

## **Rest in His Peace**

By: Amanda Martinsen

*“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.” Luke 2:13-14*

Can you imagine what it must have been like for people that were there on the night Jesus was born? We know angels were singing and shepherds heard the good news of His birth. And we know that everything changed the night Jesus was born.

It might be hard to imagine that a tiny infant baby can have that much impact on the world, but He did!

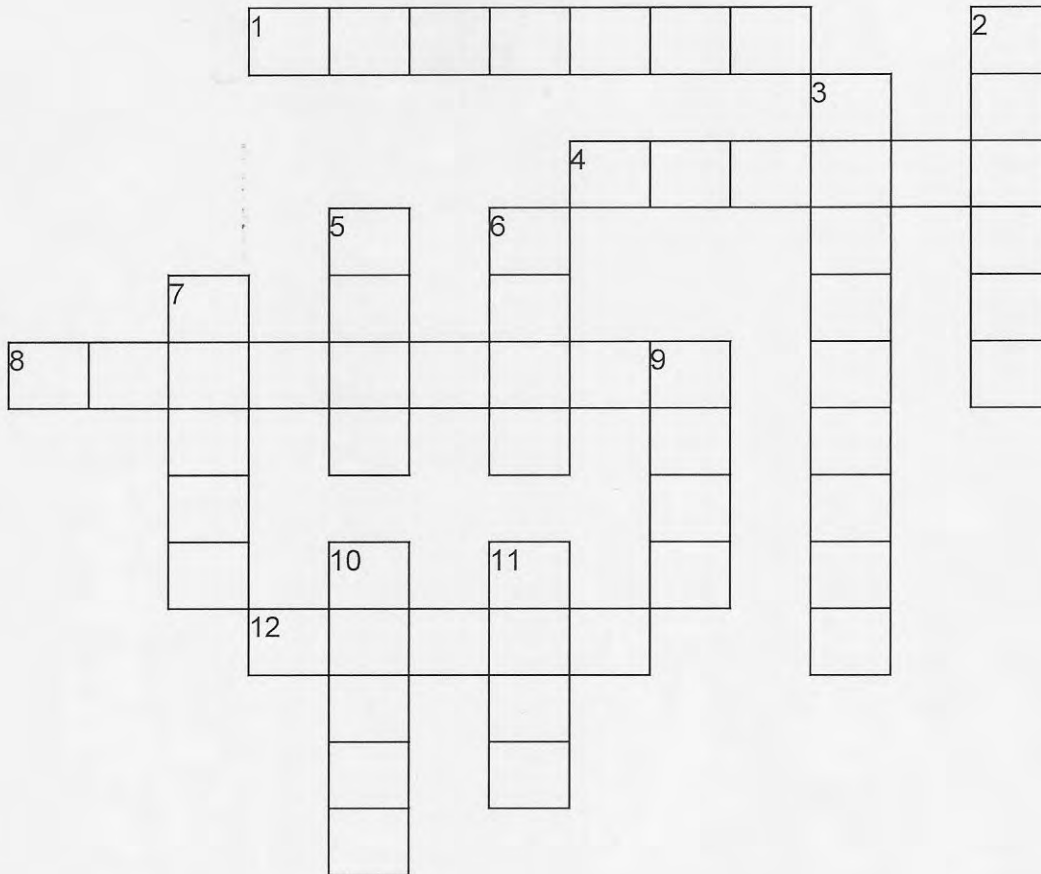
Jesus entered the world as our Savior, but He is also our Comforter which means He helps us to feel loved. He is our Healer, which means He helps us to feel better when we are sick or hurting. And He is our Peace-Giver, which means He helps us to feel calm and not to worry about things.

There may be times when it seems like the world around you has a lot of bad stuff happening in it. Or times when things going on in your life are hard and overwhelming. You can trust that Jesus will give you peace and that He will always be there for you.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Christmas Luke 2:1-18



### Across

1. Who followed a star to find Jesus
4. who sang at Jesus' birth
8. Who took care of the sheep at night
12. Who was the wicked King that wanted to 'worship' Jesus

### Down

2. Who was Jesus' 'earthly' father
3. What is the 'City of David'
5. Who was Jesus' cousin that was born at approximately the same time
6. Who was Jesus' Mother
7. Who was born in a stable
9. What led the Wise Men to Jesus
10. Where did Mary keep the memories she had of Jesus' birth
11. Name one gift that was brought to Jesus

