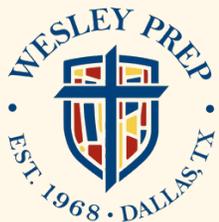


SONGS OF CHRISTMAS

Daily Advent Devotional



Lovers Lane
FAMILY MINISTRY

Heffo, Lovers Lane and Wesley Prep families!

We're so happy to share this Advent devotional with you! Advent is such an exciting time—the four weeks leading up to Christmas when we get our hearts ready to celebrate the birth of Jesus. This special booklet was created with love by Lovers Lane Worship Teams, Lovers Lane Family Ministry, and the 6th grade class at Wesley Prep, and it's full of reflections, prayers, and thoughts to help you and your family prepare for Christmas.

The theme of this devotional is "Songs of Christmas." The songs throughout this book are ones found in scripture that accompany the anticipation of the birth of Jesus and the carols that accompany this season for us, today. These songs are powerful, beautiful and such a special reminder of the hope, joy, peace and love found in the Christmas Season.

As you interact with these daily reflections, prompts, activities and questions, take time to reflect on the wonder of Christmas and how special it is to welcome Jesus into your hearts and home. Each piece in this devotional was written to share a unique perspective on this holy season. It's a beautiful reminder that Jesus came for all of us, no matter how big or small.

May this devotional bring light and love into your Advent season and JOY and hope into your heart as Christmas draws near.

From our church and school family to your own, Merry Christmas!

Lovers Lane Family Ministry Team



Anticipating Activities

Throughout this season, we know there are many activities that fill the calendar, and our hope is that you select 4-5 activities from this list to celebrate this season with your faith family. We cannot wait to see you there!

Sunday Worship & Lovers Lane Living Room

Nov. 30, Dec. 7, Dec. 14 & Dec. 21
Lovers Lane Campus & Watson Hall

Joyful Noise Christmas Worship Experience

Dec. 7 | 11 AM | Asbury Hall

KIDSing Worship Performance

Dec. 7 | 11 AM Worship

Christmas Craft Sunday

Dec. 14 | 9:30 AM - 1 PM | Watson Hall

Candlelight Carols

Dec. 14 | 6 PM | Main Sanctuary

Preschool Christmas Chapel & Celebration

Dec. 17 & 18 | 9:15 AM | Shipp Chapel

Lessons & Carols

Dec. 18 | 6:30 PM | Main Sanctuary

Everybody's Christmas

Dec. 19 | 5 PM | Lovers Lane Campus

Christmas Eve Services

Dec. 24 | 10 AM, 5 PM, 6 PM & 7 PM | Lovers Lane Campus

Daily Advent Devotional

Nov. 30 - Dec. 25

For more information on these events visit llumc.org and the Wesley Prep Panther Page!

ADVENT WEEK 1

HOPE

NOVEMBER 30 - DECEMBER 6

Hope That Sings

Thrive Worship Team

We're always struck by how music carries hope long before we can hold it. A melody can rise up from places where words alone fall short. And in the very first moments of Christmas, that's exactly what happens.

Before shepherds heard angels...
Before wise men followed stars...
Before Jesus even took his first breath...

Mary sang.

Her song, The Magnificat, isn't quiet. It isn't tame. It's a bold anthem bursting out of a young woman whose world has just tilted on its axis. And yet, out of her uncertainty comes a melody of **deep, defiant hope**: "My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior..." (Luke 1:46-47)

Mary teaches us something vital at the start of Advent: **Hope doesn't wait for everything to make sense. Hope starts singing in the dark.**

In her lyrics, Mary names the character of God. The God who notices the lowly, lifts up the humble, fills the hungry, and overturns the world's assumptions about who matters. Alistair Begg, in his book *Christmas Playlist*, says Mary's song shows us a God who is mindful of us and mighty to save us.

That's the heart of hope:
A God who sees us.
A God who acts on our behalf.
A God who comes close.

As we begin this Advent season, maybe you need that reminder. Maybe the year has felt heavy. Maybe hope feels like a stretch. If so, listen again to Mary's song. Let it echo in you the way a chorus sticks long after worship ends.

Hope is not wishful thinking. Hope is confidence in the God who keeps showing up.

And this week, as we worship, may the same God who gave Mary a song plant one in you too, a song that reminds you that light is already on its way.

Mary's Song: Luke 1:46-55 (NRSV)

And Mary said,
"My soul magnifies the Lord,
and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior,
for he has looked with favor on the lowly state of his servant.
Surely from now on all generations will call me blessed,
for the Mighty One has done great things for me,
and holy is his name;
indeed, his mercy is for those who fear him
from generation to generation.
He has shown strength with his arm;
he has scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts.
He has brought down the powerful from their thrones
and lifted up the lowly;
he has filled the hungry with good things
and sent the rich away empty.
He has come to the aid of his child Israel,
in remembrance of his mercy,
according to the promise he made to our ancestors,
to Abraham and to his descendants forever."

