

Noel:

Come and See What God Has Done

Daily Advent Devotional



Lovers Lane
FAMILY MINISTRY



Christmas Eve Family Worship

Join us for a Christmas Eve Worship Service that includes carols and a Live Nativity by our KIDS, Preteens and Students!

Lovers Lane
FAMILY MINISTRY

December 24 | 10 AM
Lovers Lane Sanctuary

Connect with Family Ministry

Sunday Worship

Jesus lived a life of worship, both in actions and words.

He taught beautifully about the value of worship throughout his Sermon on the Mount. He demonstrated his own commitment by observing the Sabbath and teaching in the Synagogue. Jesus reminded us that "It's written, You will worship the Lord your God and serve only him."

Worship is one of our core values because we become more like Jesus by committing to worship.

8:15 AM - Traditional Worship (Shipp Chapel)

9:30 AM - Thrive (Asbury Hall)

11:00 AM - Traditional Worship (Sanctuary)

African Fellowship Worship (Shipp Chapel)

Crosswalk Worship (Asbury Hall)

Liturgical Worship

Modern Worship

Liturgical Worship

Cultural Affinity Worship

Contemporary Worship

Online

Lovers Lane
KIDS

Preteens
At Lovers Lane UMC

[http:// lumc.org/kids](http://lumc.org/kids)



Lovers Lane KIDS

Lovers Lane
STUDENTS

[http:// lumc.org/students](http://lumc.org/students)



@lumcstudents



Lovers Lane
Students/Parents

Week 1: Noel

December 1-7

Come and see what the hope of God has done.

God's hope is for everyone and will carry us through even the darkest days. God's promises are always fulfilled, and the greatest promise was of a savior who would bring hope to us all. Hope that lifts us when we are down and carries us when we are lost. We celebrate this Advent season with God's amazing hope in anticipation for what is to come.

"Come and see what God has done" —these words invite us to reflect as we wait in anticipation of the incredible works of God, and the most miraculous work of all: God's plan to send a son into the world to bring us life and hope.

In a world often filled with uncertainty and darkness, the light of Christ breaks through, offering us a hope that never fades. We celebrate today the hope of Christ's birth with eager expectation.

Weekly Scripture:

Isaiah 7:10-17
1 Timothy 1:1-2
Luke 1:26-38



Weekly Reflection Questions:

- What does "hope" mean to you?
- When do you need hope?
- When is it hard to have hope?
- Where do you have hope right now?

Prayer:

God of Hope, We thank You for the hope that comes from knowing You are with us. We hold on to this hope with gratitude each and every day. May we take this hope and share it with the world around us. Help us to be people of hope, looking to you and living out the hope you bring into the world. May your light shine brightly in our hearts this Advent season, filling us with anticipation and joy. Amen.

Share your own prayers for the week as you light the Hope candle for the first week of Advent

Hope: December 2

Ava Ward

My favorite moment in scripture is in the book of Genesis when God created the earth and everything on it. On the sixth day, God created livestock such as dogs, horses, bunnies, cows and chickens. Then God made wild animals such as lions, cheetahs, giraffes, and rhinos. Next, God made man and woman. He made them to watch over the birds, the sea, the animals, and the plants. God made Earth a beautiful place. He was very creative, and I am grateful that he made everything, especially animals - like horses.

I wonder where and how God started and how He made all of the beautiful things?

God created Adam and Eve, and eventually, their relatives had Jesus. That means we are all related to Adam and Eve and Jesus. As a relative of Jesus, I think he would want us to be humble, kind, forgiving, generous and treat people as you would want to be treated.

During Advent when we get ready to celebrate Jesus' birthday, we should think about how God created the Earth and every living creature on it out of His love for us. So, we should love like God loves creation and like Jesus loves us, treat people more kindly, and think about what God gave us instead of the gifts we are going to get. The most valuable gift we have ever been given is the gift of Jesus - God's hope, peace, joy and love, personified.

Hope: December 3

William Nazareth

Matthew 14:13-21

Jesus is a promise answered to the world and hope for us all!