## Love that is transforming

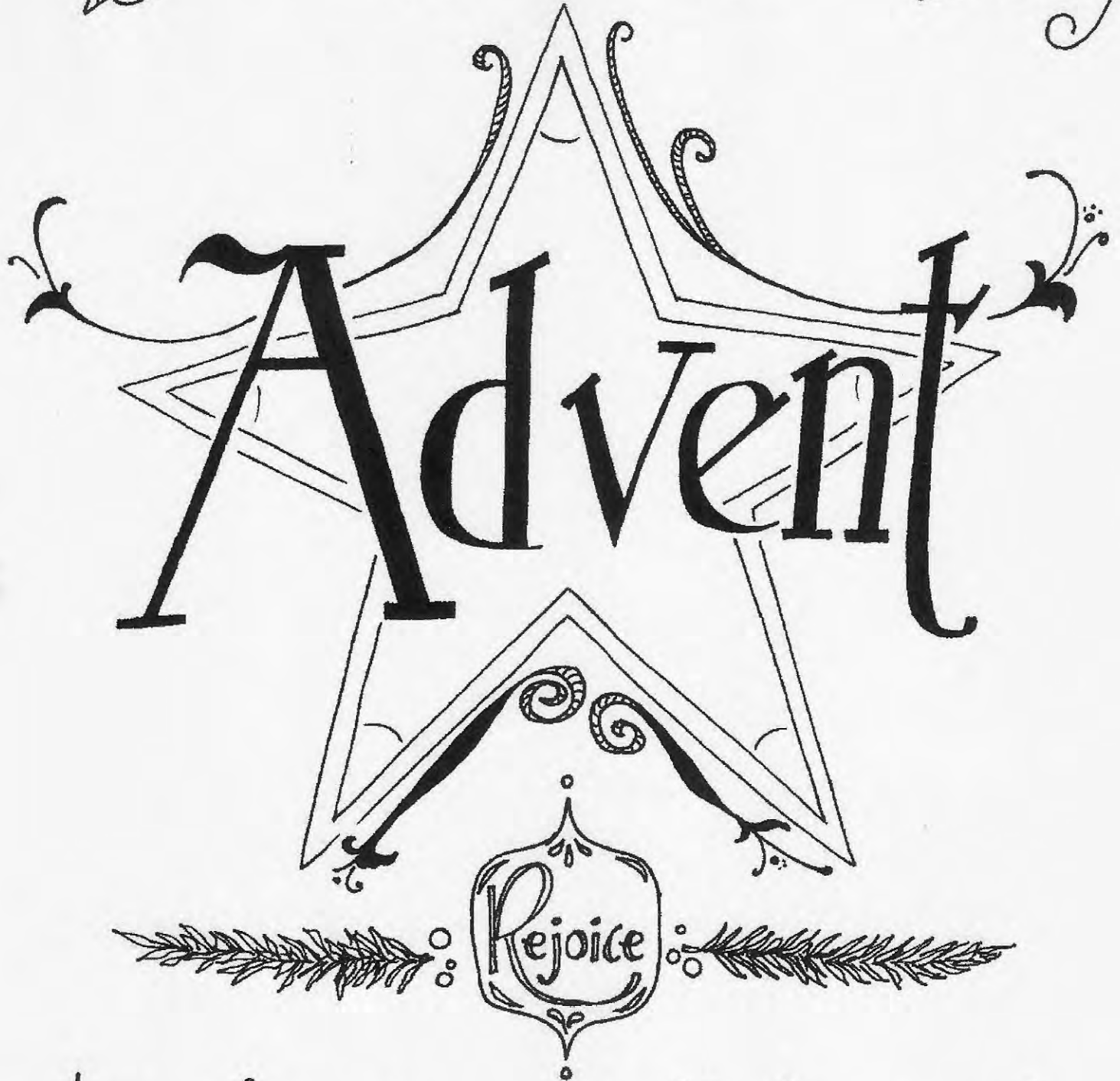
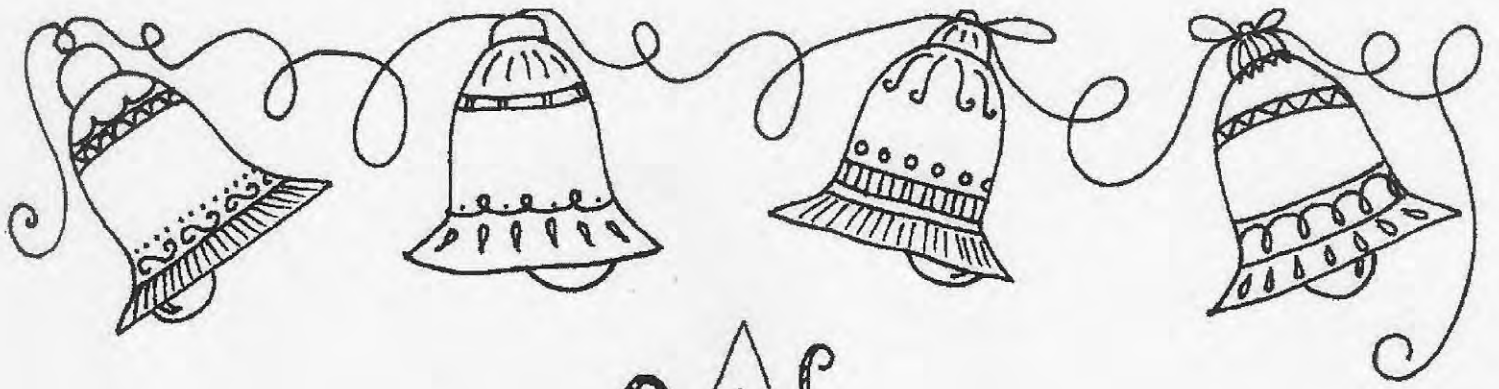
By: Sara Lamkin

"Do not conform to the pattern of this world but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is — his good, pleasing, and perfect will. " Romans 12:2

When I was 18, I traveled to Panama on a mission trip. One night there were hundreds of people outside in the dark, worshipping together. Now one important thing to know about me is that I hate bugs. Really, really hate. And in this part of Panama, the people and houses were not the cleanest. There was a small boy who kept watching us...our clothing, skin tone, everything. He asked if I would hold him in my lap. I did not think about how dirty he was, I pulled him into my lap and held him while we watched the service.

For me, this is the first time in my life where I could feel the power of God's love. When I said yes to where God wanted me to be and what God wanted me to do, I was able to put others before myself easily. I was able to show God's love to that boy.

So when God asks you to be nice to someone, say yes. You will feel love.



Arise, shine, for your light has come!

Mandy Groce '12

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## **Finding the Prince of Peace**

By: Meredith Wilson

“A child will be born to us. God will give a son to us. He will be responsible for leading the people, His name will be Wonderful Counselor, Powerful God, Father Who Lives Forever, Prince of Peace.” Isaiah 9:6

Sometimes, life can be really hard. Maybe it is trouble with your parents, your friends, or people at school. We may be confused on why the bad stuff is happening to us. It may be hard to face every day.

