

# Advent

A Time to Prepare



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# HOPE

## Week 1

**Candle Name:** Prophet's Candle  
**Candle Symbolizes:** Hope  
**Reminds Us:** Jesus is coming

**Verse:** Romans 15:12-13

**Prayer:** O God, by whose word all things are sanctified, pour forth Thy blessing upon this wreath, and grant that we who use it may prepare our hearts for the coming of Christ and may receive from Thee abundant graces. Who livest and reignest forever. Amen.

Christ Candle  
Light on Christmas Eve



**Verse:** John 1:29

# PEACE

## Week 4

**Candle Name:** Angel's Candle  
**Candle Symbolizes:** Peace  
**Reminds us:** The message of the angels; "Peace on Earth, Good Will Toward Men."

**Verse:** John 3:16-17

**Prayer:** O Lord, stir up Thy power, we pray Thee, and come; and with great might help us, that with the help of Thy grace, Thy merciful forgiveness may hasten what our sins impede. Who livest and reignest forever. Amen.

# FAITH

## Week 2

**Candle Name:** Bethlehem Candle  
**Candle Symbolizes:** Faith  
**Reminds Us:** Mary and Joseph's journey to Bethlehem

**Verse:** Luke 3:4-6

**Prayer:** O Lord, stir up our hearts that we may prepare for Thy only begotten Son, that through His coming we may be made worthy to serve Thee with pure minds. Who livest and reignest forever. Amen.

## Week 3

**Candle Name:** Shepherd's Candle  
**Candle Symbolizes:** Joy  
**Reminds Us:** The Joy the world experienced at the coming birth of Jesus

**Verse:** Luke 2:7-15

**Prayer:** O Lord, we beg Thee, incline Thy ear to our prayers and enlighten the darkness of our minds by the grace of Thy visitation. Who livest and reignest forever. Amen.

