

HOPE: A Family Advent Journey

An Introduction to the Journey

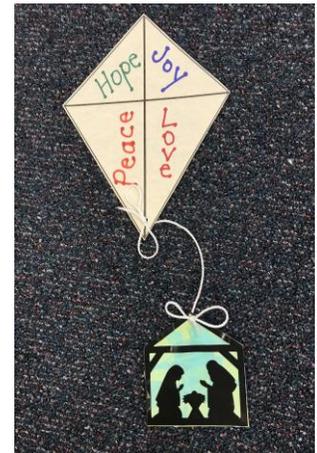
Our Advent Journey

We are so excited to take this journey through Advent with you and your family. This time of year is filled with hope, faith, joy, peace, and, of course, love. Each week, in this family study, we will be exploring a different topic –

- Hope:** *Look Up*
- Mary's Faith:** *Look In*
- Joseph's Joy:** *Look Forward*
- Jesus Brings Peace:** *Look Around*

Gather Together and Lighting the Advent Candles

Each week, during your family gathering time, you will light the advent candle and add the Advent word for the week to your kite. Why a kite? Kites remind us to look up. Even if they are out of sight, we can feel their tugs on the string so we know they are still there. Those slight tugs on the kite string are like “God Tugs”. Those moments when you are reminded that God is always with us. Throughout this Advent season add your “God Tugs” to your prayer journal. Print the included kite template on cardstock, decorate it, and place it near your Advent candles. Use our picture to give you inspiration. You will also need 5 candles to use for your advent candle lighting. This will be for weeks 1 through 4 plus a candle to celebrate the birth of Jesus.



Family Candle Conversations

These discussion questions are provided to take your family further into the journey. They can be completed at any time during the week.

Advent Lesson

Each week, there will be a new lesson, with provided scripture, to share as a family. Again, the lesson can be completed at any time during the week.

Prayer Journal and Requests

Prayer allows us to talk to God directly. We can use this time to tell God about how we're feeling or about something that has us worried. A prayer journal will be an important part of our family journey. A journal can be created for each member of your family. Each person will need a folder that can have pages added as the weeks progress. You may include blank paper for them to write or draw and/or use the Prayer Journal pages included in each week's journey.

We can also pray for other people – encourage your family to think of people that they want to include in their prayers. This can be someone that they know directly or a group of people, such as doctors, teachers, or the members of your church.