However, I have some good news for you! Even in the middle of this trouble, we have a God who loves us so much and wants to help us in times of need. One of the most amazing things about our God is that He brings us peace.

God sent Jesus to be born in a manger so that He could love others and bring peace during His life. That is why we call Him the “Prince of Peace.” This means that our God is so mighty and can guide us through our times of trouble.

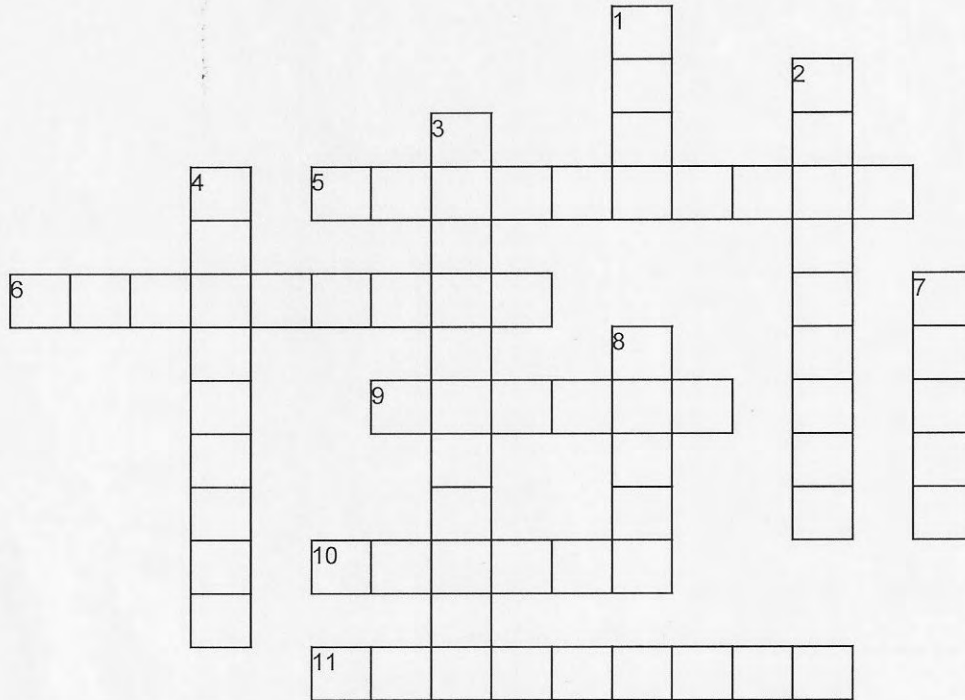
Do not lose hope! Talk to your family or a trusted person about what you are going through. Start reading your Bible and praying. Spending time with God means we can have peace in Him.

Throughout the Christmas season, read the verse above over and over and memorize it. This can help remind ourselves of how big our God is.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Isaiah 9:6



### Across

- 5. the \_\_\_ will be on His
- 6. will be on His \_\_\_
- 9. He will be called E. F. \_\_\_
- 10. He will be called P. \_\_\_
- 11. He will be called M

### Down

- 1. a child is
- 2. He will be called W
- 3. He will be called E. \_\_\_
- 4. He will be called C
- 7. a son is
- 8. He will be called P. of P. \_\_\_

## What does peace in the heart mean?

By: Deborah Taylor

In Luke 2 we see the birth story of Jesus Christ. In verses 13-14, the angel proclaimed to the shepherds,

“Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace to those on whom his favor rests.”

Next a “multitude of heavenly hosts” appear praising God. The word used for **heavenly hosts** describes an army and is used elsewhere in the New Testament to describe war and lack of peace in the heart. Jesus’s birth brought the possibility of peace to our hearts.

Imagine you are a shepherd in the field and a multitude, which is so great a number that they cannot even be counted, of warrior angels show up and you are witnessing their celebration of the arrival of this peace.

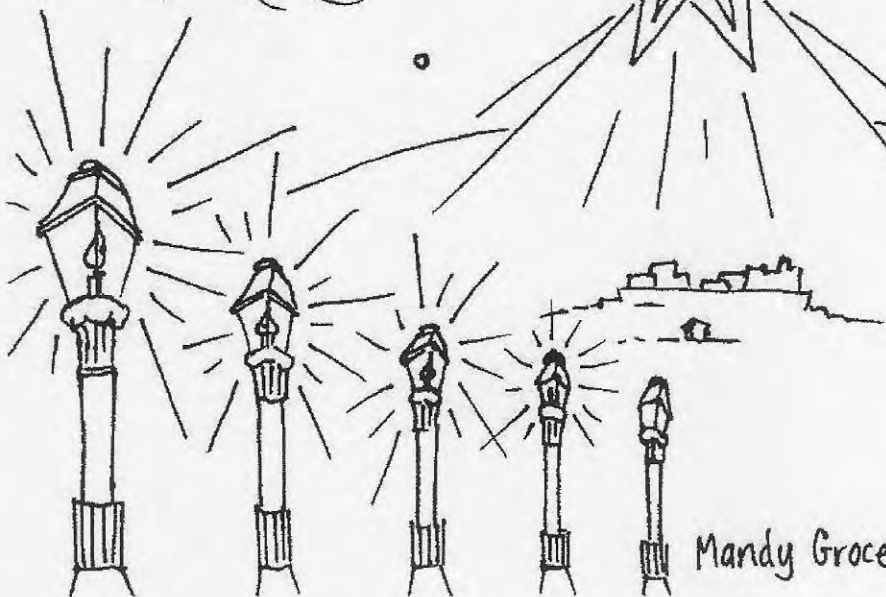
The angels were so happy that Jesus had arrived. It meant that when we are scared or nervous that if we pray and believe that Jesus will calm our hearts. That our hearts can feel good and at peace no matter what is happening in the world.