I see this in scripture when Jesus multiplied fish. The story starts when the people said, "All we have are five loaves of bread and two fish." Jesus said, "Bring them here." Then he had the people sit on the grass. He took the five loaves and two fish, lifted his face to heaven in prayer, blessed, broke, and gave the bread to the disciples so that 5,000 people could eat together.

Jesus performed many miracles, and all of them are special to us. The miracles remind us of a promise answered, the hope we are given, and the gifts God provides for us.

God provided me with a good education, a good place to live and good friends around me.

What scripture reminds you of a promise answered?

Hope: December 4

Eloise Hart

My favorite story in scripture is about Joseph. I believe it reminds us that the good is yet to come, even when something bad happens, there can be good. As we believe in God, we can have hope that God will guide us through anything.

As a family, write down or share everything you remember about the story of Joseph as he receives his coat and how his brothers treated him. Then read the story in Genesis 37-50

Hope: December 5

Ainsley Neal

A characteristic of God that gives me hope is that God is always present, even when we don't feel like He is.

My favorite thing about Jesus is knowing how many people he helped, and through Jesus' example, and from my parents, church and Mr. Bruce, I learned that helping others is a good thing to do.

Jesus was a promise answered to the world when he came to Earth and died for our sins. He was able to help us ALL, and I wonder how he was able to heal the sick, and help everyone around him.

When there are moments I can't feel God, I wonder how amazing it would be to meet Jesus and learn from him, in person. For now, I keep reading scripture to remember the hope of God's presence.

"I have set the Lord always before me; because he is at my right hand, I shall not be shaken."

Psalm 16:8

Hope: December 6

Lola Bett DiFonzo

My favorite thing to know about Jesus is that he enjoys people who follow his guide and heals the unhealable with the power within him, from God. He forgives all who have sinned and asks for forgiveness. In Jesus we can find hope, through his actions during his time on Earth.

I find hope in these scriptures that teach me more about Jesus:

“Who forgives all your iniquity, who heals all your diseases,”
Psalm 103:3

“Forgive as the Lord forgave you.”
Colossians 3:13

“All of God’s promises have been fulfilled in Christ with a resounding ‘yes.’”
2 Corinthians 1:20

As a family, pick a scripture to remind you of the hope found in Christ for this Advent Season. Read it together nightly.

Hope: December 7

Noel means “the one who was born,” and reminds us of the gift of Jesus who was born to rescue and restore ALL.

This season can be busy and stressful, so as a family, come up with an activity every week that will restore you. (ex: decide on a Christmas movie to watch together every week.)



Week 2: Noel

December 8-14

Come and see what the peace of God has done.

This week, we reflect on the peace that Christ brings to our world. The words "Come and see what God has done" invite us to behold the wonder of God's work in bringing peace through the birth of Jesus Christ. In a world filled with conflict and unrest, Jesus comes to offer us peace, not as the world gives, but a peace that passes all understanding.

God sent Jesus to be the Prince of Peace, to reconcile us with God and with one another. The peace of Christ transcends circumstances and fills our hearts with calm and assurance, knowing that God is with us. As we wait in this Advent season, we are reminded of the peace that Jesus offers, a peace that transforms us and the world around us.

Weekly Scripture:

Isaiah 9:6
Romans 5:1-10
Philippians 4:6-7
Romans 12:18



Weekly Reflection Questions:

- What does "peace" mean to you?
- When do you need peace?
- When is it hard to have peace?
- Where do you have peace right now?

Prayer:

God of Peace,
We thank You for the peace that You bring into our lives through Jesus Christ. A Peace that we lean into when everything around us feels messy and hard. Help us to be agents of peace in our homes, our communities, and our world. Through this Advent season may we all remember your hope and your peace and share this with those around us. Amen.

