

UNIT 1: JOY • LESSON 4:

"Joyous News"

LUKE 2:8-20



With all my heart I glorify the
Lord! In the depths of who I
am I rejoice in
God my savior.
Luke 1:46-47

ADVENT:

The season of Advent is the 4 weeks before Christmas (Nov. 29-Dec. 24.) Each Sunday we prepare our hearts for the birth of Jesus and focus on a special word and light candles in our Advent wreath. Today we light the candles of HOPE, JOY, PEACE & LOVE. This week our word is **LOVE**. Love is strong care, affection, closeness and connection that we show one another and that God gives to us every day. **On Christmas Eve, we light the CHRIST CANDLE to celebrate the birth of Jesus.**

BIBLE STORY:

In today's Bible story, we learn of angels telling shepherds the news of Jesus' birth.

In the fields around Bethlehem, shepherds were watching their sheep. It was dark and cold, and they were warming themselves by a fire. Suddenly, an angel appeared! The angel said, "Do not be afraid. Today in Bethlehem a baby was born for everyone! The baby is God's Son. The baby's name is Jesus. You will find him lying in a manger." The shepherds said, "let's go to Bethlehem and see this special baby!" The shepherds found Mary and Joseph and baby Jesus. They told everyone they saw about the new baby. The shepherds praised God for letting them see the special baby, Jesus.



Dear God,
We thank you for the love You give to us each day. Help us to show Your love to all people. Thank You for sending Your son to teach us about love. We pray that Your love might be spread around our world, and that all people would know that You love them.
Amen

WONDER QUESTIONS & ACTIVITIES:

- What does love mean to you?
- How do you show love?
- In today's story, the shepherds were told the good news by angels. How do you think they felt?
- What are ways you can share good news?
- Be sure and look in the sky over the moon on Monday Dec. 21 at 5:45pm to see the "Bethlehem star." This is when Jupiter and Saturn are aligned and make a big bright star in the sky. This hasn't happened in 800 years!
- If you haven't already, grab some paper - staple the pages together to make a booklet and create an Advent journal. Decorate the cover and write down things inside that make you feel HOPE and JOY and PEACE and LOVE each day.

God chose the lowly shepherds as the first to hear of Jesus' birth. The good news of Jesus is for all people. Spreading the news brought joy to all who heard it. Joy is meant to be shared, as joy is for all!

Joyous News

Christmas Around the World

Did you know Christmas is celebrated in many ways all around the world?

France – As children wait for Christmas Day, they open 24 windows on an Advent calendar. They are allowed to open a window each day starting December 1st.

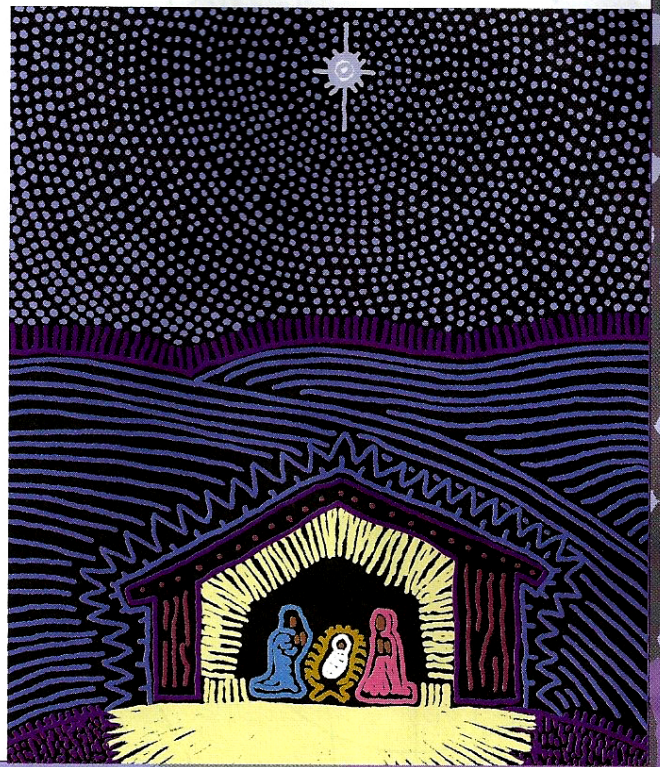
Germany – Children and their families usually do not put up their Christmas tree until December 24th.

Portugal – Families set up Nativities to celebrate Christmas. After attending Christmas services on Christmas Eve, they add baby Jesus to the manger.

The Philippines – There is a special tradition of displaying a star-shaped Christmas lantern, called a paról. The lantern is usually made of bamboo and paper. The lantern represents the star of Bethlehem.