Jesus

IS OUR

Peace



Mandy Groce '12

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## Love is a verb

By: Sara Lamkin

*Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It does not dishonor others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres. Love never fails." 1 Corinthians 13: 4-8a*

We love our families. We love God. We love puppies. We love pizza. In our world, the word love has come to mean how others make us feel. We love puppies because they are soft and fun! But is that what love means?

The birth of Jesus took love to a new level. It made love a selfless action. Love is not a feeling. It is not how happy or not something or someone makes us feel. It is a verb. Love is something we do.

We love our families even when we are mad at them. We love others when we are nice to them.

God shows us that He loves us when He forgives us, when He sent Jesus to be with us and teach us. Love should be something we do no matter how we feel. This Christmas, let us remember that God showed us how to love when He sent His son.

We need to Love as God loves us.

# Advent



## **Blest be the tie that binds**

By: Malinda Dunlap Fillingim

“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.” Luke 2:6-7

Serving newly arrived refugees blessed me in countless ways. One young child especially touched my heart. Around her left ankle was a blue string, tied on by her father who had to stay behind in the refugee camp, far away from his beloved family. The child's mother explained the blue string was a reminder to the child that no matter where she went, she was connected to her father and that one day, they would be together again. After a few months with the family, I noticed the growth of the child was making the blue string become tight. "What will happen when your daughter outgrows the string?" I asked. The mother took my hand and smiled, "Oh, Malinda, our hope lasts because we know God is the one who ties us all together. We will never out-grow hope."

Jesus's birth brings hope that whatever is happening our lives, God loves us and is with us.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Christmas from the Holy Bible

I M G X R T K V B I Z V Y P D S Q T G O E P J M  
M B M J J V C C I Z D I E C A Z P S Q F U B D U  
M E H E L H T E B Z X R C J I J E S U S E M R G  
K S K K Q F A V V M D G I T Q I N U G A V K V H  
J D F I Z D O G X N N I O B F K N O R S V I N T  
Y R X N H P N H I A W N J N U F H T D I G O N Y  
J E M G D C B K C N J T E G L P H D T L J A Q J  
M H Y O G S Q R Q L S T R O E V L G L O O D K L  
T P R A B E W I H I I Z C S Y A G Q Y R G G A D  
B E R H H T R I B V K K O V M X X Q T N T U T A  
T H Y I A E A G P M S J Z B T F Q T H S Y Y T F  
P S H K C H O A P D E U V L E U N A M M E S R V  
R K D B R A T S F F K D M M A R Y O E E E A P J  
F H A L L E L U J A H N U V Y J R V C Q N N K B  
G W A Z D G P M W K H S H U A H N P J K F Q Y Z  
L Y C E Y A H J P O A X L E N B Q K I Z R W J R  
Y E S H X Q T N L V K L O P Q W L N Z H I P L W  
S K H H N K F Y I C N R X S T Q C P H G I M S R  
L N J R U X S O Y I P L S T K E K W A H A O J L  
E O L E P P R E Q W N B M R N V Z M S N A P Q M  
G D F O I C H R I S T M A S X F G R G Z X R T K  
N X G R I Y J Y U R C A E V F T O E D Q L Y G T  
A U I K R E T A L U C A M M I W R D D J Y Q Z A  
W T F W C O N F C Z Y E J H Q T K N O Q S K I E

Angels      Bethlehem      Birth      Christmas      Donkey      Earth  
Emmanuel      Flocks      Frankincense      God      Gold      Hallelujah  
Holy Spirit      Immaculate      Inn      Jesus      Joseph      Joy      King      Lamb  
Magi      Manger      Mary      Myrrh      Rejoice      Savior      Shepherds  
Star      Virgin      Worship

## **The Candle of Christ: The unexpected act of God**

By: Mike Boone

*“and Jacob the father of Joseph, the husband of Mary, and Mary was the mother of Jesus who is called the Messiah.” Matthew 1:16*

Have you ever wondered if God can use you to love others? God uses people that sometimes the world thinks are not important.

Like Mary, Jesus's mother. She was a young woman, unknown, and from a town that most people did not want to visit. Mary was chosen to raise the son of God. God did not choose an easy place for his son to be born or live. God did not choose an easy couple to be his mother and father here on earth.

You may be saying, 'I could never do anything like that.' I could never be used by God. It was hard for Mary to say yes. She knew that she could be in trouble as she and Joseph were not married yet. God told her to not be afraid. God wants us to be willing to say yes. God will give us what we need in order to do what God asks of us. We just need to be brave enough to say yes.

God can and does use anyone.

Jesus  
GIVES US  
Hope



Mandy Groce '12

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## **Breathe in His Peace**

By: Amanda Martinsen

*“Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.” John 14:27*

Do you ever wonder if Jesus really cares about all the little details of your life?

Like if you have had a bad dream, or if you fight with your brother or sister a lot, or if you're worried about a test at school?

The answer is yes! He really does care about all those things.

Sometimes it's easy to get overwhelmed with things, especially at Christmastime. There is a lot going on after all. You might be busy with school, helping your parents or grandparents around the house, and getting ready to spend time with family and friends.

During such a busy time it's easy to wonder if Jesus still cares about all that's going on in your life. Because we can't see Him, it might feel like He is far off in the distance from you. But He isn't. He is always right there with you in your heart.

Jesus gives us a peace that nothing else can. So when you need to, take a deep breath in and out and ask Him to give you peace in that moment. It's one of those really special ways He shows us He cares about us.



Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## John 14:27

B J T X N V T U P E N W F G I U D J V I L X S S  
O B U X T W F M Z C H P G J P N E Z K O M B E D  
R I Y G R H L D K Y T Z Y C O L B T S A D S W U  
I P Z E G X W Q P Q M A D E L T F P A N V P Q V  
B Y K Z A T R K I O C I L Q J T R A P H A B X V  
K J X M N I V V L C A Y H P M D X A L O W V L T  
P U X N G N U J D R X P S G H S P X Z J D S A T  
H J Q J D I F O F B L T O A R H Y J F Y M O M H  
K H D V C N K A O G I S W L H J Z W Z E U M V Z  
X F X B F N F I S I U E T E O E R I G Q D P B O  
D H X P Q H F J O V R X B L P Z A Y J Z P Q K X  
E C S T R O U B L E D K W H J Z Q R I L B O L Y  
N U F L F B W V H T F W C W S I N J T V Z P F Z  
Y O W E Y Q N O A L S W R E O P S O B S D I J S  
I X D L R O W D Y I N W T D U S U Y R K P Y K I  
O F I E B W Y W P L Y K S U B N J G Q E C A E P  
O J N S E T E V T J C K T V T D H S Q I J J S A  
T I R M I O H P F B F M U U J C N V Y K V W W A  
L E A V E E U O F H O S L C V I Q V M K D V C A  
V V W B X F L H I C A F H O C E G K O Y P H P H  
D G H U V O O T L I X M D L P B A E H Y E G Z Y  
B M W Y V W K C B K I D Z R W V U U S L H P N V  
D K G E A U U C P M W A D W W X L C N M I D H V  
Q B H F Q A J L Q W A Y X A J B Q V Y R H G B C

afraid    troubled    hearts    give    leave    world    john    joy  
love    Peace

## **Finding Joy in Christ While Living Overseas**

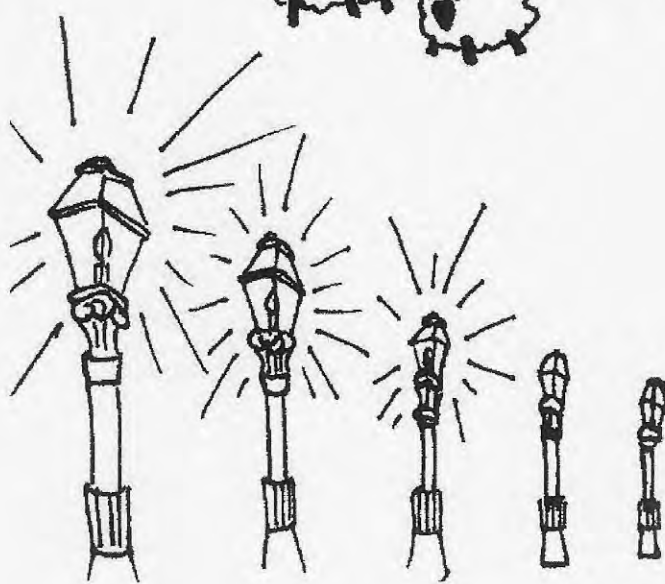
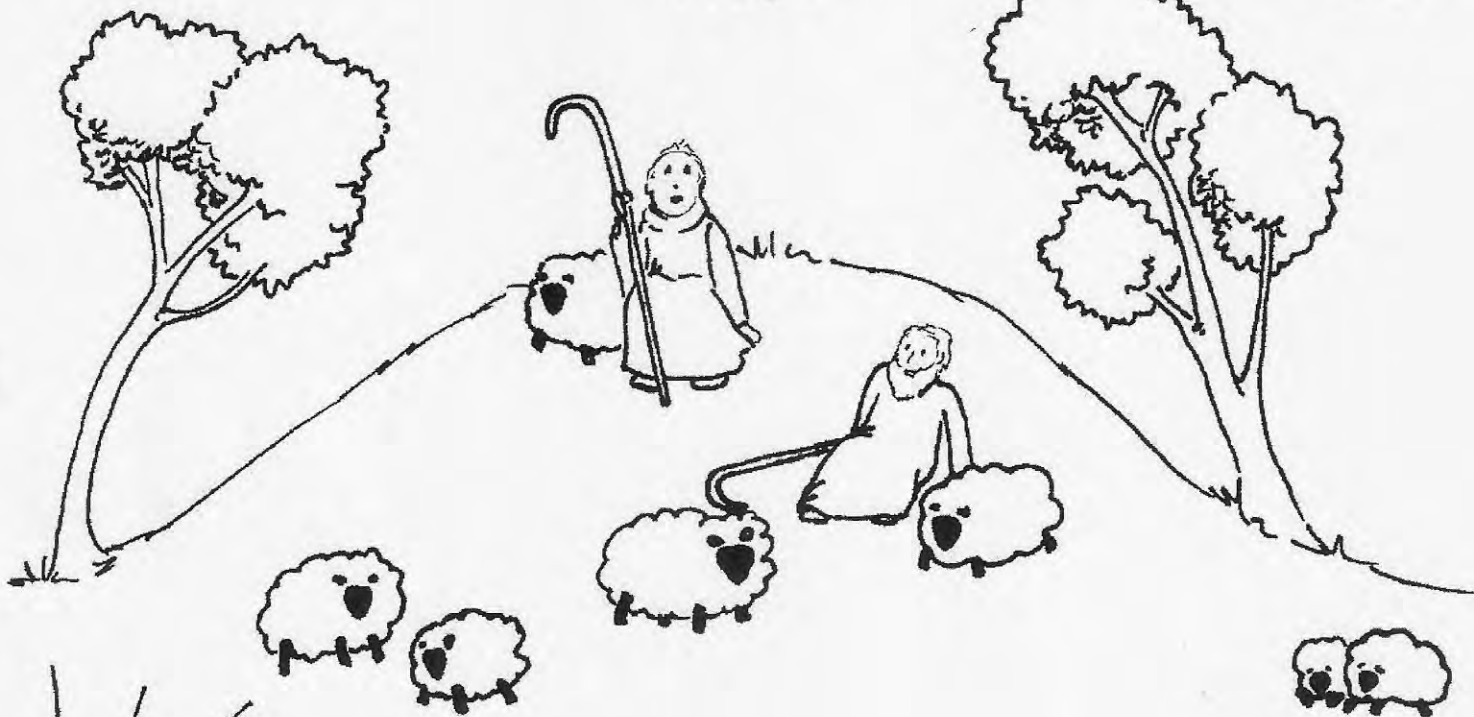
*“Your love has given me great joy and encouragement, because you, brother, have refreshed the hearts of the Lord’s people.” Philemon 1:7*