Share your own prayers for the week as you light the Peace candle for the second week of Advent

Peace: December 9

James Telford

In Luke 2:16, it says, “And they came with haste, and found Mary, and Joseph, and the babe lying in a manger,” so I decided to make my drawing of when everyone arrived to adore Jesus. When I look at my drawing, I think about how Jesus was born to save us. The reason I put a lot of fog in the picture was to focus on baby Jesus, showing us what God has done. I made the swaddle around baby Jesus the purest white because he is the Son of God, the creator of mankind and the world.



Come & See:

- *Jesus
- *Mary
- *Joseph
- *Magi
- *Shepherd
- *Animals

Peace: December 10

Holly Ridley

One of my favorite things that I have learned about Jesus comes from Matthew 5:43-45 about how we should love our enemies. I learned this from my church in my confirmation class.

The Bible says,
“You have heard that it was said, ‘You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.’ But I say to you: Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, so that you may be children of your Father in heaven, for he makes his sun rise on the evil and on the good and sends rain on the righteous and on the unrighteous.”

Matthew 5:43-45

I enjoy this scripture because it reminds me that even when I do something wrong or unkind, God will forgive me and still love me. It also teaches me how I should behave towards people who do the wrong thing to me. I know I need to love them and forgive them, which helps me feel peace.

Who is someone who brings you peace?

Peace: December 11

Collin Moss



Psalm 23

"The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want.
He makes me lie down in green pastures;
He leads me beside still waters;
He restores my soul.
He leads me in right paths
for His name's sake.
Even though I walk through the darkest valley,
I fear no evil,
for you are with me;
your rod and your staff,
they comfort me.
You prepare a table before me
in the presence of my enemies;
you anoint my head with oil;
my cup overflows.
Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me
all the days of my life,
and I shall dwell in the house of the Lord
my whole life long."

Peace: December 12

Elise Broer

In Luke 1:26-39, Jesus was a promise answered to the world.

The angel Gabriel came to Mary and told her, "Fear not, Mary, for thou hast found favor with God." Gabriel tells Mary that she will have a baby named Jesus.

"He shall be great and shall be called the son of the highest. And the Lord God shall give unto him, the throne of his father David. And he shall reign over the house of Jacob forever. And of his kingdom there shall be no end."

Luke 1:32-33

This scripture shows that Jesus was a promise answered to the world because Gabriel is telling Mary that her son shall be great, that his kingdom will never end, and he will save the world!

*As a family, pick a scripture to remind you of the peace found in Christ for this Advent Season.
Read it together nightly.*

Peace: December 13

Justina Weato

My favorite characteristic of God is that he always forgives me because even after all that I do and turn, he is always there with open arms. This can be seen in 2 Chronicles 33: 1-20, when Manasseh became king of Judah at the young age of 12. For many years, he turned away from God by rebuilding altars of other gods, bowing down to and worshiping them, building altars inside the LORD'S temple, and letting the people of Judah go astray.

With this, God tried to talk to them but they retaliated and ignored Him. Because of this, He brought the army of another kingdom which took King Manasseh captive, and as he endured many hardships in that prison, King Manasseh sought out the lord and prayed. God was so moved by the act and forgave Manasseh and in doing so He brought Manasseh back to his kingdom where Manasseh turned a new leaf now believing the Lord is God.

Noel signifies the one who is born or to be born, but in my own words, it represents starting anew after sharing my burdens with Him.

Noel

To be reborn,
standing there before the altar,
laying down our sins
as the gentle waves of forgiveness
put them to rest.
We start anew and feel refreshed,
reborn, though aging,
but over and over,
we return to the altar,
laying down new burdens
as those same warm, gentle waves of forgiveness
put them to rest once again.

Peace: December 14

Noel means “the one who was born,” and reminds us of the gift of Jesus who through the Holy Spirit gifts us with a peace that passes understanding.

One way to bring peace to the season of Advent is to slow down - be present, be peaceful, just be.

As a family, try to find a few moments together to:

*Color these ornaments, or a few real ones, to represent what peace looks like to you.

*Sit together and admire your Christmas decorations. Talk about which decorations are your favorite or the stories behind them.

*Take an ornament and place it on your stomach - watch the ornament rise and fall as you take deep breaths together. Bonus points for the family member who keeps in on the longest, even after all the inevitable laughter!