Denmark – Danish families place their Christmas tree in the middle of the room. They dance around the tree while singing carols.

Ukraine – One family tradition is to hang spider-web-shaped decorations. The web symbolizes the story of a poor widow who did not have enough money to decorate for Christmas. When her children awoke on Christmas Day, much to their delight, their tree was covered in webs of gold and silver.



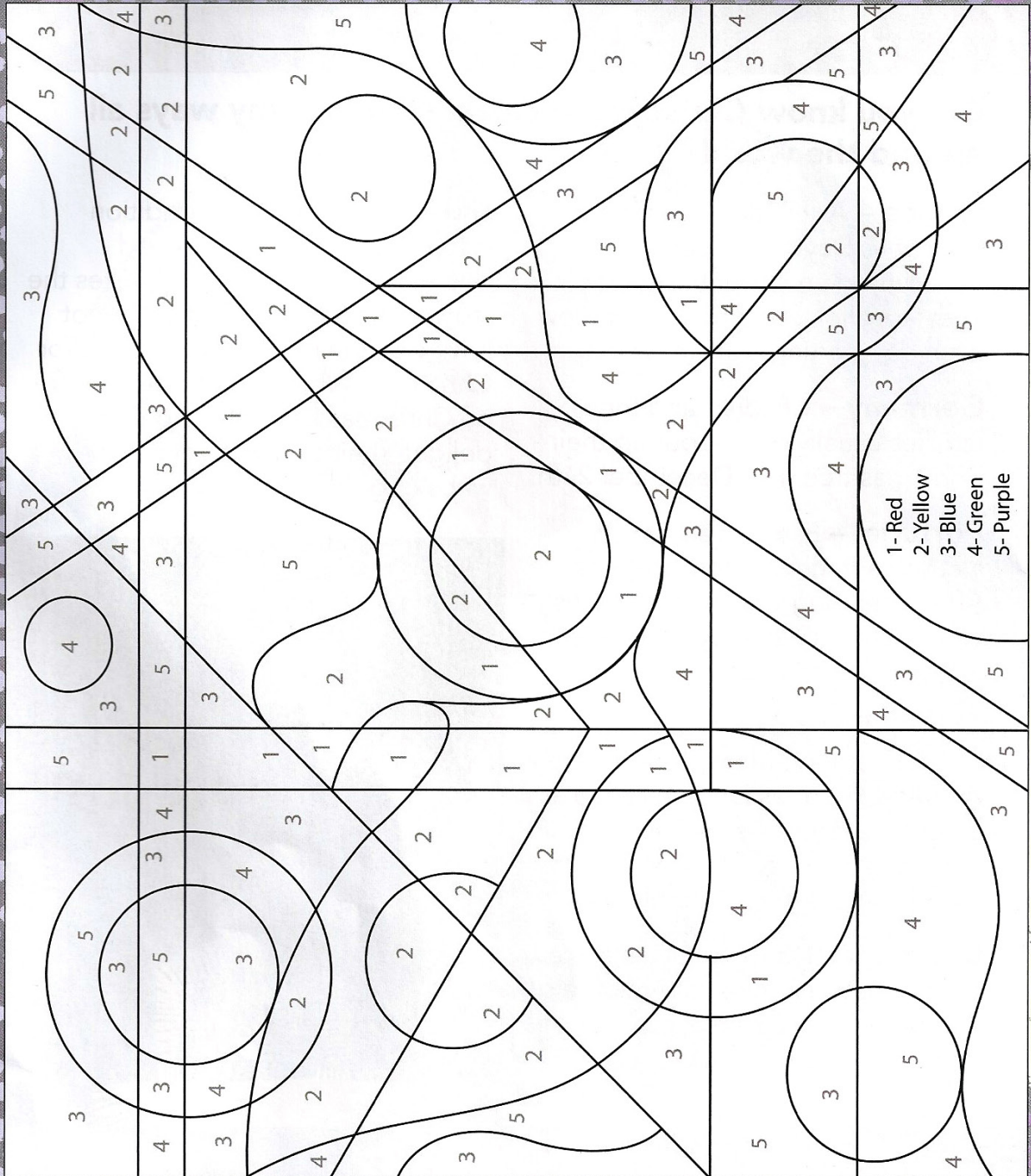
Joyous News

Find the Hidden Word

CELEBRATE
WONDER™

Session 4 •

Match the color to the number to reveal a special word.





Advent Wreath

Color a candle for the special days of Advent.

November 29 - HOPE

December 6 - JOY

December 13 - PEACE

December 20 - LOVE

December 24 - JESUS