Hello, my name is Chloe\* and my husband and I serve in Central Asia. I teach English as a Second Language to preschool-aged children. One of the things that I love about teaching the little ones is the reminder of how to live life with the wonder and joy of a child. When I take life too seriously, God reminds me to stop and enjoy what He has given me-family, friends, pets.

When I am worried about being able to talk to the people around me in their language, I have to remember that it is more important to love God. If I do what I do without focusing on God then I lose that joy. I lose that wonder and excitement for who God is and why I am here. Yes, it is about telling others about Jesus and that makes me happy. But first, it all needs to be about God. And then I am full of joy.

\*name changed for safety reasons ☺

Jesus  
IS OUR  
Joy



Mandy Groce '12

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## In the Month of December

By: Kylah Goff (Contributed by Amy Boone)

*“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*

In the month of December, our thoughts turn to things above  
With Mangers and carols and gifts for those we love.  
We just love the Christmas season- preparing our hearts and homes as well  
A time for family and celebrating- as His story we re-tell.  
In living Christmas trees, nativities, and carols we proclaim:  
“To this world was sent a Savior, and Jesus is His name!”  
But there is much of the world that knows nothing of these things-  
So they don’t celebrate the birth of our king.  
They can’t celebrate – because they have never heard  
The story of Christmas, of salvation come to earth.  
God’s son and our Savior who was born in Bethlehem-  
The most precious, perfect gift that has ever been given.  
The light of the world and the hope of all mankind  
But unaware of that light or gift that has ever been given.  
The light of the world and the hope of all mankind  
But unaware of that light or gift, they are so very blind.  
Here in Mozambique many folks could not recall  
Ever hearing “good news of great joy shall be for all.”  
There are no Christmas lights, no decorations anywhere  
No nativities or caroler- its incredible bare.  
Because the light of the world they haven’t yet viewed  
And the song of salvation is an unknown tune.  
So in this month of December, let’s also turn our thoughts  
To all of those around the world who never have been taught.  
Though prayer and missions studies and with your offerings  
Through your service there at home or maybe traveling. You are light to the world and good  
news to ALL you bring, So they too can celebrate the birth of the King.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## John 3:16

1. FRO \_\_\_\_\_

2. OGD \_\_\_\_\_

3. OS \_\_\_\_\_

4. OVLED \_\_\_\_\_

5. HTE \_\_\_\_\_

6. WORLD \_\_\_\_\_

7. HATT \_\_\_\_\_

8. HE \_\_\_\_\_

9. EAVG \_\_\_\_\_

10. HIS \_\_\_\_\_

11. ONLY \_\_\_\_\_

## Love Is All We Need

By: Kim Bounds

*“I give you a new commandment, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.”* John 14:34-35

“Love, love, love, love. The gospel in a word is love. Love your neighbor as your brother. Love, love, love”.

How many of you sang that song at camp or at church? It’s beautiful and it’s the gospel.

How did Jesus tell us we should act in the world? It was one simple rule...Love one another. That is it. That we should love everyone.

We are not listening to Jesus if we pick and choose who to love. If we decide we do not want to love a person for one reason or another, then we are wrong. It does not matter what they look like, smell like, what their favorite sport is, what their family is like, or what movies they watch. We are just supposed to love them. Treat them with kindness always.

As we get ready for the birth of Jesus and Christmas, let us pray that we can learn to love others as Jesus loves us. A love without rules. After all, isn’t that the kind of love baby Jesus came to give us?

# Birth of Christ

E S E H T O L C G N I L D D A W S  
G I Q D I A R F A B G J M U Y E T  
W X L A B K Z P E Y O J L Z M M A  
Q H S G G H Z T N A X E V U M E X  
J E D A K B H D G U G E I U H S E  
M T T A K L O J Z N O N L G Y C D  
P A T H E V O I A Y N F O A D B N  
J D N H T S T S D U U O I R J A W  
S T E G E E T T Q N D E M I H Q U  
D M A P E A R X J T U Z X R Z W S  
R Y H W R R E A I E R U O I V A S  
E L Y T U O G D Z L K B D U K Z M  
H M R R G Y I J P A Q O K N E D Y  
P L M L O N P I Y E N R B O W P Y  
E W F S G L E J J V A N U B P N R  
H P G S J P G C L B S C Q V C C A  
S S X O F D N H E Y W M E O E B M

star      peace      born      Saviour      joy      good tidings  
afraid      glory      angel      shepherds      inn      manger  
swaddling clothes      taxed      Mary      Bethlehem  
Nazareth      Joseph

## Take Heart

By: Amanda Martinsen

Did you know that Jesus actually tells us we will face hard things in our lives? He does!