Weekly Wonder Questions

- What is something big and wonderful about God that you noticed today?
- Where do you need God to help you look up and feel hope again?
- How can you give someone hope this week?
- How can someone give you hope?

Prayer:

God of promise and possibility, kindle in us the hope of Mary's song. When the world feels upside down, remind us that You are turning it right-side up. Let Your light break into our waiting hearts, that we might sing with courage and live as people of hope. Through Jesus Christ, the Light of the world. Amen.



Grace M. - 6th Grade

What is hope? Can hope be defined? Can a definition be pinned to it?
Can a universal meaning be found?

I think not.

Hope is a candle. It is a flame, burning bright in the darkness. People will try to blow it out, and they might succeed. But we all have a match, all you have to do is have the courage to light it. Hope will light you, and it's flame will burn with the splendor of the brightest fire.

In the vastness of the universe, you may feel like just a spark, and that is true.

But it only takes one spark to start a fire.

And that spark can be anyone.

Even you.

You can change the world.

All you have to do is light the candle.

And start the fire.

Brooks D. - 6th Grade

In the beginning, God created the Heavens and the Earth. The earth was without form and void, and darkness was over the face of the deep.

Genesis 1:1 (NIV)

You can tell by this passage that God had hope when he created the Heavens and the Earth.

God had hope that God could make the Earth into a beautiful space, and created for 6 days as God filled the Earth with the things that gave him hope, things that could have hope, and things that are symbols of hope.

Wonder Question:

What is one way you can show or create hope?



A Song of Hope:

My favorite Christmas song is "Jingle Bells."

I love this song because when I was sick on Christmas, Preston's family sang to us, and it made me feel better!

Luke 9. - 6th Grade

In Matthew 14:22-32 a big storm happens while the disciples were on a boat, and as they are sleeping, Jesus walks on water to them. When the disciples woke up, they saw Jesus standing on water, and they were terrified. They thought he was a ghost, but Jesus said, “take courage, it is I. Do not be afraid.”

So Peter said, “Lord, if it is you, tell me to come on the water.”

Jesus replied, “Come.”

Then Peter got up and took a step, but Peter felt the waves and the wind and was scared, so he sank.

Jesus put his hand out and said, “You of little faith. Why did you doubt?”

Then they climbed into the boat, and the wind died down.

This scripture reminds us to always have hope even when we feel scared and have doubts, and we can always believe that Jesus is always there to help us.

Prayer:

Dear Heavenly Father,
Would you please help us have more hope and belief that you, Jesus, and your love are always there. Please help us share the reminder, and encourage us to be more hopeful this Advent Season. Amen.

William N. - 6th Grade

For surely I know the plans I have for you, says the Lord, plans for your welfare and not for harm, to give you a future with hope. Then when you call upon me and come and pray to me, I will hear you. When you search for me, you will find me; if you seek me with all your heart, I will let you find me, says the Lord, and I will restore your fortunes and gather you from all the nations and all the places where I have driven you, says the Lord, and I will bring you back to the place from which I sent you into exile.

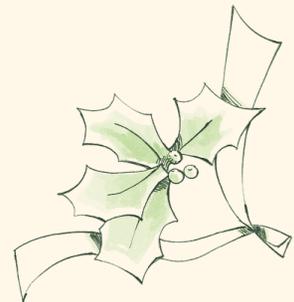
Jeremiah 29:11-14 (NRSV)

We can see through the story in this scripture that the Israelites saw hope when Jeremiah told them to plan for the best and have hope that God will save them even as they were in exile.

This passage reminds me that God told us to plan for riches and not for evil, to give yourself a future and a hope. God also added that we will find him when we seek for him.

Prayer:

Our Lord, please bestow us with the knowledge that you gave Jesus to help us plan for welfare and have hope that you will help us. Even when you were crucified, you had hope for us. Now help us to hope and be our best selves. Amen.



Anticipating Activities

Advent is a season of waiting, but in the waiting God does truly remarkable things. As we wait, we can continue to live into our faith and choose actions that give us hope.

Decorate For the Holidays

If you haven't already, spend some time decorating your home for Christmas. Spend some time talking about the ornaments that are sentimental or making some new decorating decisions together!