Family Craft Time

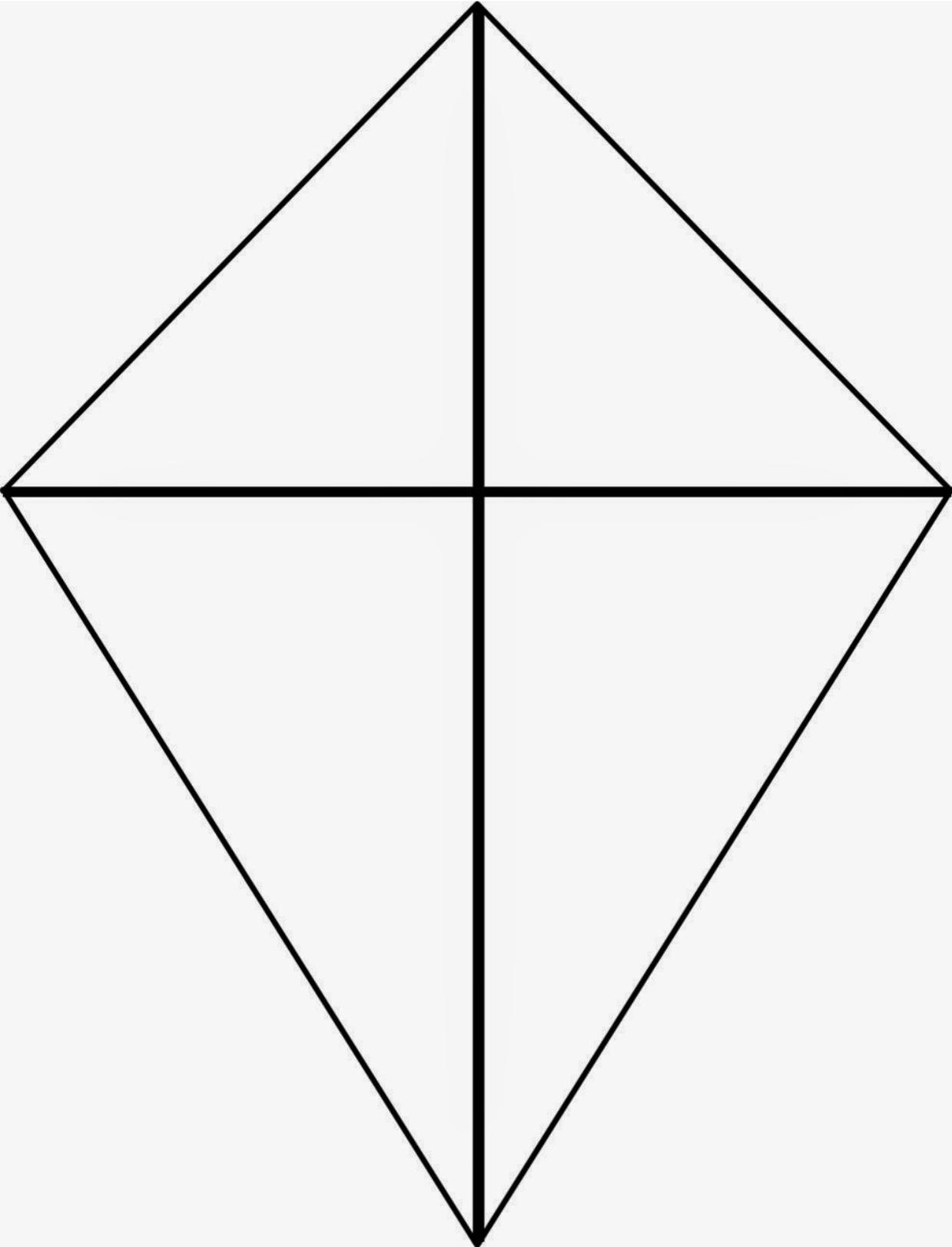
Every week, we will have a craft, using basic supplies, which will relate to our weekly focus. Week 1 will not have a craft listed because you will need to create your kite from this introduction.

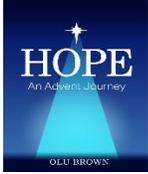
Family Prayer

Close your weekly journey with the provided prayer.

Additional Pages

Additional resources, like templates and coloring pages, will be found at the end of each week's journey packet.





HOPE: A Family Advent Journey

Week 1 - HOPE

OUR HOPE: *Look Up*

A child is born to us, a son is given to us, and authority will be on his shoulders. He will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, Prince of Peace. *Isaiah 9:6*

Gather Together – Lighting the Candle of Hope

- Gather your family and your kite and light the advent candle for “Hope.” Add the word Hope to your kite.
- Talk about what hope means and share some things that you hope for today. Very often we hope for small things when we say “I hope it doesn’t rain today” or “I hope we make it on time”. What are some big things that we hope God will help us with today? How can we hope bigger?

Family Candle Conversations – Going Further

Take a moment to go outside with your child(ren) and look up. Ask: What do you see? When Jesus was born in a manger, the Wise Men looked up in the sky to follow a star to find the child they hoped would be their King. What do we see when we look up at what God has created? What do we see when we look up during the day or during the night?

Advent Lesson – Isaiah 9:6-7

Isaiah’s words say, “a child is born”. These are his words of hope about Jesus. The Hebrew people hoped that the child (Jesus) would be their King. Before Jesus was born on Earth the Hebrew people hoped that he would be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, and Prince of Peace. Jesus arrived, but no one hoped that he would be born in a manger outside with animals. Hope is about believing in what we have not seen or what has not happened yet.

Prayer Journal and Requests

Prayer allows us to talk to God directly. We can use this time to tell God about how we're feeling or about something that has us worried. We can also pray for other people. Use your prayer journal and/or the included prayer journal page to write or draw a prayer for God.

Family Prayer

Thank you, God, for the spirit of Hope. Thank you for your Son Jesus, our Wonderful Counselor. I am reminded of Hope when I look up and I see all that you have created. I pray that hope keeps us close to you. Amen.