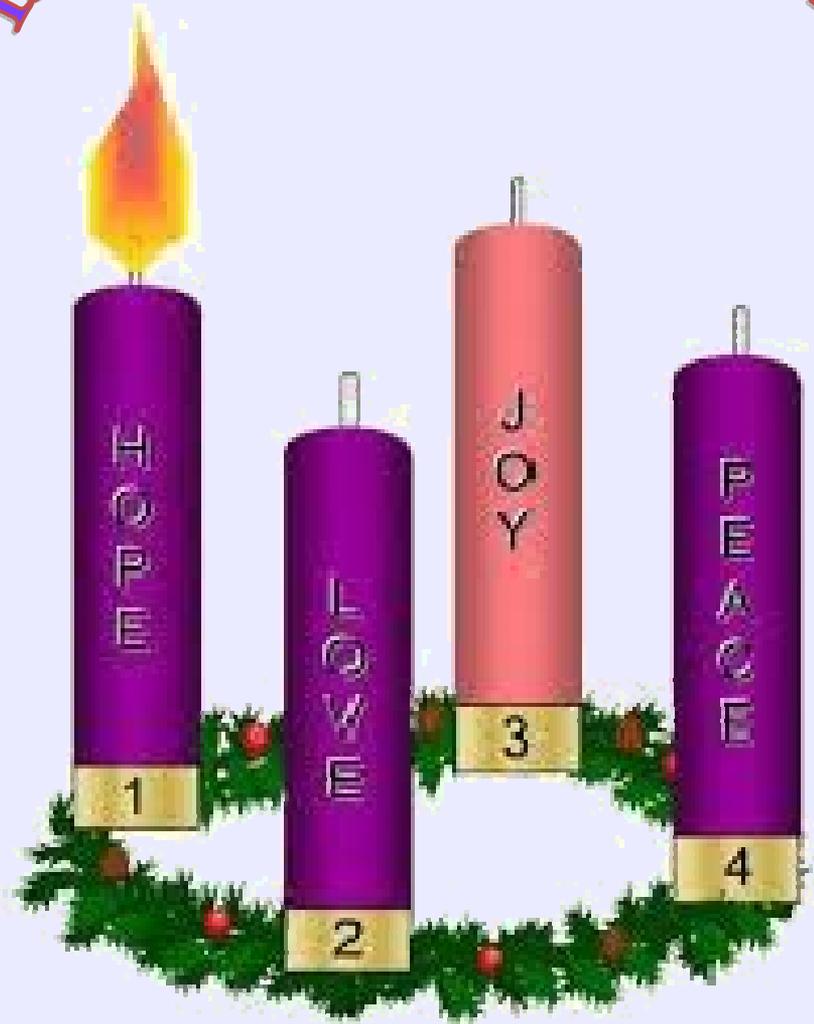
# JOY

Advent is a season of the church year during which we prepare our hearts for Christ's coming. Advent is the beginning of the *liturgical year* for Christians. [*Liturgical* -- from *liturgy*, which means the forms and functions of public worship.] The dates of Advent vary each year, but it always contains the four Sundays before Christmas Day.

[www.umc.org](http://www.umc.org)

Dec 1st

# 1st Sunday in Advent



Dec 2nd



He called a little child to him, and placed the child among them. And he said: "Truly I tell you, unless you change and become like little children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. Therefore, whoever takes the lowly position of this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven. And whoever welcomes one such child in my name welcomes me.





Dec 3rd

Submitted by Gail Belshay

I want to age like sea glass. Smoothed by tides, not broken.

I want to ride the waves, go with the flow and feel the impact of the surging tides.

When I am caught between the rocks and a hard place, I will rest.

And when I am ready, I will catch a wave and let it carry me where I belong.

I want to be picked up and held gently by those who delight in my well-earned patina and appreciate the changes I went through to achieve this luster.

I want to enjoy the journey and let my preciousness be, not in spite of the impacts, but because of them.

Let us then approach the throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need.

**Hebrews 4:16**



At Christmas, numerous churches turn to United Methodist Hymnal #239 to sing “Silent Night, Holy Night.” For many, it is a staple of the holiday season that often is paired with a candlelight service.

Christmas Eve 2018 marked the 200th anniversary of the first performance of the beloved carol.

Written by Joseph Mohr and composed by Franz Gruber, the song made its debut during a midnight service at St. Nicholas Church in Oberndorf, Austria (then a village in the Austrian Empire).

A video was made that features a variety of United Methodist choir members marking this milestone in song, raising their voices in worship to Christ the Savior. Emmanuel UMC’s Chancel Choir was one of those choirs!

Sing to him, sing praise to him; tell of all his  
wonderful acts. Psalm 105:2

As an 8-year child, I ing strange about the marvels of moved to Quito, Ecuador, with living so far from where I had my family. I went to a missionary school at the foot of a mountain, and my school bus passed the bull fighting rink every afternoon. Our



lived before. As young children our instinct is to observe and accept the world around us. After all, everything is new to us.

family car traveled on dusty rural roads over scruffy desert terrain, or climbed winding, narrow roads with sheer drop offs (and no guard rails). We shopped in small and dimly lit bakeries and butcher shops with packed dirt floors, and wandered through festive outdoor markets brimming with stands of exotic foods and wares. In the city, there were indigenous people wearing the wool clothing of their ancestors as well as people in modern business attire. Everything written or spoken around us was in Spanish.

