

An Advent Devotional for Children and Families



How to use this devotional:

During Advent, we wait for Jesus to arrive and lead us from darkness. For four weeks prior to Christmas, we prepare our hearts for our Savior. We light candles each Sunday to celebrate the brightness Jesus brings to our world. There are four weeks of Advent and four themes we explore: LOVE, PEACE, JOY, and HOPE.

On Sunday, November 29, you will find:

- Mary's story of LOVE
- A coloring page
- Scripture to learn more about God's LOVE
- A reading and musical response to use as you light your own Advent wreath*

On Sunday, December 6, you will find:

- Joseph's story of PEACE
- A coloring page
- Scripture to learn more about God's PEACE
- A reading and musical response to use as you light your own Advent wreath*

On Sunday, December 13, you will find:

- The shepherd's story of JOY
- A coloring page
- Scripture to learn more about God's JOY
- A reading and musical response to use as you light your own Advent wreath*

On Sunday, December 20, you will find:

- The wise men's story of HOPE
- A coloring page
- Scripture to learn more about God's HOPE
- A reading and musical response to use as you light your own Advent wreath*

* Each week in worship, a Covenant family will share the liturgy, and the choir will respond in song. To find these videos, go to <https://covenantfrazer.org/ministries/covenant-kids/> and click on the "Advent 2020" box.

Please use these materials in whatever way (and on whatever day) works best for your family. Please send pictures of completed coloring pages and Advent pictures of your family to Jen Langlois at janglois@covenantfrazer.org.



The First Sunday in Advent

Luke 1:26-55

God was ready to send his Son into the world. God carefully chose young Mary to be mother to his Son. God sent the angel, Gabriel, to deliver this amazing news to Mary while she was alone in her home. The angel said, "Greetings, you who are highly favored! The Lord is with you." Mary was surprised, Mary was frightened, and Mary was confused.

The angel told Mary not to be afraid. God loved Mary and had wonderful plans for her to become pregnant and give birth to God's son, Jesus. Jesus would become the ruler of God's kingdom forever.

Although Mary was engaged, she was not yet married to Joseph. Mary asked, "How will this be?" The angel told Mary, "No word from God will ever fail." The angel reminded Mary of her cousin, Elizabeth, who was very old but was now pregnant with a child, too. Anything is possible with God. "I am the Lord's servant," Mary answered. "May your word to me be fulfilled."

After the angel left, Mary quickly went to visit Elizabeth. When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, her own baby "leaped in her womb, and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit." Elizabeth and her unborn baby both recognized Mary as the mother of God's holy Son. Elizabeth's faith further encouraged Mary, and Mary sang a beautiful song to honor God. "My soul glorifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior, for he has been mindful of the humble state of his servant..."

This is a story about LOVE. God loved Mary and created Mary for the task ahead of her. God planned that Mary would deliver Jesus into the world, hold Jesus as a baby, guide Jesus as a young boy, follow Jesus in his ministry, and then witness Jesus' crucifixion and resurrection. God loves us so much that God sent Jesus to live with us, to die on the cross to forgive our sins, and to live in heaven forever. God loves YOU and has special plans for YOU each day and throughout your life.

Explore More

Ephesians 2:10:

For we are God's craftsmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good things.

What does this verse tell you about God's love for you? _____

How will knowing this truth guide you each day? _____

Light the Advent Wreath

Reader: "We look for light, but all is darkness; for brightness, but we walk in deep shadows. Like the blind, we grope along the wall, feeling our way like those without eyes." (Isaiah 59:9b-10)

All: Watch! Wait! The day of the Lord is at hand. Prepare ye the way of the Lord! We eagerly await the light of Jesus to reach all who walk in darkness!

Reader: As we light the candle for Love, we remember Mary. God sent an angel to tell Mary that she had been chosen to carry God's Son into our world. Because God loved Mary, God knew Mary would love and care for Jesus.

All: God sent Jesus to light our world with God's love.

Reader: "Dear friends, let us love one another, for love comes from God. Everyone who loves has been born of God and knows God." (1 John 4:7)

Musical Response

Why did He come?