Prayer Journal Page

A child is born to us, a son is given to us, and authority will be on his shoulders. He will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, Prince of Peace.

Isaiah 9:6

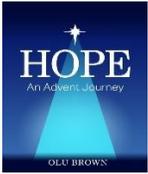
Use this space to write or draw your prayer

Who do you want to pray for today?

What is something that you hope will happen that you want to ask God for His help in coming true?

“God Tugs” – Where did you see God at work in your life this week?





HOPE: A Family Advent Journey

Week 2 - FAITH

MARY'S FAITH: *Look In*

Nothing is impossible for God. *Luke 1:37*

Gather Together – Lighting the Candle of Faith

Gather your family and your kite and light the advent candle for “Faith.” Add the word Faith to your kite. Having Faith means believing and then committing your life to God. Talk about what faith looks like for you. Does faith mean just believing in something? When we have faith, should we do something with that faith? What can you do to show that you have faith in God?

Family Craft Time – Paper Nativity

Use the attached sheet to create your own nativity. Color and decorate the pieces prior to cutting. Be sure to fold the pieces as noted and cut on the solid lines. Place your nativity scene in a shoebox to keep it all in one place.



Family Candle Conversations – Going Further

Imagine how Mary felt when she looked in the manger to see Jesus. She had faith in what the angel Gabriel told her and now it was real! Jesus was born! Let's look in the manger and talk about what we see and what we have faith to believe in. Bring your shoebox nativity scene to the family discussion and talk about what you see. Who was there and what did they have faith in? Mary? Joseph? Wise Men? Now what do you have faith in about Jesus' birth? Although we were not in Bethlehem to see Jesus lying in a manger, our faith helps us to believe that Jesus is King!

Advent Lesson – Luke 1:26-33, 37

An angel named Gabriel was sent by God to talk to Mary before Jesus was born. The angel told her to rejoice because God was honoring her. Gabriel told Mary that she would be the mother of Jesus and that he would be called The Son of the Most High. Although this news was a little strange to Mary, she had faith in what the angel told her. It was hard to believe that God would be Jesus' heavenly father and Joseph would be Jesus' earthly father and that Mary would be Jesus' mother, but "Nothing is impossible for God". Faith is believing in something that you have not seen, heard, or experienced. Faith is knowing that with God it will happen.

Prayer Journal and Requests

Prayer allows us to talk to God directly. We can use this time to tell God about how we're feeling or about something that has us worried. We can also pray for other people. Use your prayer journal and/or the included prayer journal page to write or draw a prayer for God.

Family Prayer

Dear Heavenly Father, I pray the Faith is with me every day. I pray that my Faith will grow as I come to know that with you all things are possible. Never let faithfulness leave me but bring me closer to you.
Amen.