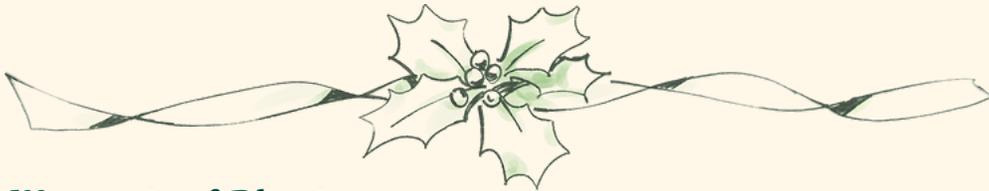
When you are done, take a moment to enjoy your hard work and reflect on what gives you hope right now.

"A family activity that signals the holiday season is decorating together at our house and then decorating Grandma and Grandpa's house."

Jeff, DeDe & Owen Jones

"We have ornaments from all of our trips and vacations, and get to reminisce as we put them on the tree."

Eddie, Audra, Sydney & AC Rester



Mountain of Blessings

Use pillows, couch cushions, or blankets to build a pretend mountain.

Every time you add a piece, someone says one blessing God has given them. When the mountain is built, stand on top and sing "Go Tell It On the Mountain" together. Then watch a Christmas movie.

"For our family, it is not Christmas time until the Hallmark movies are on 24/7!"

Jimmy, Jill, Zach, Dalia, Haven, Chris & Levi Emery

Go Tell It On The Mountains

Traditional American Folk Song

Unison

Go, tell it on the moun-tains, O-ver the hills and ev-ery-where;

Go, tell it on the moun-tains That Je-sus Christ is born!

Five

Harmony

1 While shep-herds kept their watch-ing O'er si-lent flocks by night, Be-
 2 The shep-herds feared and trem-bled When lo! A-bove the earth Rang
 3 Down in a low-ly man-ger The hum-ble Christ was born, And

1 hold through-out the heav-ens There shone a ho-ly light.
 2 out the an-gel cho-rus That hal-led our Sav-ior's birth.
 3 brought us God's sal-va-tion That bless-ed Christ-mas morn.

D.C.



Today, spend some time listening to "Go Tell It On The Mountain," or read the lyrics. Reflect on the hope within the song, and how you can outwardly show hope to those in your life.

ADVENT WEEK 2

PEACE

DECEMBER 7 - DECEMBER 13

Peace for All African Fellowship Worship Team

During Advent, Christ calls all God's people across every culture, nation, and community to rebuild what is broken. We are invited to restore relationships between families, neighbors, and peoples, so that peace may find a home among us.

The peace Christ offers is not the silence of fear, avoidance, or oppression. It is the presence of fairness, dignity, healing, and opportunity for every child of God. Christ comes as a Healer to a world wounded by conflict, injustice, poverty, displacement, and division, and brings restoration where pain has lingered too long.

Many cultures remind us that we belong to one another.

In Africa, the spirit of Ubuntu says, "I am because we are." In other places, traditions teach that community, compassion, and shared life make peace possible. Advent reminds us that peace grows wherever people choose connection over separation, forgiveness over resentment, and love over fear.

Advent peace is not passive. It is courageous hope that something new is possible because God is with us. Christ comes to guide us toward a peace that embraces all nations and honors the sacred worth of every person.

Prayer:

God of peace, shine Your light on every nation and every people. Where there is conflict, bring understanding. Where there is fear, bring courage. Where there is injustice, bring righteousness. Come, Prince of Peace. Lord Jesus, let Your Advent peace begin in our homes and communities, healing broken relationships, calming anxious hearts, and teaching us to forgive.

Holy Spirit, unite Your Church throughout the world. Make us instruments of peace: speaking truth, offering compassion, seeking justice, and building bridges of reconciliation. O Emmanuel, God with us, calm the storms within us. Replace worry with trust, anger with love, and division with unity. Make Your peace shine through us, that the world may know Your hope. Amen.

Zechariah's Song: Luke 1:68-79 (NRSV)

Blessed be the Lord God of Israel,

for he has looked favorably on his people and redeemed them.

He has raised up a mighty savior for us

in the house of his child David,

as he spoke through the mouth of his holy prophets from of old,

that we would be saved from our enemies and from the hand of all who hate us.

Thus he has shown the mercy promised to our ancestors

and has remembered his holy covenant,

the oath that he swore to our ancestor Abraham, to grant us that we,

being rescued from the hands of our enemies,

might serve him without fear, in holiness and righteousness in his presence all our days.

And you, child, will be called the prophet of the Most High,

for you will go before the Lord to prepare his ways,

to give his people knowledge of salvation

by the forgiveness of their sins.

Because of the tender mercy of our God,

the dawn from on high will break upon us,

to shine upon those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death,

to guide our feet into the way of peace."

Weekly Wonder Questions

- What is peaceful to you?
- Where do you feel the most peaceful?
- When did you feel God's peace this week?
- How can you be a peacemaker?



Jackson - 6th Grade

Surely God is my salvation; I will trust and not be afraid. The Lord, the Lord himself, is my strength and my defense; he has become my salvation.