He came down that we may have love;

He came down that we may have love;

He came down that we may have love,

Hallelujah forever more.



The Second Sunday in Advent

Matthew 1:18-25

Joseph, who was engaged to Mary, learned that Mary had become pregnant by the Holy Spirit. Joseph was very confused about this. He loved Mary, was going to marry her, and planned that they would have children together after they were wed. It was not proper for an unmarried woman to be pregnant or to give birth to a child. Joseph did not want to embarrass Mary; he did not want to be embarrassed himself. So, to avoid public disgrace, Joseph planned to divorce Mary quietly.

But, God had different plans for Joseph. God wanted Joseph to be his Son's father on earth. So, God sent an angel to Joseph when he was sleeping. The angel said, "Do not be afraid to take Mary home as your wife...She will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins." The angel told Joseph that Mary's baby was the Son of God.

The angel's visit gave Joseph great PEACE about his future. "When Joseph woke up, he did what the angel of the Lord had commanded him and took Mary home as his wife." Joseph obeyed God even though he must have wondered about the details of God's plan. Joseph was a carpenter by trade; he was used to controlling the plan. He selected and operated each tool in his toolbox for its designed purpose. He chose the axe to cut wood, and he worked the bow and string to work the drill. Joseph, the builder, now understood that he was to be a tool in God's plan to deliver his Son, Jesus, into our world.

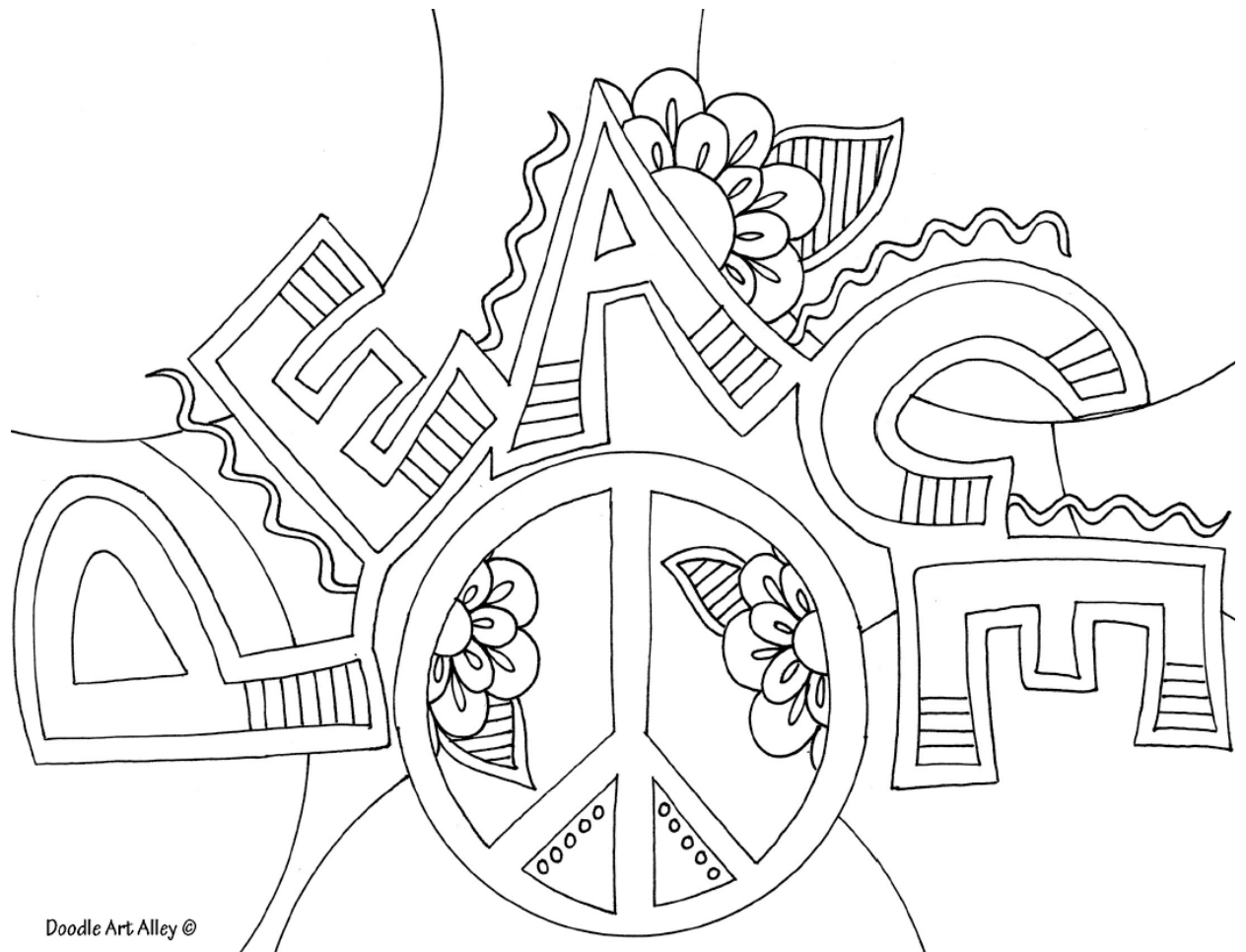
Sometimes it's hard to understand what God has planned for us. Imagine that you are playing on the playground with friends and see the new boy at school sitting alone on a bench. It's fun to keep playing; it's hard to interrupt fun with friends. God may be sending you to meet this boy, though. If you obey God, and include the new boy in your game, you will feel the same PEACE that Joseph felt when he obeyed the angel.