Prayer Journal Page

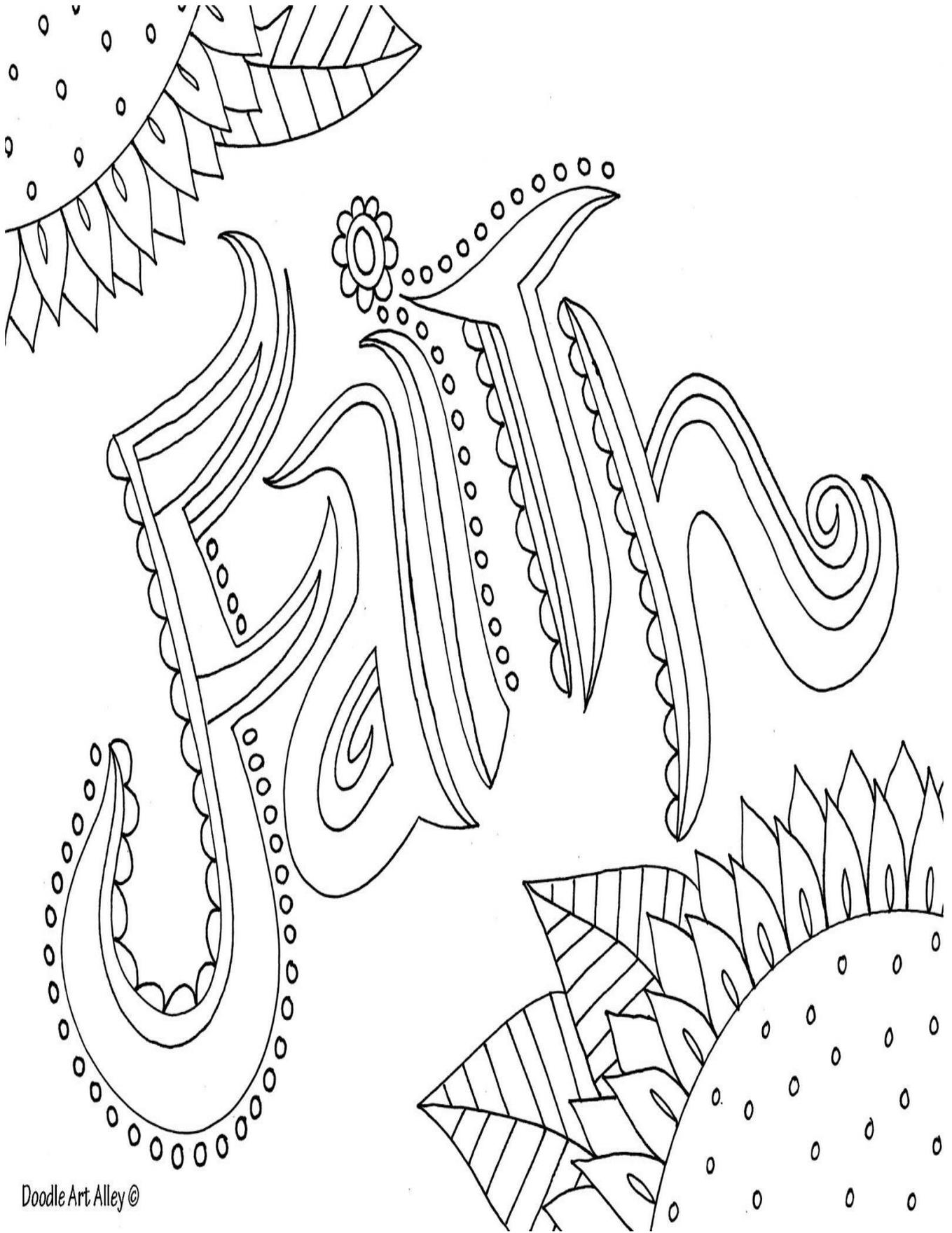
Nothing is impossible for God. *Luke 1:37*

Use this space to write or draw your prayer

Who do you want to pray for today?

Knowing that nothing is impossible for God, what do you want to ask of Him?