Week 3: Noel

December 15-21

Come and see what the joy of God has done.

This week, we celebrate the joy that comes with the birth of Jesus.

The words, "Come and see what God has done," invite us to witness the incredible gift of joy given to us through Christ. The angels proclaimed great joy at the birth of Jesus, and we too, are invited to experience this joy in our hearts today.

We are reminded that this unspeakable joy, cannot be explained but only experienced. The joy of Advent is not merely a fleeting happiness, but a deep, abiding joy that comes from knowing we are loved and redeemed by God. We all get to live into this joy through the birth of Jesus. We celebrate this Advent season with hope, peace and joy in anticipation for what is to come.

Weekly Scripture:

Isaiah 12:2-6
Luke 1:39-45



Weekly Reflection Questions:

- What does "joy" mean to you?
- When do you need joy?
- Where has Jesus produced joy in your life this Advent season?
- How can you bring joy to someone else this week?

Prayer:

God of Hope, We thank You for the hope that comes from knowing You are with us. We hold on to this hope with gratitude each and every day. May we take this hope and share it with the world around us. Help us to be people of hope, looking to you and living out the hope you bring into the world. May your light shine brightly in our hearts this Advent season, filling us with anticipation and joy. Amen.

Share your own prayers for the week as you light the Joy candle for the third week of Advent

Joy: December 16

Pastor Bruce Hearn

You have shown me the path to life, and you make me glad by being near to me. Sitting at your right side, I will always be joyful.

Psalm 16:1

My family has a saying: “We’re on an adventure.” Often it was said at the beginning of road trips when I was a kid. It has become a family mantra of sorts when we are faced all those moments life brings. The ups and the downs. The understanding behind it was we are facing these moments together, as family, and as a family of faith: God is a part of the ride. I don’t know if Mary and Joseph ever thought, directly, that they were “on an adventure,” but oh what an adventure it was. I think of the moment of trust they must have had in each other and in God.

And God’s trust in us.

Our faith is one of mutual trust. We trust God is who God says God is. God trusts us to be the Children-of-God, for us the Body of Christ, in the ever-creating evolution of the world. When I see what God has done, I see trust. That trust, that care, is a gift of hope, peace, mercy and grace. And because God is not finished creating--The Creator has given to us the responsibility of helping create. Our skill set: God’s Love, Mercy and Grace and the more we give the more God supplies.

Hey, we’re on an adventure!

Prayer: Lord, we’re on an adventure and we are trusting in your light to show the way. Amen.

Joy: December 17

Luke George

One of my favorite things that happened in the Bible was when Jesus was born because it was the start of a great thing!

Jesus was born to his mother and father who had nothing, and even had to give birth in a stable with animals surrounding them. Jesus is a miracle because he came to Earth in a humble way, and lived a life of humility, but he was rich in his spirit and ultimately, gave the world everything. I am joyful as I think about Jesus time on Earth and Jesus’ crucifixion and resurrection because it is something to be thankful for - He gave us a second chance at life and saved us from our sins.

Jesus’ birth and death were both miraculous events that changed the world forever and gave me, my family and so many others a life to be thankful for each morning we wake up!

As a family, share something each day that you are thankful for as you wake up and get ready for the day!

Joy: December 18

Annaleigh Nelms

I remember when I was three, sitting in the kitchen with my grandma, decorating a birthday cake for my soon-to-be little brother, Elijah. Both my parents were at the hospital and Grandma was staying with me at my house. I remember how excited I was to have a baby brother. I told everyone at church, school, and all my friends,

“I am going to have a baby brother! His name is going to be Elijah, but I am gonna call him Eli.” (I never did actually call him Eli).

This reminds me of when the angel Gabriel told the shepherds, “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.”

Luke 2:11-12 (NIV)

When the shepherds heard this, they were super excited just like me, and if they were feeling the same enthusiasm as I did, they would have told everyone.

“There is a new child born! He is the Messiah, but we are gonna call him Jesus.”