Isaiah 12:2 (NIV)

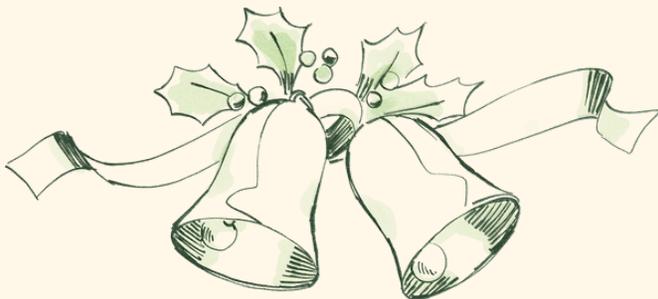
This passage reminds me of the glory and strength our great Lord holds, and how he is still gentle with his strength and with us.

Prayer:

Heavenly Father, I pray that you defend me against the hardships soon to come and you give me strength for challenges.

I pray you do the same for everyone no matter how small or big. I pray for your peace.

In your name I pray, Amen.



Rylan - 6th Grade

*Blessed be the Lord, the God of Israel;
he came and set his people free.
He set the power of salvation in the center of our lives,
and in the very house of David his servant,
Just as he promised long ago
through the preaching of his holy prophets:
Deliverance from our enemies
and every hateful hand;
Mercy to our fathers,
as he remembers to do what he said he'd do,
What he swore to our father Abraham—
a clean rescue from the enemy camp,
So we can worship him without a care in the world,
made holy before him as long as we live.*

Luke 1:67-75 (MSG)

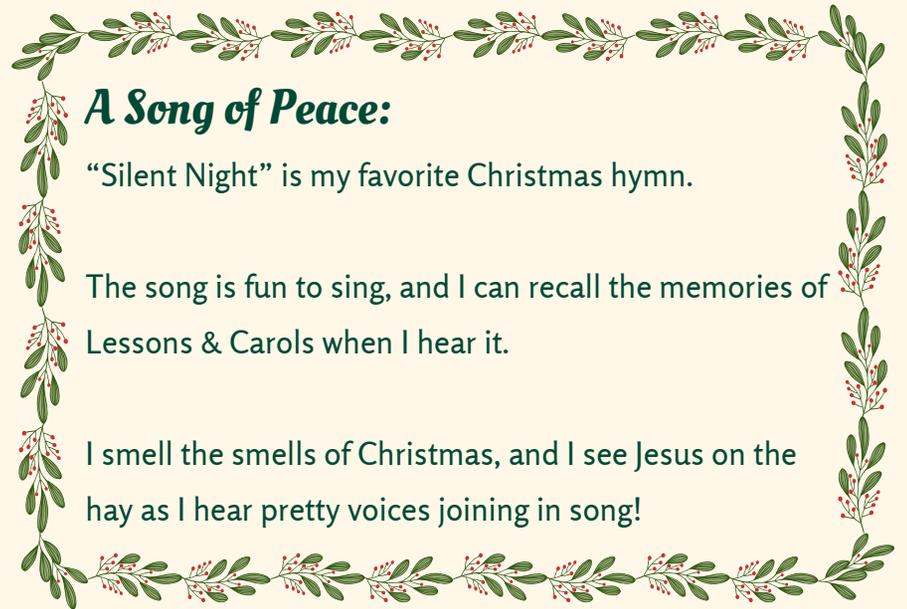
Jesus is a promise answered to the world and hope for us all. This scripture helps us remember that God can bring peace in any circumstance because of God's promise long ago.

A Song of Peace:

"Silent Night" is my favorite Christmas hymn.

The song is fun to sing, and I can recall the memories of Lessons & Carols when I hear it.

I smell the smells of Christmas, and I see Jesus on the hay as I hear pretty voices joining in song!



Cole T. - 6th Grade

When I hear the song “Silent Night” there are many memories connected to that song that bring me peace.

- Sounds of my classmates singing with me at Lessons & Carols last year.
- Preston & Audrey singing their solos.
- The stained glass of the sanctuary.
- The Christmas tree with lights.
- Ms. Herring’s room decorations with our Charles Dickens hotels displayed.
- The Christmas Carolers coming to school to sing for us.
- Decorating my Christmas tree and listening to carols in my room.
- My mom wrapping presents and ornaments clinking.
- My family preparing Christmas together.

Wonder Questions:

What is a song that brings you peace?

What memories are connected to that song?

Sadie P. - 6th Grade

I hereby command you: Be strong and courageous; do not be frightened or dismayed, for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go.”

Joshua 1:9 (NRSV)

This verse is a reminder to be strong and courageous even in difficult times.

God wants us to experience a peace that passes understanding because God is always with us.