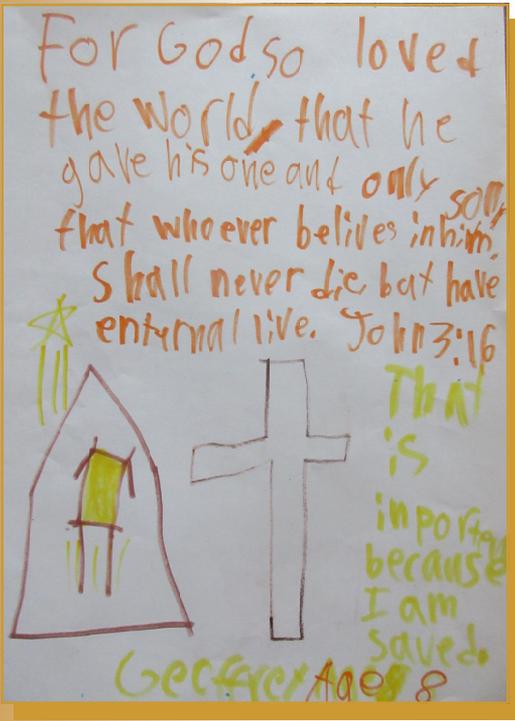
Very little looked or sounded like it had in Springfield, Virginia, and yet, at age 8, I quickly accepted what I saw as normal. I don't remember feel-

However, when we returned to the states, I experienced what I assume is "culture shock". When I entered a People's Drug Store, I was overwhelmed by the glaring lights and shiny, white flooring. It seems strange to me that even though I had spent my first 8 years in this same U.S. suburbia, I would find it so jarring to find myself there at age 10. I naturally compared it to the shops in Quito. If I hadn't moved to very different places at two different ages, I doubt I would have noticed this distinct difference in adjusting to change.

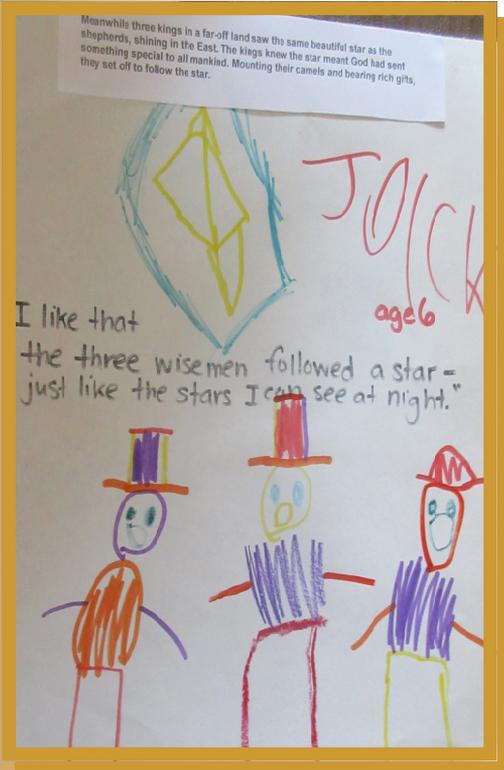
I think this is true of faith. We need the eyes of a child to accept and believe God's promises unconditionally.

Jesus said, "I tell you the truth, unless you change and become like little children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. Therefore, whoever humbles himself like this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven. And whoever welcomes a little child like this in my name wel-

Dec 6th



“Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these. Truly I tell you, anyone who will not receive the kingdom of God like a little child will never enter it.” And he took the children in his arms, placed his hands on them and blessed them. Mark 10:14b-16



Dec 7th

## **I CAN ONLY IMAGINE** by MercyMe

I can only imagine, what it will be like,  
When I walk, by Your side.

I can only imagine, what my eyes will see,  
When Your face is before me.

I can only imagine . . .

I can only imagine.

Surrounded by Your glory,  
What will my heart feel?

Will I dance for You Jesus,  
Or in awe of You be still?

Will I stand in Your presence,  
Or to my knees will I fall?

Will I sing hallelujah,

Will I be able to speak at all?

I can only imagine . . .

I can only imagine.

I can only imagine, when that day comes,  
When I find myself, standing in the Son.

I can only imagine when all I would do is forever,  
Forever worship You.

I can only imagine . . .



Submitted by Ann Ladd

And now you will be silent and not able to speak until the day this happens, because you did not believe my words, which will come true at their appointed time.”