Explore More

Psalm 85:8: I am listening to what the Lord God is saying;
God promises peace to us, God's own people,
if we do not go back to our foolish ways.

What does this verse tell you about God's gift of peace to you? _____

How will knowing this truth guide you each day? _____



Light the Advent Wreath

**All: Watch! Wait! The day of the Lord is at hand. Prepare ye the way of the Lord!
We eagerly await the light of Jesus to reach all who walk in darkness!**

Reader: We light first the candle for Love and remember that God sent Jesus to light our world with God's love.

Reader: As we light the candle for Peace, we remember Joseph. Joseph was frightened when he learned that Mary was pregnant with God's Son. God sent an angel to Joseph in a dream with a message of peace. "When Joseph woke up, he did what the angel of the Lord had commanded him and took Mary home as his wife." (Matthew 1:24)

All: God sent Jesus to light our world with God's peace.

Reader: Jesus said, "Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you...Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid." (John 14:27)

Musical Response

Why did He come?

He came down that we may have peace;

He came down that we may have peace;

He came down that we may have peace,

Hallelujah forever more.

He Came Down - Words: Trad. Cameroon - Music: Trad. Cameroon, trans. and arr. by John Bell - 1990 WGRG The Iona Community (Scotland)



The Third Sunday in Advent

Luke 2:8-20

Mary and Joseph, secure in God's LOVE and wrapped in God's PEACE, traveled to Bethlehem and settled into a stall where Jesus was born and laid in a manger. While the prophecies of the Old Testament were being fulfilled, there were shepherds out in the fields with their flocks of sheep. This was how the shepherds spent many nights, and, to them, this night was like all the others. They sat quietly in the dark, watching over their sheep as they grazed or rested. Then, all of a sudden, out of the sky, an angel appeared "and the glory of the Lord was shining around them."

Imagine how surprised and scared these shepherds must have been! One minute, they were squinting through darkness out at their sheep. Then, they were blinded in a spotlight, looking up at an angel! "But the angel said to them, 'Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people. Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord. This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger.'"

As the shepherds stood in awe and their eyes adjusted to the light, more angels arrived! Together these angels proclaimed, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men." And then, as quickly as they arrived, the angels disappeared, and the shepherds were left in the dark. As their eyes once again adjusted to the darkness, the shepherds decided, "Let's get over to Bethlehem as fast as we can and see for ourselves what God has revealed to us."

Following the angels' instructions, the shepherds headed to Bethlehem and found Mary, Joseph, and baby Jesus just as the angels told them they would. Imagine their JOY when they saw God's Son before their eyes! They quickly spread out to share the news with the public. Their JOY was contagious; they shared their JOY with everyone they met! Rather than sending holy angels, God sent these ordinary shepherds to spread the news of his Son's birth to the community. The people never saw angels, but they believed the shepherds' good news and headed to the stable to share the JOY of Jesus' birth.