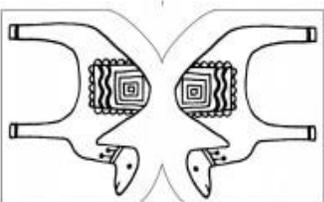
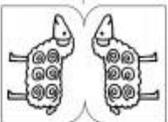
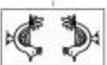
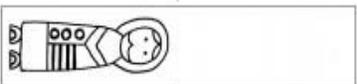
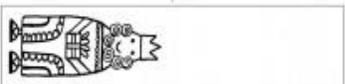
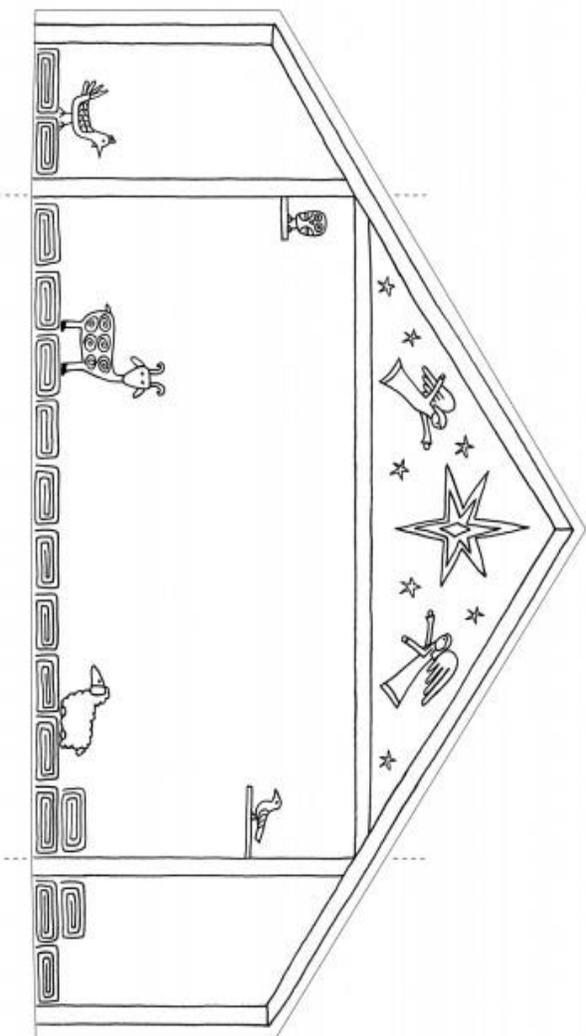
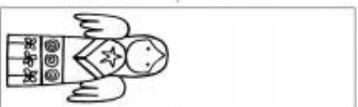
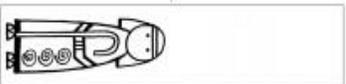
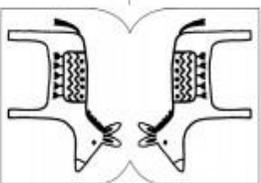
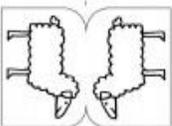
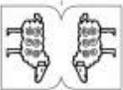
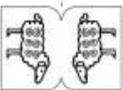
“God Tugs” – Where did you see God at work in your life this week?

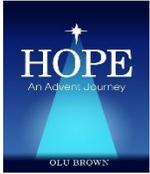


Doodle Art Alley ©

made by joel Nativity Scene (travel size)

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HOPE: A Family Advent Journey

Week 3 - JOY

JOSEPH'S JOY: *Look Forward*

But as he considered these things, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, "Joseph, son of David, do not fear to take Mary as your wife, for that which is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. *Matthew 1:20*

Gather Together – Lighting the Candle of Joy

- Gather your family and your kite and light the advent candle for "Joy." Add the word Joy to your kite.
- Talk about what joy means and some things that bring joy to your life. For example, young children may list tangible items such as toys and candy. That's ok! We know that God can use anything to bring joy! For older children, start to shift the conversation to how we can find joy by being kind, giving and doing things for others. Middle school and Youth can discuss how Jesus brings them joy.

Family Candle Conversations – Going Further

Think about your last dream and share it with your family. Do you think Joseph might have been afraid to see an angel? Have you ever been afraid? What can you do the next time you get scared? What are some ways that you find joy by following Jesus? How can you help someone else find joy this week?

Advent Lesson – Matthew 1:18-21

Tell the story of the angel coming to Joseph in a dream. Joseph may have been afraid and didn't know what to do, but he was obedient and found joy in looking forward to what this baby would mean to all people forever and ever. Sometimes we are scared and confused and the only way to find joy is to look forward to the good things we know God has planned for us.

Family Craft Time – Joy Binoculars

Make your own “Joy Binoculars” by decorating two toilet paper tubes and gluing them together. Poke a hole on the top outside of each tube and attach a piece of yarn for a strap. When you are feeling scared or sad, take a second look through faith. Pick up your “Joy Binoculars” and take a look. Find Jesus and you will find joy!



Prayer Journal and Requests

Prayer allows us to talk to God directly. We can use this time to tell God about how we’re feeling or about something that has us worried. We can also pray for other people. Use your prayer journal and/or the included prayer journal page to write or draw a prayer for God.

Family Prayer

Dear God, help me to remember that you love me and when I trust you, you can help me find Joy. Even when I am scared or sad or lonely you are there for me. Help me to remember to pray for everyone to feel your love so they can have Joy. Thank you for Joseph’s story. Amen

Prayer Journal Page

But as he considered these things, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, “Joseph, son of David, do not fear to take Mary as your wife, for that which is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. *Matthew 1:20*

Use this space to write or draw your prayer

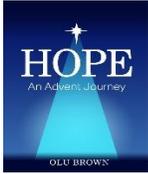
Who do you want to pray for today?