Luke 1:20

Dec 8th

# 2nd Sunday in Advent



# Choir Prayers

Jeanne Hunt

Dec 9th

## *"Prepare Ye the Way"*

**T**onight, Lord, we begin our preparation  
for Christmas.

These are the wonder songs that proclaim the  
marvel of that moment of divine love.

We are privileged to enter this season once again.

A season in which our voices revel in the quiet awe  
of your humble birth.

Lullabys and gentle lyrics are our prayer as we  
sing to an infant no different in birth than  
the babies we have held.

Keep us in touch, Lord, with our task.

Our voices bring to this congregation the  
innocent wonder, the magnificent joy,  
the overwhelming love of this Jesus  
who became one among us.

Allow us to see him anew in these Advent weeks;

See him as the child of love;

Sing to him with tender hearts.

For we can easily get lost in our busy ways . . .

So much music to learn, so little time, so many  
Christmas chores.

Help us spend these Advent rehearsals as a time  
apart in your presence,

Never forgetting the beauty and simplicity of that  
holy night.

A night that changed our lives.

A night that deserves the voices of angels!

Submitted by Kathryn Griffin

A voice of one calling: "In the wilderness prepare the way for  
the LORD; make straight in the desert a highway for our God.

Isaiah 40:30

2011 Age 17

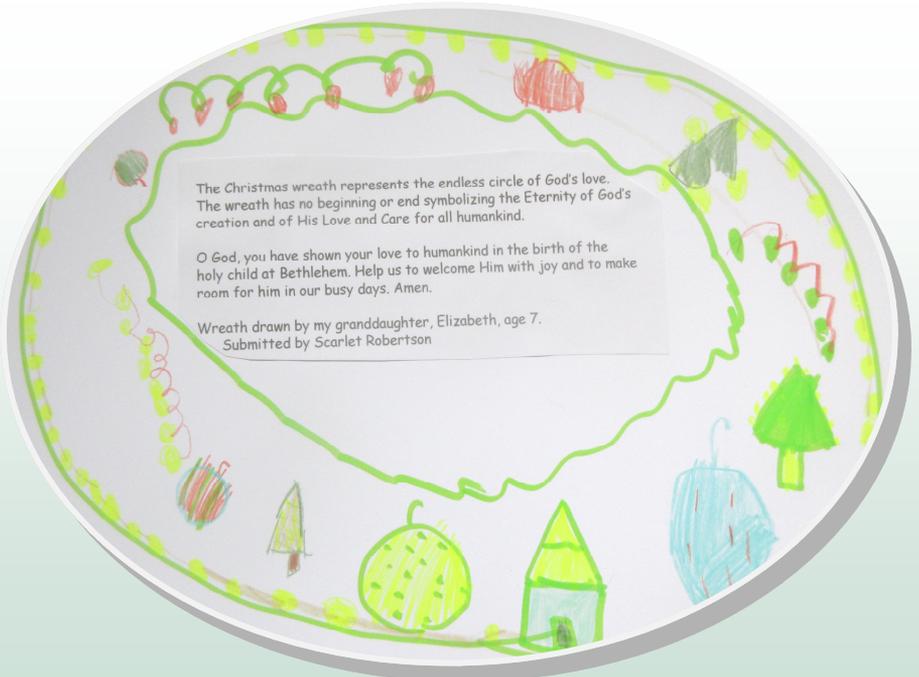


Following a beautiful bright star, the shepherds found their way to the stable in Bethlehem. Mary and Joseph were there with the baby, Jesus. The shepherds rejoiced, for as the angels had promised, they'd found the Son of God.

Dec 10th

All your children  
will be taught by  
the LORD, and  
great will be their  
peace.

Isaiah 54:13



The Christmas wreath represents the endless circle of God's love. The wreath has no beginning or end symbolizing the Eternity of God's creation and of His Love and Care for all humankind.

O God, you have shown your love to humankind in the birth of the holy child at Bethlehem. Help us to welcome Him with joy and to make room for him in our busy days. Amen.