When I heard about Elijah, I told my friends at church and my teachers. When the shepherds received the news about Jesus, I can imagine they told the townspeople they saw on their way to the stable.

So who are you going to share the good news with this Christmas?

Joy: December 19

Blake Yarbrough

What do you think of when someone mentions christmas?

For most kids it is stockings, sweet treats, and presents. When you are a kid and you hear the words, “What do you want for Christmas?” Things like a new dollhouse, hot wheels, slime, or a new football come to mind. Before I fully knew the meaning of Christmas I thought that Santa Clause was all that mattered. I didn’t really know it was supposed to be about our savior. Growing up at Wesley Prep, I knew what the story was but I didn’t know why it mattered. When I started to understand, everything started to piece together why people were extra nice and happy.

I remember the first time I started to really understand. I was in fourth grade, it was one week before Christmas break. And, I could hardly contain myself. I mean I was too busy thinking about that new barbie doll I wanted. The halls of Wesley Prep were the most crowded I had ever seen. Of course Lessons and Carols was that Thursday so I get why. But, the even better part was that I was going to New York City that Saturday. I was ready to live out my “Home Alone 2” fantasies. New York was so amazing! We had so much fun going to F.A.O. Schwartz, seeing the Rockefeller Christmas tree, and all of the amazing decorations. When I got back home it hit me. I had only cared about what I got and no one else. And, then I remembered the story I had heard so many times.

The realization hit. None of this was about presents, Christmas trees, stockings, and candy canes. It was all about Jesus. From personal experience I can say that we get caught up with all of the Christmas festivities and forget about why we celebrate. With the holiday season coming up I am trying to keep Jesus in my heart and why we celebrate.

Joy: December 20

Quinn Jones

“Let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to our Father who is in heaven.”

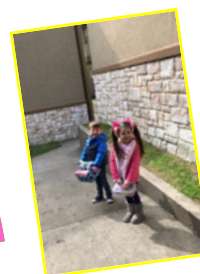
Matthew 5:16 (NRSV)

Jesus let his light shine by helping deaf people hear and blind people see. He also fed those who did not have food and helped sick people feel better. He was kind to the poor and even to those who did NOT let their light shine.

I let my light shine by making people smile and laugh by being silly or making funny jokes. In carpool, I always smile and say ‘Good Morning’ and ‘Have a great day.’ I always let others have a turn and if someone forgot their snack or a school supply, I always share. If I see someone I know, I wave and say hi to them.

Some other ways that I let my light shine are by volunteering in programs that help people. At Christmas, I passed out cookies to the homeless and gave them warm coats for the winter. I have also passed out produce to people who need it and brought canned goods to the food bank. I have brought meals to older people with Meals on Wheels and packed snacks for children in foster care. I have also helped set up apartments for refugee families. Things I’ve done with my school to let my light shine are spend time with the elderly at Casa Feliz, cleaned up the school playground with the Dad’s Club, brought in supplies, like deodorant, hand warmers and scarves, and made blessing bags, and we brought in supplies for the people who survived Hurricane Helene.

Letting your light shine means to spread your love, kindness and JOY (as Mr. Bruce says) to others and to follow in Jesus’ footsteps. This scripture is important to me because it feels good to spread love, kindness, and JOY with other people. Showing love to people will make them want to pass it on or tell other people about God’s hope, peace, joy, and love!



Joy: December 21

Noel means “the one who was born.”

During this Advent season, we anxiously await the birth of Jesus, and we are filled with joy at the good news of the birth of Jesus, just like any family member is filled with joy at the birth announcement of a newborn child, grandchild, niece or nephew!

There is joy in many aspects of this season - songs, decorations, presents and spending time with loved ones.