Prayer:

Dear God,

Thank you for the gift of this new day.

Guide my every thought, word, and action.

God, thank you for my strength.

Amen.



Anticipating Activities

Advent is a season of waiting, but in the waiting God does truly remarkable things. As we wait, we can continue to live into our faith and choose actions that give us peace.

Silent Night Service Project

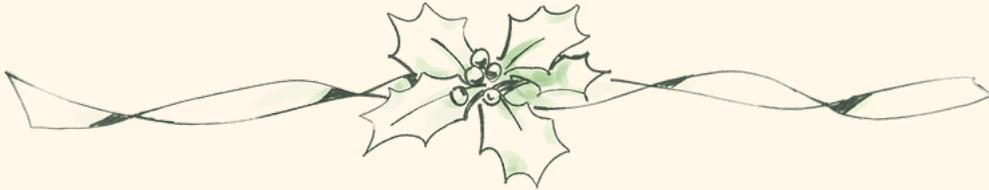
Pick something to quietly bless someone else: cookies for a neighbor, cards for nursing home residents, or a small gift for someone in need.

Deliver it secretly or quietly.

As you are serving, say:
 “Jesus came quietly, but with great love. We can bless quietly too.”

“A yearly practice for our family is going to church to participate in the season, and we enjoy eating together.”

Ngoni, Batsie, Mischel, Melody, Kingstone & Kudakwashe Mukarakate



Calm & Cozy Night

Turn on the fireplace (even if it is the fireplace video on Netflix).

Make some hot cocoa and read some of your favorite stories of the Christmas season.

Enjoy the time together and the moments of peace that can happen in this busy season.

“Some of our favorite stories to read during the Christmas season are The Night Before Christmas, Elf, and Samurai Santa!”

Elliott, Joy, Felix & Max Gonzalez

Silent Night

SLOWLY, WITH EXPRESSION

Si - lent night, ho - ly night, All is calm, all is bright;
 Si - lent night, ho - ly night, Dark-ness flees, all is light;
 Si - lent night, ho - ly night, Won-drous Star, lend thy light;

Round yon Vir - gin Moth - er and Child! Ho - ly In - fant, so ten - der and mild,
 Shep - herds hear the an - gels sing, 'Al - le - lu - ia! hail the King!
 With the an - gels let us sing, Al - le - lu - ia to our King;

Sleep in heav - en - ly peace, Sleep in heav - en - ly peace.
 Christ the Sav - ior is born, Christ the Sav - ior is born."
 Christ the Sav - ior is born, Christ the Sav - ior is born.

ADVENT WEEK 3

JOY

DECEMBER 14 - DECEMBER 20

The Sound of Real Joy *Crosswalk Worship Team*

Joy isn't one-note.

It's never been the painted-on happiness we feel pressured to wear this time of year. Real joy feels more like music — the way a bright major chord hits harder because of the minor one that came before it.

Advent lives in that tension.

Between the major lift of "Joy to the World" and the minor ache of "O Come, O Come Emmanuel."

Between longing and fulfillment, silence and singing.

And that's the world Jesus stepped into — the same one we're living in right now.

Which is why the angel's words still speak directly into our bones:

"Do not be afraid. I bring you good news of great joy for all people."

(Luke 2:10)

Joy wasn't announced into perfection.

It was spoken into the night, fear, waiting, uncertainty.

Joy was God saying, "I'm here. Even now."

That tension — the ache and the arrival — is what we tried to carry into the new song our team crafted this year, "Hope (One Holy Night)."

It sits in that quiet space where so much of Advent actually lives.

Where "*Light in the silence*" and "*Joy in the flame*" feel less like poetry and more like survival.

Where hope doesn't drown out the darkness but stands inside it and starts to glow.

Advent reminds us that real joy doesn't demand we skip the ache.

It shows up with us, right in the middle of it.

And sometimes it sounds like a major chord rising out of a minor moment — unexpected, grounding, and exactly what the heart needed.

The Angel's Song: Luke 2:13-14 (NRSV)

And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying,

*"Glory to God in the highest heaven,
and on earth peace among those whom he favors!"*

Weekly Wonder Questions

-I feel joy when _____.

-If you were an angel, what would your song sound like?

-How can we spread joy?

-What brings God joy?

Prayer:

God, thank You for joy that doesn't depend on everything being perfect. Thank You for meeting us in the bright moments and in the aching ones. Teach us to see Your presence in both the major and the minor of our lives.

Let joy rise in us this week—honest, grounded, unforced.

And let that joy spill over into hope for everyone around us.

Amen.



Vera B. - 6th Grade

May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.