How does God bring joy to you and your family? Thank God for all the joy in your life.

“God Tugs” – Where did you see God at work in your life this week?



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HOPE: A Family Advent Journey

Week 4 - PEACE

JESUS BRINGS PEACE: *Look Around*

“They shall call his name Immanuel,” which translated means, God with us.
Matthew 1:23

Gather Together – Lighting the Candle of Peace

- Gather your family and your kite and light the advent candle for “Peace.” Add the word Peace to your kite.
- Younger children may have a difficult time understanding what peace means. Ask them what makes them feel peaceful or calm. There are lots of things that bring us a peaceful feeling, but true peace comes from God. Talk about a time when you prayed and God brought you peace.

Family Candle Conversations – Going Further

Philippians 4:7 tells us that the peace of God will guard our hearts and our minds in Christ Jesus. But there are times when we feel anxious or scared. What can we do when we feel those things and don't feel peace? Peace is one of the “Fruits of the Spirit”. Also included in the Fruits of the Spirit are love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control (Galatians 5:22-23).

Advent Lesson – Matthew 1:20, Philippians 4:8-9

Jesus is also called Immanuel which means “God with us”. Jesus came to live among us to teach us how to live. What does that mean? Jesus teaches us to love God but also to love one another. Learning to love one another as ourselves will lead to peace, not just for us but for everyone. Wow! That can be hard. True peace comes directly from God. Look around this week and find ways you can share peace with someone.

Family Craft Time – Peace Chain

This week you and your family will make a “peace chain”. You will need 2-inch strips of paper, glue sticks or a stapler and markers. Take a strip of paper each day and write or draw some ways that you can bring peace to someone else by showing love and kindness. Share it with your family and then add it to the chain.



Prayer Journal and Requests

Prayer allows us to talk to God directly. We can use this time to tell God about how we're feeling or about something that has us worried. We can also pray for other people. Use your prayer journal and/or the included prayer journal page to write or draw a prayer for God.

Family Prayer

Dear God, thank you for giving us Jesus who teaches us about Peace and love and all the Fruits of the Spirit. When we are scared or sad, we know you are there for us. Help us remember to tell everyone about you and that you love them. Amen

Prayer Journal Page

“They shall call his name Immanuel,” which translated means, God with us.

Matthew 1:23

Use this space to write or draw your prayer

Who do you want to pray for today?

Think about what makes your heart feel peace. Thank God for that peace.

Ask God what you can do for others that will bring them the same feeling of peace.

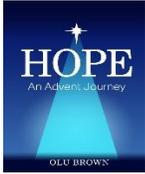
“God Tugs” – Where did you see God at work in your life this week?

Peace
is a Fruit of the Spirit.



Orange

Galatians 5:22-23



HOPE: A Family Advent Journey

Christmas Eve

A Savior is Born

Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord. *Luke 2:11*

Gather Together – Lighting the Christ Candle

Gather as a family and read the Good News of the Birth of our Savior. Older children can read portions of the scripture. Light the Christ candle and have a quiet time of prayer and thanks for the gift of Jesus!

Advent Lesson: The Good News of the Birth of our Savior – Luke 2:1-20

The Birth of Jesus – In those days Caesar Augustus issued a decree that a census should be taken of the entire Roman world. And everyone went to their own town to register. So Joseph also went up from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to Bethlehem the town of David, because he belonged to the house and line of David. He went there to register with Mary, who was pledged to be married to him and was expecting a child. While they were there, the time came for the baby to be born, and she gave birth to her firstborn, a son. She wrapped him in cloths and placed him in a manger, because there was no guest room available for them. And there were shepherds living out in the fields nearby, keeping watch over their flocks at night. An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. 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.” Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God and saying, “Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace to those on whom his favor rests.” When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, “Let’s go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has told us about.” So they hurried off and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby, who was lying in the manger. When they had seen him, they spread the word concerning what had been told to them about this child, and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds said to them. But Mary treasured up all these things and pondered them in her heart. The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things they had heard and seen, which were just as they had been told.