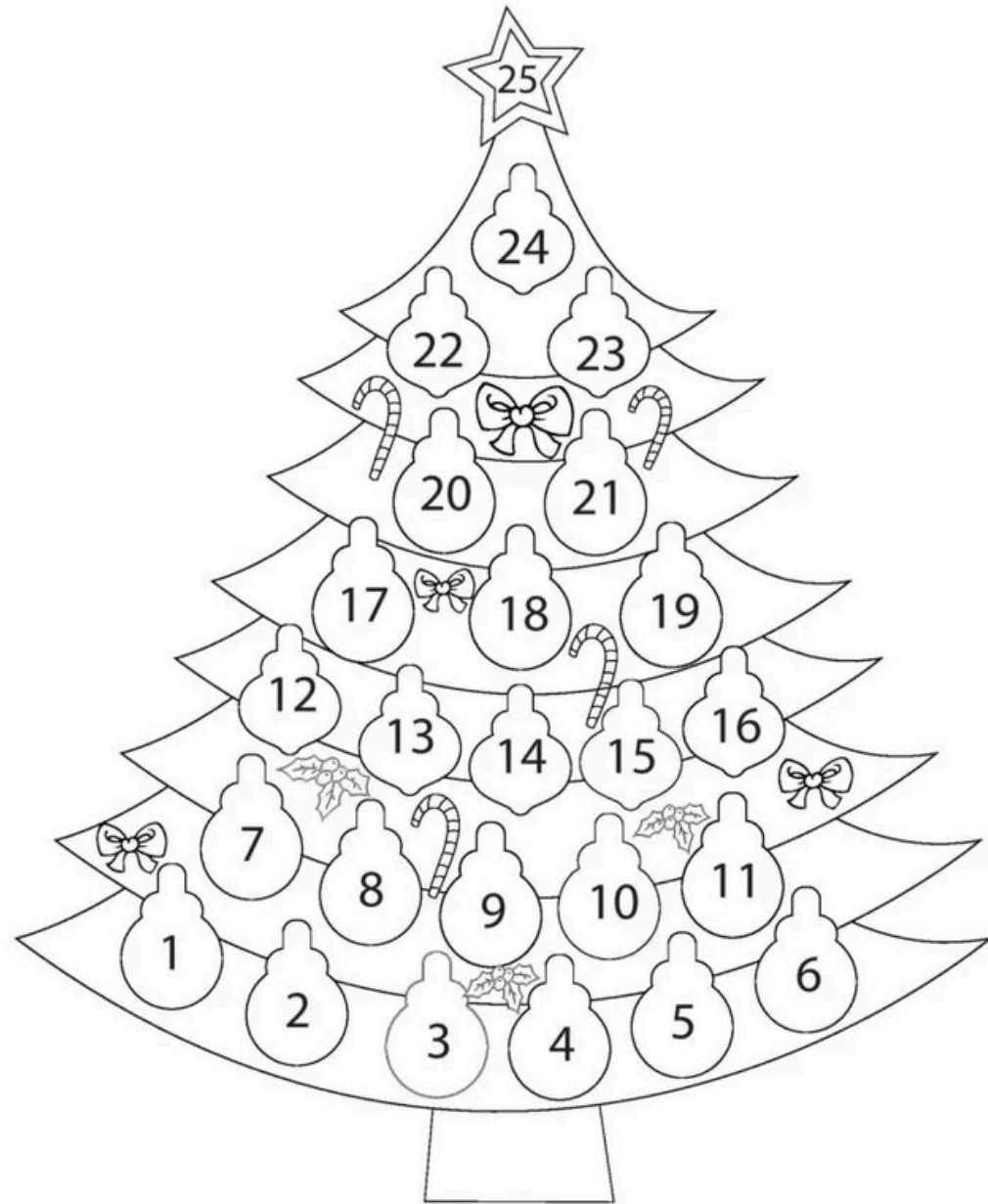


As a family, try to find a few moments together to find JOY!

*Choose a child from the Angel Tree, shop for gifts, and wrap them together.

*Put together a christmas song bracket - listen to songs throughout your day, pick the superior song and eliminate songs until you select the Ultimate Christmas Song!!

*Dress in your Christmas pajamas, make some hot chocolate, and go for a drive to see Christmas lights!



Week 4: Noel

December 22-25

Come and see what the love of God has done.