God sends parents, pastors, Sunday School teachers, and friends to teach us about God's love and his Son, Jesus. We haven't heard the angels sing, but we have heard the choirs sing. We, too, are called to share the JOY in knowing God with our friends and our family.

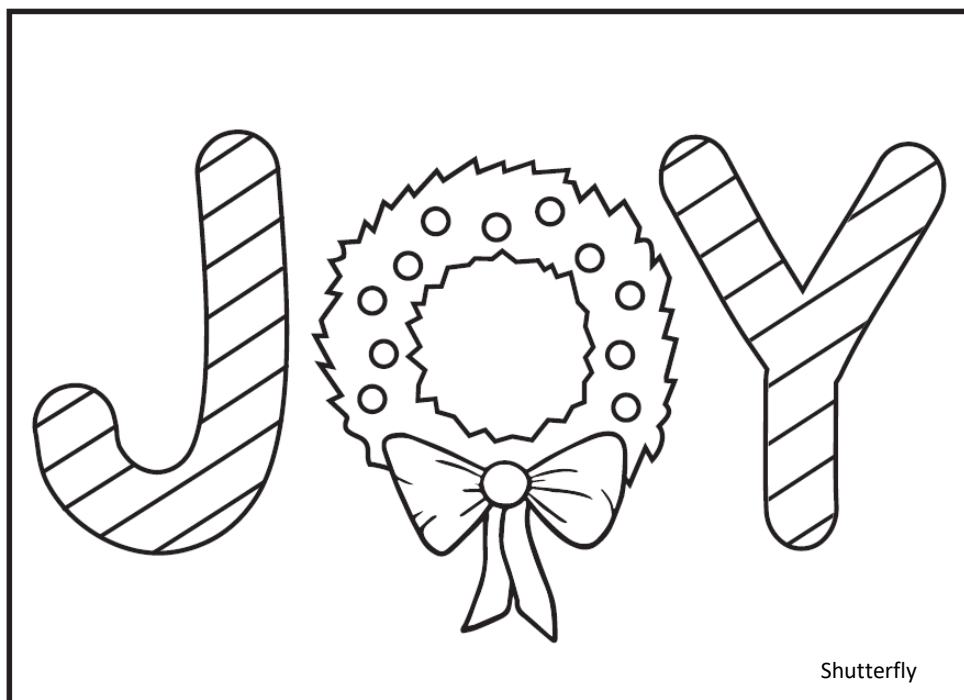
Explore More

1 Peter 1:8-9:

You have not seen Christ, but still you love him. You can't see him now, but you believe in him. You are filled with a wonderful and heavenly joy that cannot be explained. Your faith has a goal, and you are reaching that goal—your salvation.

How does this verse explain that we can find great JOY? _____

How will knowing this truth guide you each day? _____



Light the Advent Wreath

All: **Watch! Wait! The day of the Lord is at hand. Prepare ye the way of the Lord!
We eagerly await the light of Jesus to reach all who walk in darkness!**

Reader: We light first the candle for Love and remember that God sent Jesus to light our world with God's love.

Reader: We light second the candle for Peace and remember that God sent Jesus to light our world with God's peace.

Leader: As we light the candle for Joy, we remember the shepherds. The night that Jesus was born, shepherds were watching over their flocks in the darkness. Angels appeared to the shepherds, bringing "good news [to] cause great joy for all the people." (Luke 2:10) Jesus had been born, and he was lying in a manger! When the angels left them, the shepherds ran to Bethlehem, found Baby Jesus, and then spread the good news of this great joy with everyone they met. Then, "the shepherds went back full of joy. They thanked God for all they had heard and seen. It happened as the angel had told them." (Luke 2:20)

All: **God sent Jesus to light our world with His joy.**

Leader: "[God] will yet fill your mouth with laughter and your lips with shouts of joy."
(Job 8:21)

Musical Response:

Why did He come?

He came down that we may have joy;

He came down that we may have joy;

He came down that we may have joy,

Hallelujah forever more.