*"I have told you all this so that you may have peace in me. Here on earth you will have many trials and sorrows. But take heart, because I have overcome the world."* John 16:33

***But take heart.*** Did you catch those three words?

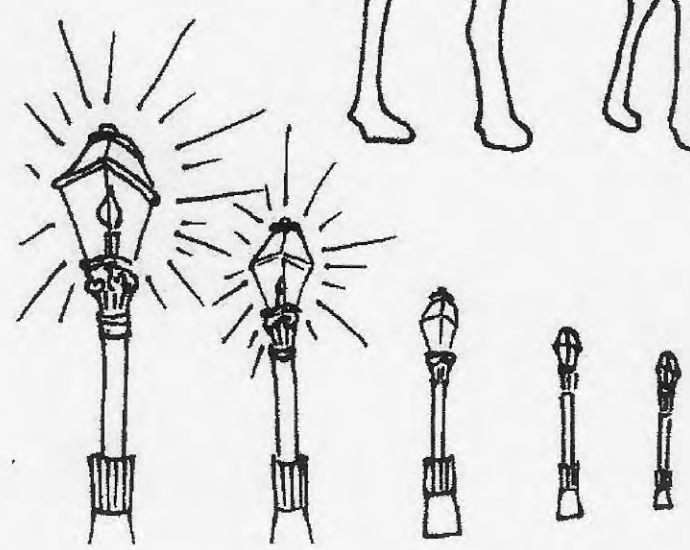
When we take heart it means we gain courage and confidence in something, or that we are feeling hopeful. It means we can hope things will get better soon. I don't know about you, but I can think of nothing better to take heart in than Jesus.

So when things happen in your life that are hard, or when you may not understand why something is happening the way that it is, remember you can take heart in Jesus. You can trust Him to help you.

He came into our world as a tiny baby and forever changed the world. He gives us peace when times are hard and we can always trust in Him.



Jesus  
IS OUR  
Way



Mandy Groce '12

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## **Birth of Christ**

By: Meredith Wilson

To learn about God, it is important we read our Bible so we can learn from the people and their stories. Christmas is celebrated because God allowed His son to be born through Mary. Through this story, Mary can teach us some important lessons on how we should treat others as believers of God.

### **1. Mary knows our God is a big God**

After Gabriel the Angel tells Mary she will give birth to Jesus, she replied with this:

In Luke 1:38, Mary said, *“I am the servant girl of the Lord. Let this happen to me as you say!”*

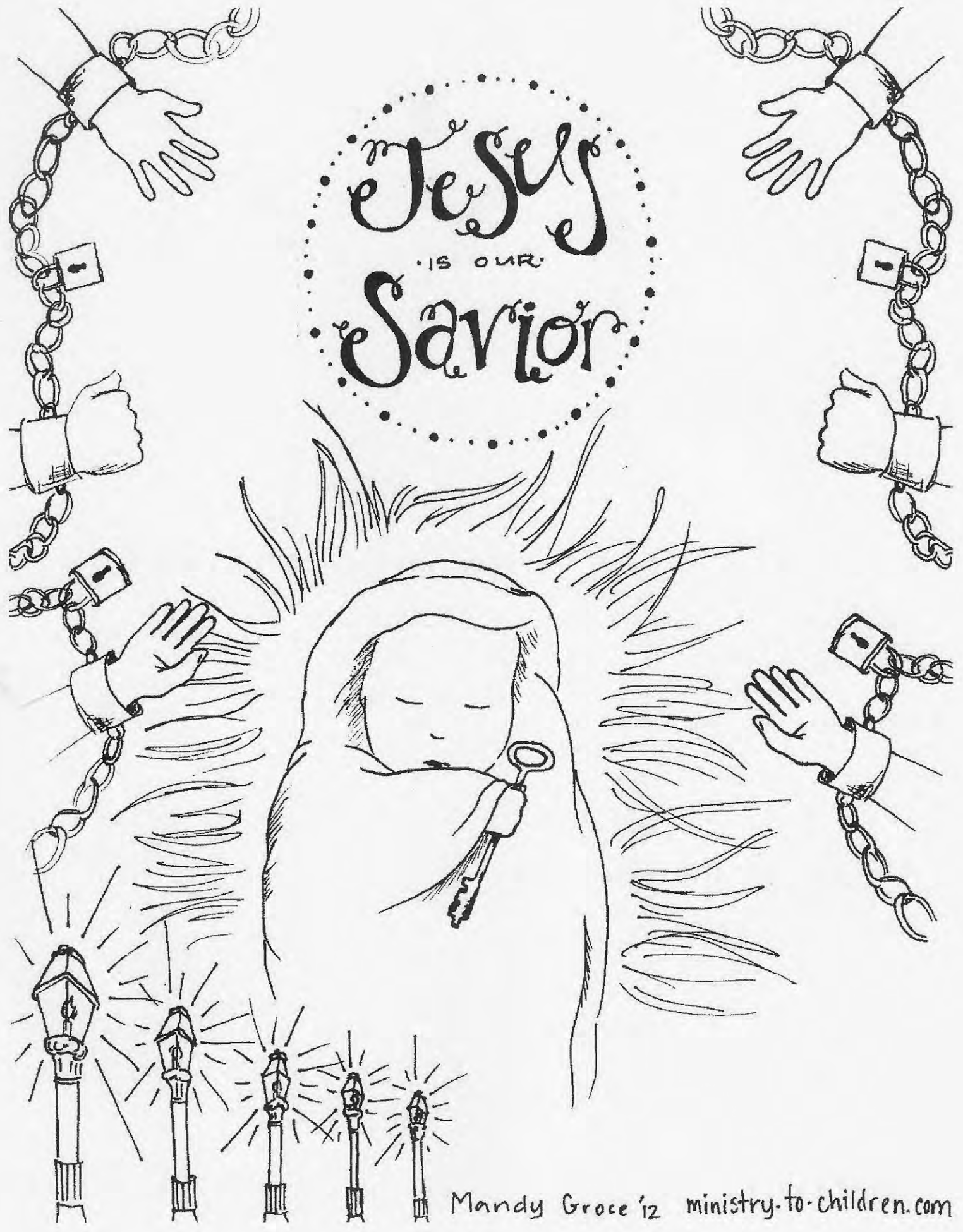
Mary knew she would be okay because God is in control of the outcome. Her love for God allowed her to trust in His plan. She knew she would be okay in the end because she knows our God can do anything.