This week, as we light the candle of love, the fourth candle of Advent, we reflect on the love that God has poured out upon us through the gift of Jesus. The words, "Come and see what God has done", remind us of the greatest act of love ever shown—the coming of Jesus into our world.

God's love is a love that is sacrificial, unconditional, and perfect. God's love is a love that was freely given to us all. In the birth of Jesus, we see God's love made tangible. It's a love that entered our broken world to bring us redemption and eternal life through Jesus' ultimate death and resurrection. As we wait for the celebration of his birth, we remember that love is the heart of the Advent story. It is through this unconditional love that God invites us to come and see and to experience his presence and grace in our lives.

Weekly Scripture:

Jeremiah 51:10
Luke 8:39
Luke 2:1-7



Weekly Reflection Questions:

- What does "love" mean to you?
- When do you need love?
- When is it hard to love others or yourself?
- How can you be loving this week?
- How do you see love in the story of the birth of Jesus?

Prayer:

God of Love,
We thank you for the love you have shown through the gift of your Son, Jesus. You loved us first and your love will carry us through and will sustain us. Your love is with us always, a love that calls us to love others as you have loved us. Through this Advent season may we all feel into your Hope, Peace, Joy and Love and share this with those around us. Amen.

Share your own prayers for the week as you light the Love candle for the fourth week of Advent

Love: December 23

Jackson Morris



This is the story of David and Goliath. I like this story because David had to use his wits to overcome a big challenge.

I have to use brain over brawn a lot because I don't have a lot of brawn.

“Have no regard for his appearance or stature... God doesn't look at things like humans do. Humans see only what is visible to the eyes, but the Lord sees into the heart.”

1Samuel 16:7

When I read this devotion, I think of 1 Samuel 16:7: 7 But the Lord said to Samuel, “Have no regard for his appearance or stature...God doesn't look at things like humans do. Humans see only what is visible to the eyes, but the Lord sees into the heart.”

I wonder what God saw in the hearts of Mary and Joseph, plain and ordinary people. The Creator trusted them with the Greatest Gift when that gift—Jesus—was his smallest, in need of all things a new-born needs. I like to think he saw love, in its purest form, full of wonder and trust. When I look, this is what I have seen the Creator do, trust us with his Love. And we are called to give that love away.

Prayer: God, search me, help me, direct my heart to reflect your love. Amen.

Love: December 24

Grace Weato

God has done some pretty amazing things, but in his Top Three List of Amazing Things, beside me, is his love and Jesus. We all know that Jesus is the greatest gift of all and God sent him for us, Jesus is Noel. Noel means the one who was born.

*The first Noel the angel did say
Was to certain poor shepherds in fields as they lay
In fields where they lay keeping their sheep
On a cold winter's night that was so deep*

This Advent season theme is “Come and See what God has Done.” This is exactly what happened with the shepherds, they went to see what God had done, and what they found was the best gift of all Jesus, the one born to change everything.

*They looked up and saw a star
Shining in the East beyond them far
And to the earth it gave great light
And so it continued both day and night*

After Jesus was born, there was a big old star in the sky. This star led the shepherds and wise men to Jesus. Jesus is the big great light to the world that is constantly shining day and night. In a way, the star was a symbol foreshadowing the light and guiding Christ.

One of my favorite things about Jesus is that he stands up to people, either straight to their faces or, if he is feeling sassy, through parables. Parables are example stories with lessons you can take and use in the real world. Not only is he taking a stand, but he is doing it in a kind way that teaches and not discourages.

When I hear Noel, I think of Christmas. The Christmas season, or Advent, is a time for us to love others, just as God loved us by giving us the greatest gift of all Jesus.

Love: December 25

Merry Christmas!!

Today we celebrate Noel, “the one who was born!” Jesus is the physical embodiment of love on Earth, a love that transformed the world, and a love that represents Emmanuel - “God with Us!”

Today and always remember that God loves you, and that is a gift you cannot return or exchange - a gift that should be celebrated!

As a family, take time to list your favorite things you love about each member of your family - uplift how they show love or a characteristic that reminds you of God through them.