He Came Down - Words: Trad. Cameroon - Music: Trad. Cameroon, trans. and arr. by John Bell - 1990 WGRG The Iona Community (Scotland)



The Fourth Sunday in Advent

Matthew 2:1-12

Before Jesus was born, the world had become full of sadness and despair. People were waiting for someone to save them from their hopelessness and to guide them from the darkness. The world was waiting for Jesus to arrive to save them. His birth had been foretold in the Bible. Isaiah wrote, “Nevertheless, there will be no more gloom for those who were in distress...The people walking in darkness have seen a great light...For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the greatness of his government and peace there will be no end.” (Isaiah 9:1-2a,6-7a)

Wise men in the east were waiting for Jesus, too. When they noticed a star rising in the sky, they knew that Jesus had been born and that the star would lead them to him. Before they reached Bethlehem, the wise men stopped in Jerusalem and met with King Herod. King Herod was the supreme ruler of the day and was threatened by the prophecies that named Jesus as king. He asked the wise men to send him news when they found Jesus so that he, too, could worship the young king. He had no intention of worshipping Jesus, however. Rather, he planned to have Jesus killed.

The wise men then continued on their journey. They were unsure how long it would take them to find young Jesus, but their HOPE in God’s promise of everlasting “justice and righteousness” (from Isaiah 9:7) motored their movements forward. They traveled during the night, following the light of the rising star. And, eventually, that star froze above the home of Jesus. They knelt before the young child and offered him their gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh.

When it was time to return home, the wise men were warned in a dream not to return to King Herod, so they chose an alternate route. This path was lit by HOPE fueled by God’s promise for a brilliant future. In a similar way, Joseph was warned by an angel in a dream to take his family to Egypt where they would be safe from Herod. They remained there until the angel returned to Joseph to tell them that they could return home.

We honor the hope of the wise men again on Epiphany, January 6 of each year.