Romans 15:13 (NIV)

I love this verse because it reminds me to have hope the whole way through. Romans 15:13 is a blessing from the apostle Paul and is used as a finishing prayer for believers of God for overflowing hope. God has promised an amazing future for his believers, and this prayer is based on the hope we have for that future.

Even though I picked this verse based on hope it also has joy and peace tucked in there. Believing in God and Jesus Christ fills you with joy and when you go to Heaven it is eternal peace.

I think the song "O Holy Night" best represents this verse. It talks about hope and peace, and brings me so much joy. I love "O Holy Night," and I think it is such a pretty song for this season.

Prayer:

Dear God,
The Bible has taught me all of the amazing things you do everyday. You keep the world rotating and bless many of the people on it. The future you have in store for me, my friends, and my family will be amazing, I know it. Once I enter your Kingdom, I will be more blessed than ever.

Whenever I am in doubt, please guide me back to where I am meant to be with hope, peace, joy and love. My hope and faith for you will never end. Amen.

Ainsley N. - 6th Grade

This is how the birth of Jesus Christ took place. When Mary his mother was engaged to Joseph, before they were married, she became pregnant by the Holy Spirit. Joseph her husband was a righteous man. Because he didn't want to humiliate her, he decided to call off their engagement quietly. As he was thinking about this, an angel from the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, "Joseph son of David, don't be afraid to take Mary as your wife, because the child she carries was conceived by the Holy Spirit. She will give birth to a son, and you will call him Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins." Now all of this took place so that what the Lord had spoken through the prophet would be fulfilled:

*"Look! A virgin will become pregnant and give birth to a son,
And they will call him, Emmanuel." (Emmanuel means "God with us.")*

When Joseph woke up, he did just as an angel from God commanded and took Mary as his wife.

Matthew 1:18-24 (ESV)

This passage reminds us that we should always follow God. Just like not everyone is going to like us, King Herod didn't like Jesus, but there are people who did and still do like Jesus. I believe and love Jesus and I always will, and that brings me joy.

Prayer:

Dear Heavenly Father,
I thank you everyday for what you do. I'm praying for JOOOOYYY, and that everyone around me has JOY.

Help us share your word through our actions and words.

In Jesus name, Amen.

Harper - 6th Grade

A Song of Joy:

My favorite Christmas song is “The First Noel.”

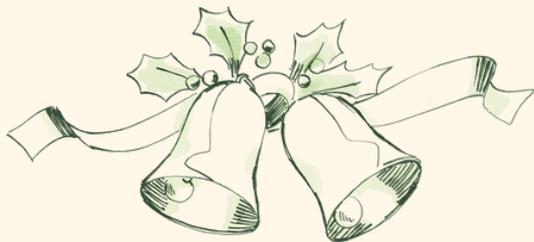
This song is about the birth of Jesus, and is telling the beautiful details of the best gift we have been given.

My favorite line is “they followed the star wherever it went!” and I think we should try to follow JOY like that.

Wonder Questions:

What is a song that brings you joy?

What is your favorite line? Why?



Ava W. - 6th Grade

I pray that God, the source of hope, will fill you completely with joy and peace because you trust in him. Then you will overflow with confident hope through the power of the Holy Spirit.

Romans 15:13 (NLT)

The passage reminds us that good gives us hope and joy. It's not something we create on our own. God gives us the Holy Spirit that gives us the confidence and hope that one day we will join God in Heaven for unending JOY.

Prayer:

Dear God,

We pray that the Holy Spirit will fill us with hope, peace, love and joy in this season of Advent. Help us to share the message of hope to others in our community and let it bring them joy. In Jesus name we pray, Amen.



DECEMBER 19 - JOY

Anticipating Activities

Advent is a season of waiting, but in the waiting God does truly remarkable things. As we wait, we can continue to live into our faith and choose actions that give us joy.

Joy Jar

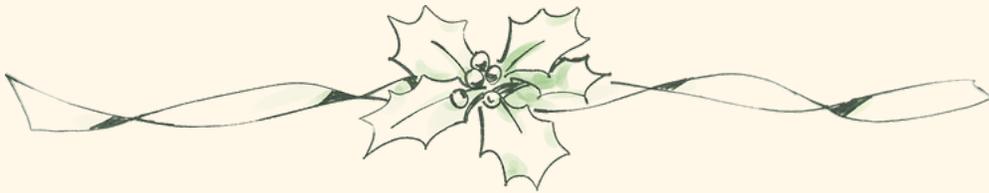
Grab a jar in your house and place it under your Christmas tree.

Throughout the next week, fill it up by writing on paper the things that bring you joy and place the paper in the jar.

On Christmas Day, read the slips of paper together and enjoy the many things that brought you joy this week - God's gift to you.