### **2. God used Mary in an important story**

Sometimes, we may think we are not cool enough, smart enough or popular enough for God to notice us. However, Mary is just like us. She wasn't the smartest kid at her school or the most popular. Mary was just a person like you and me.

Luke 1:28 says, *“The angel came to her and said, “Greetings! The Lord has blessed you and is with you.”*

God still used Mary to be in a very important story and He wants to do the same for us! Sometimes, the Devil may tell us we are not good enough. However, that is not true because God says that we are. He wants us to love Him just as much as He loves us. Like He did with Mary, He wants to help write our valuable stories too.



Jesus  
IS OUR  
Savior

## **And the Time Came...For Joy**

By: Matthew and Heather Hirt

*“There was also a prophet, Anna, the daughter of Penuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was very old; she had lived with her husband seven years after her marriage, and then was a widow until she was eighty-four. She never left the temple but worshiped night and day, fasting and praying. Coming up to them at that very moment, she gave thanks to God and spoke about the child to all who were looking forward to the redemption of Jerusalem.” Luke 2: 36-38*

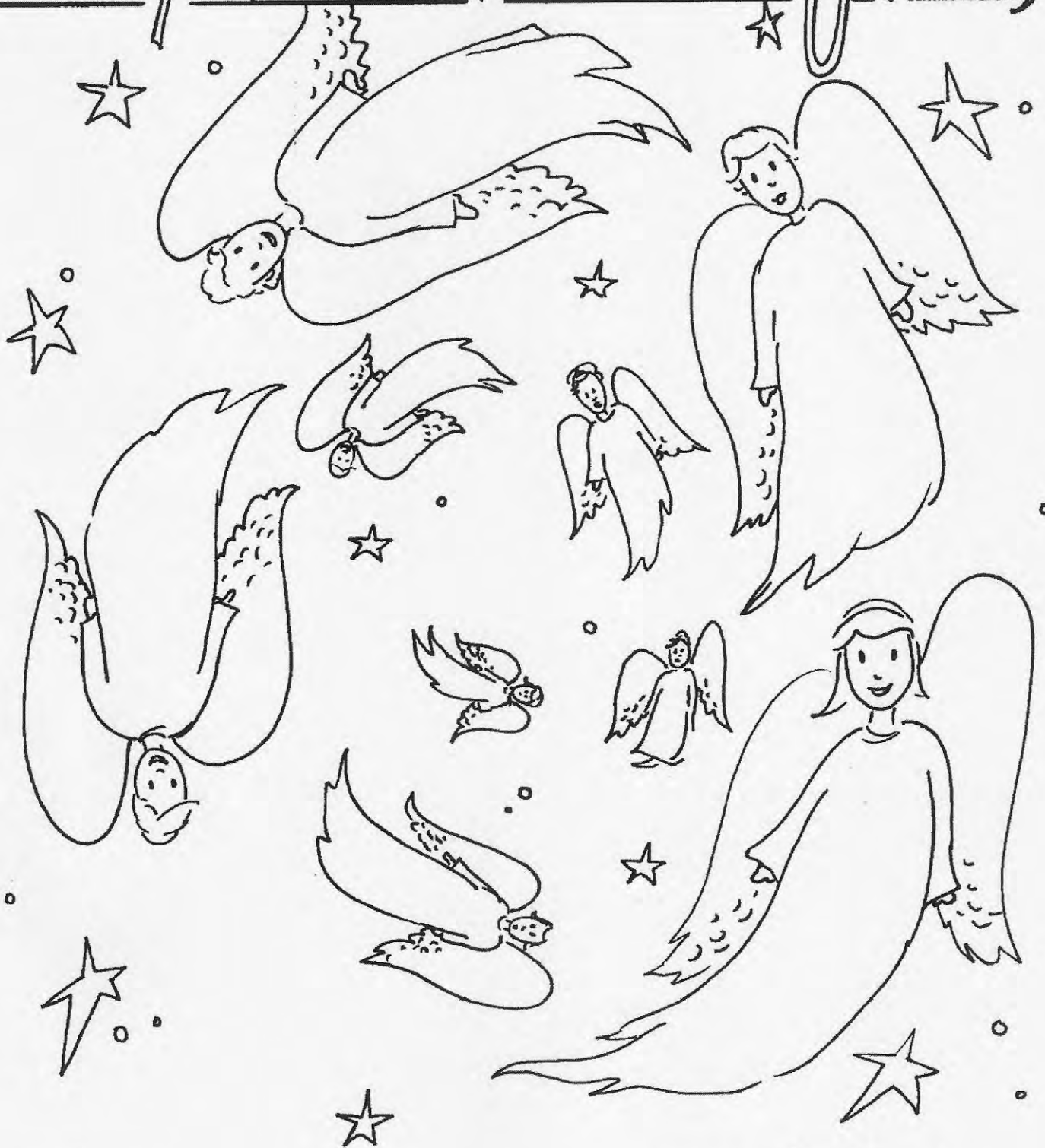
Christmas is a time for joy but sometimes people feel sad. If we can't spend Christmas with the people we want to then sometimes we can be sad or lonely. How can we still have joy when we feel sad?

When Jesus was born, there was an old woman in the temple serving God. Anna was at least in her 80s and had been alone most of her life because her husband had been dead a long time. She had devoted herself to working for God.

Anna was at church when Jesus's parents brought him there the first time as a baby. She was so excited to hear about him and to meet him. She was filled with joy.

So whether we are surrounded by people or alone, the joy of Jesus's birth is something we can feel inside. Celebrate and share that joy this Christmas.

# Glory to God in the highest;



Mandy Groce '11

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