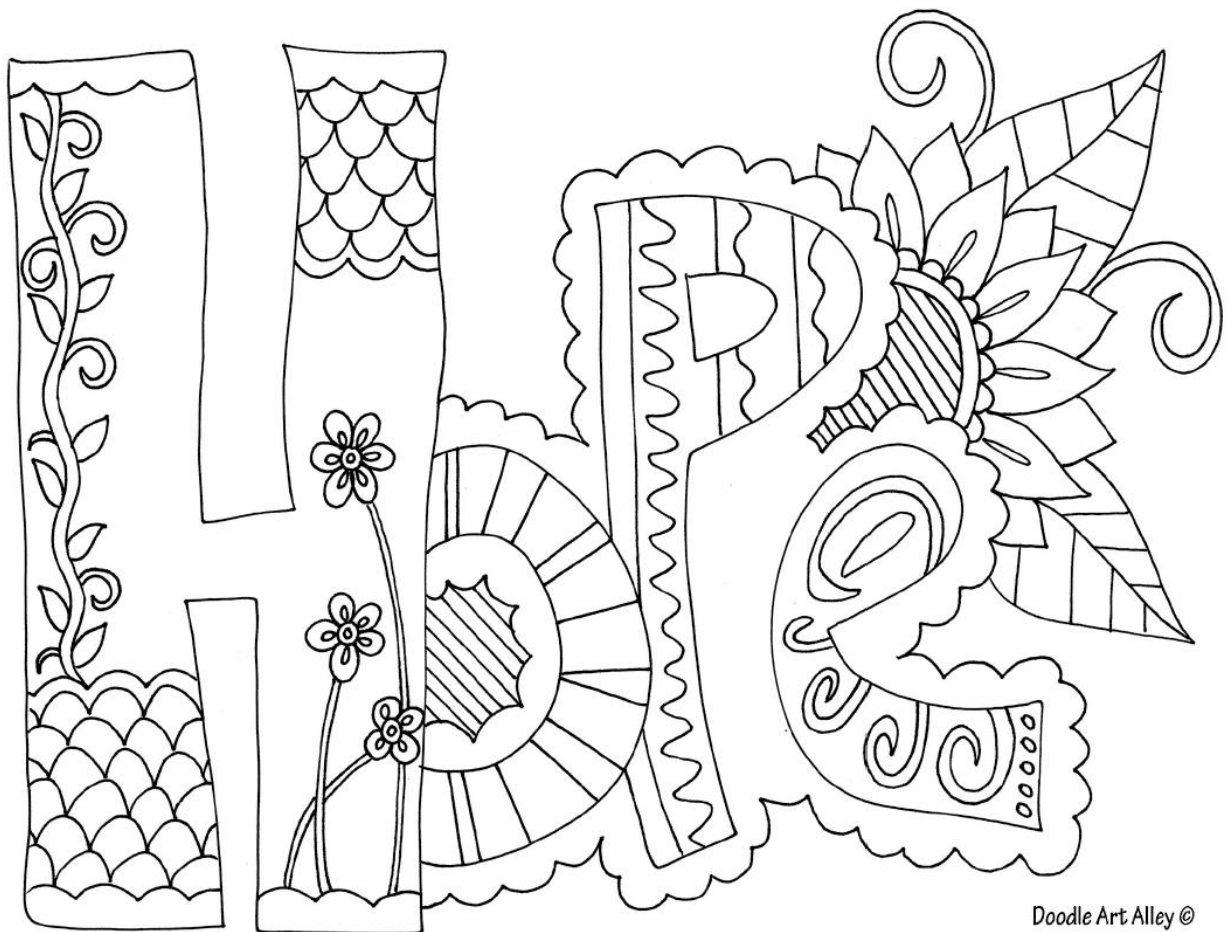
Explore More

Isaiah 40:31

But those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not be faint.

What happens when we HOPE in the Lord? _____

How will knowing this truth guide you each day? _____



Doodle Art Alley ©

Light the Advent Wreath

All: **Watch! Wait! The day of the Lord is at hand. Prepare ye the way of the Lord!
We eagerly await the light of Jesus to reach all who walk in darkness!**

Reader: We light the first candle for Love and remember that God sent Jesus to light our world with God's love.

Reader: We light the second candle for Peace and remember that God sent Jesus to light our world with God's peace.

Reader: We light the third candle for Joy and remember that God sent Jesus to light our world with God's joy.

Reader: As we light the candle for Hope, we remember the wise men. The wise men were led by the light of a rising star through the darkness until they found young Jesus. Overjoyed by the fulfillment of God's promise, they knelt at Jesus' little feet and delivered their gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. They were filled with hope for a brilliant, glittering future!

All: **God sent Jesus to light our world with His Hope.**

Reader: "For I know the plans I have for you," says the Lord. "They are plans for good and not for disaster, to give you a future and a hope." (Jeremiah 29:11)

Musical Response:

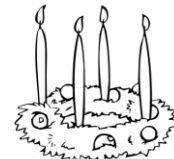
Why did He come?

He came down that we may have [hope];

He came down that we may have [hope];

He came down that we may have [hope],

Hallelujah forever more.





Merry
Christmas



Light the Advent Wreath

All: **Watch! Wait! The day of the Lord is at hand. Prepare ye the way of the Lord!
We eagerly await the light of Jesus to reach all who walk in darkness!**

Reader: On Christmas Eve, we light the first candle for Love and remember that God sent Jesus to light our world with God's love.

Reader: We light the second candle for Peace and remember that God sent Jesus to light our world with God's peace.

Reader: We light the third candle for Joy and remember that God sent Jesus to light our world with God's joy.

Reader: We light the fourth candle for Hope and remember that God sent Jesus to light our world with God's hope.

Leader: As we light the Christ Candle in the center of our wreath, we celebrate that through Jesus, "The people who walk in darkness will see a great light. For those who live in a land of deep darkness, a light will shine." (Isaiah 9:2) During Advent and throughout our lives, we pray the light of Christ will shine in the center of our hearts.

All: **God sent Jesus to light our world!
Behold, the light of Christ shines brightly!
Our paths are clear to see salvation!**

Leader: "When Jesus spoke again to the people, He said, 'I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.'" (John 8:12)

All: **In the days ahead, may we all will find opportunities to share the Light of Christ with our friends, with our family, and with our world! Amen!**