"The activities that bring us the most joy during this season are driving around to look at Christmas lights while sipping Peppermint Mochas from Starbucks, watching Charlie Brown Christmas, decorating the Christmas Tree, watching Classic Christmas Movies like White Christmas, It's a Wonderful Life, & The Santa Clause"

Leroy & Denise Startz, JP & Sarah Blanton



Christmas Lights Walk

Pick one night to walk around your neighborhood and enjoy all the lights.

As you walk, talk about which display brings you the most joy.

"We start the Christmas season with the San Antonio River Walk Lighting & River Parade, and we have to go look at Christmas lights every Advent season."

Robby, Kay, Emerson, Whitman & Ellie Eck

DECEMBER 20 - JOY

TUNE: ANTIOCH

Joy to the world! The Lord is come; Let earth re-
 Joy to the world! The Sav - ior reigns; Let men their
 He rules the world with truth and grace, And makes the

ceive her King; Let ev - ery heart pre - pare Him
 songs em - ploy; While fields and floods, rocks, hills and
 na - tions prove; The glo - ries of His right - eous -

(Hum)

room, And Heaven and na - ture sing, And Heaven and na - ture
 plains, Re - peat the sound - ing joy, Re - peat the sound - ing
 ness, And won - ders of His love, And won - ders of His

1. And Heaven and na - ture sing, And

sing, And Heaven, and Heaven and na - ture sing.
 joy, Re - peat, re - peat the sound - ing joy.
 love, And won - ders, won - ders of His love.

Heaven and na - ture sing.

"Joy to The World is my favorite carol because I have memories of the whole church signing it very loudly, and it spreads the cheer on Christmas Eve, through the beautiful flowers, flickering flames of the candles, and the many voices singing. I love Christmas time!"

Ava W. - 6th Grade

ADVENT WEEK 4

LOVE

DECEMBER 21 - DECEMBER 25

Something to Remember **Traditional Worship Team**

The fourth Sunday of Advent happens to fall on December 21st this year, coinciding with the winter solstice. Referred to in some traditions as “Yule,” this calendar day marks a celestial juncture in which the sun is at its lowest point in the earth’s sky resulting in the shortest day. And, incidentally, the longest night.

Various cultures and faith traditions have celebrated or commemorated this day differently, including the Christian tradition of a “Longest Night” service, or as you may have alternatively heard it called, a “Blue Christmas” service. Truthfully, I always found that “blue” moniker a bit off-putting with the sense that there is perhaps some stigma attached to it. The feeling is, I presume, that if you’re the sort that is quite content to be perpetually wrapped in the warm glow of the season’s jolliness onslaught, the idea that a Blue Christmas service has come to snuff out all the fun is, understandably, less appealing. But let me say to you - there is most certainly a light to be seen on the winter solstice, the longest night. (And, though Lovers Lane is not observing such a service this year, I would implore you to attend one at your next opportunity).

Would we not grasp the fullness of our joys without acknowledging the sources of our grief? Would we not realize the hope of a new day without learning from what we have lost? Would we not be able to distinguish the glittering eastern Star were it not encased by night’s black veil?

We would do well to remember in our Advent season that feelings are a part of our faith. That what once may have been a source of joy can become a point of sorrow and vice-versa. The longest night seamlessly embeds itself into our yearning anticipation of the coming Christ: a cosmic alignment that would have us look inward for a point of reflection, meditation, prayer; and then to extend outward to one another, to those who experience a range of different feelings in their Advent, and to wait together for the miracle of the birth of a Child.

The Angel’s Song: Luke 2:28-32 (NRSV)

*Simeon took him in his arms and praised God, saying,
“Master, now you are dismissing your servant in peace,
according to your word,
for my eyes have seen your salvation,
which you have prepared in the presence of all peoples,
a light for revelation to the gentiles
and for glory to your people Israel.”*

Weekly Wonder Questions

- When you imagine Jesus’ birth, what did it sound like?
- What are the big and small ways God shows us love?
- What Christmas song do you love?
- Who do you love that you wish could be around your Christmas table? (If they will not be with you this year, FaceTime them!)

Prayer:

God of new life,
You sent the gift of Love for the salvation of us all.

Waiting can be difficult but we do not do it alone. You are Emmanuel, “God with us.” The miracle of Jesus is not just that he was born of Mary, but that he lived among us, died, and was raised back to life to be born again, and again, and again.

Raise us to new life as we await
the promised coming, that we may be
a light of love and peace to the glory of God
in the name of Christ, our Lord. Amen.



DECEMBER 22 - LOVE

Sebastian. - 6th Grade

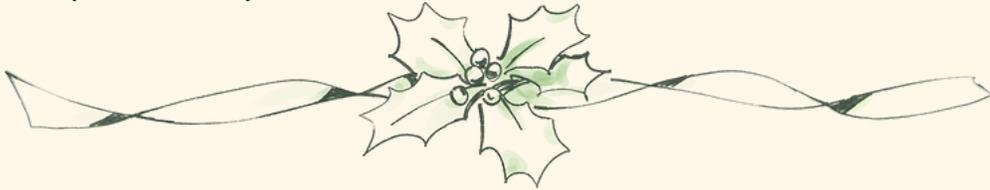
For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.

John 3:16 (NIV)

This scripture reminds me that God loved us so much that he gave his only son to die on the cross for us, so that if we have faith in God we will go to Heaven and live with God forever.

Prayer:

Dear God, thank you for this life that is so amazing because of the world you created for us, and for the technology that saves people's lives. Help the sick heal, and help people give to the poor, help us become better people, and keep our loved ones close. Help us to show your love to those around us. Amen.



Anonymous - 6th Grade

Forgive each other, as God forgives you.

Colossians 3:13 (NIV)

This scripture tells me to love everybody, and forgiveness is one of the greatest ways to show love to everyone. We all make mistakes, it is part of life. Christ forgives you for your sins, so you should forgive others. Love like God.

Prayer:

God, thank you for our gifts and our talents, for our happiness and our fun. We are grateful for your creation of our planet and for our friends and families because we can see your love through all of these things. Help us to forgive and love as you do. In your name we pray, Amen.

DECEMBER 23 - LOVE

Audrey P. - 6th Grade

God has done marvelous things that we can't explain.

"Remember Christ our savior was born on Christmas Day to save us all from Satan's power when we were gone astray."

"God Rest Ye Merry Gentleman"

These song lyrics mean to me that Christ was born to save us from any misfortune, grief, and all the bad things that we go through. We should always remember in times of sadness or shame how God has always been there and always will be here for us.

We should all think that the greatest gift in the world we have gotten is the love of Jesus!

I pray that God is always there in your hard times, and you know that when you hear this carol you really listen to the lyrics and know Jesus was born for us. Amen!

Wonder Questions:

What is a song that reminds you of God's love?

What is a song that you love?

Away in a Manger

SLOWLY, GENTLY

A - way in a man-ger, no crib for His bed, The lit-tle Lord
The cat-tle are low-ing, the poor Ba-by wakes, But lit-tle Lord

Je-sus laid down His sweet head. The stars in the sky look-ing
Je-sus, no cry-ing He makes. I love Thee, Lord Je sus; look

down where He lay, The lit-tle Lord Je-sus a-sleep in the hay.
down from the sky, And stay by my crib, watch-ing my lul-la-by.

To Martin Luther, the great reformer are attributed the words of this gentle, affecting song, while its music is said to have been adapted by him from an older melody.

Come, Thou Long Expected Jesus ***Rev. Eddie Rester***

Merry Christmas! In the middle of presents, meals, and calls with family, I want to offer you a song for today.

Charles Wesley, one of the great hymn writers of the church, gave us many classics—but few capture the heart of Christmas like “Come, Thou Long Expected Jesus.” For me, it’s one of the purest expressions of Christ’s coming for us.

Christmas can feel crowded with lists and schedules, but this simple hymn cuts through the noise with tenderness and truth. It’s only two verses long, but it carries the weight of our faith.

The first verse is a prayer we can still pray today:
***Come, thou long expected Jesus, born to set thy people free;
from our fears and sins release us, let us find our rest in thee.
Israel’s strength and consolation, hope of all the earth thou art;
dear desire of every nation, joy of every longing heart.***

Not only does it announce that Jesus frees us—it reminds us of what he frees us from: our fears. Our anxieties. Our brokenness. That’s what we celebrate today: the God who comes close enough to release us and give us rest.

The second verse turns that prayer into a statement of faith:
***Born thy people to deliver, born a child and yet a King,
born to reign in us forever, now thy gracious kingdom bring.***

Jesus isn’t just a child in a manger; he is our King, bringing the kingdom of God to life in us. His reign begins not in palaces or parades, but in hearts that make room for him.

So whether your day is filled with laughter and noise or peace and quiet, let this song be both your prayer and your confession of faith. Christ has come—and that changes everything.

Merry Christmas!

CONNECT WITH LOVERS LANE

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 (Shipp Chapel)
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

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Preteens
At Lovers Lane UMC

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Lovers Lane
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 Lovers Lane
Students/Parents



CONNECT WITH WESLEY PREP

Wesley Prep is an independent school for students 6 months to 6th grade (expanding to 7th & 8th grade soon), centrally located in Dallas, Texas. Wesley Prep provides an experiential, interactive approach to learning with intentional challenge and rigor all within the context of a nurturing, joyful community.

Our Mission

Inspiring confident and joyful learners guided by character, curiosity, and purpose.

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