Wreath drawn by my granddaughter, Elizabeth, age 7.  
Submitted by Scarlet Robertson

# Measure Your Lifetime in Blessings

Dec 11th

Measure your lifetime in blessings,  
Not in years you have known...

Count up the number of people you've touched,  
Add up the love you have shown...

Measure your days in the gladness  
That you and your loved ones have shared...  
Tally the smiles on the faces of friends,  
Total the times you have cared...

Yes, measure your lifetime in blessings,  
And you'll always remain in your prime--  
For youth is a feeling you keep in your heart

*Submitted by Margie Mock*



Dec 12th

# This Christmas

mend a quarrel.  
Seek out a forgotten friend.  
Write a love letter.  
Share some treasure. Give a  
soft answer. Encourage youth.  
Keep a promise. Find the time.  
Forgive an enemy. Listen.  
Apologize if you were wrong.  
Think first of someone else.  
Be kind and gentle.  
Laugh a little. Laugh a little more.  
Express your gratitude. Gladden  
the heart of a child. Take pleasure  
in the beauty and wonder of the earth.  
Speak your love. Speak it again.  
Speak it still once again.

ANONYMOUS

*Submitted by Becky Cavallo*

But when the kindness and love of God our Savior appeared, he saved us, not because of the righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy. He saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit, whom he poured out on us generously through Jesus Christ our Savior, so that, having been justified by his grace, we might become heirs having the hope of eternal life.

Titus 3:4-7

Dec 13th

**Advent 2019**

*The true light that shines on all people was coming into the world. {John 1:9}*

We welcome this time of year because it marks the time of Advent and the first season of the Christian Year. Believers and non-believers decorate with colorful lights, but the true light comes from Jesus the Christ. Let us pray for each other and thank God for the Blessing of fellowship.

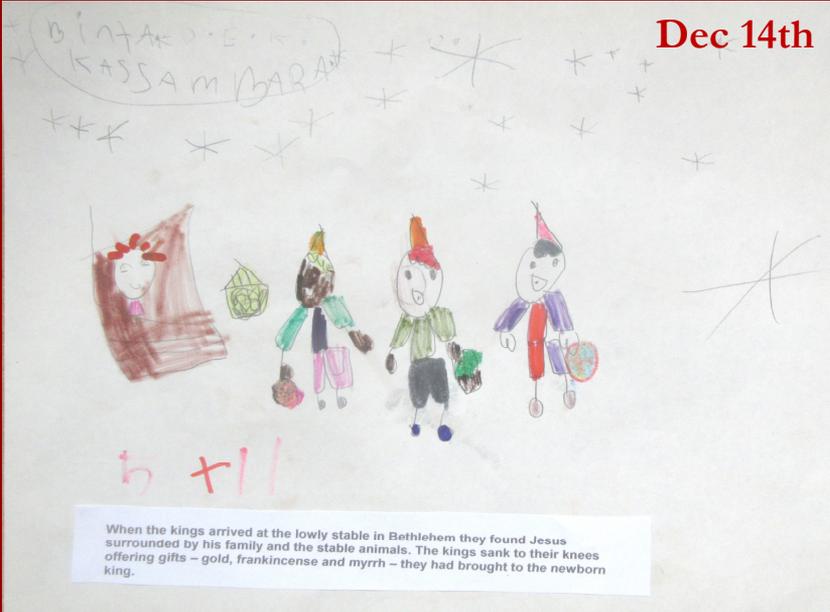
Almighty God, we worship you, O Lord  
Deliver us from the uncertainty of today and bring HOPE  
Vindicate those who were wronged, surround them with your LOVE  
Encourage them to continue on the journey with JOY  
Nurture and heal them, increase their faith and bring them PEACE  
Turns tears into rejoicing with praise to you, O CHRIST our King

Today and always. In Jesus' name. AMEN

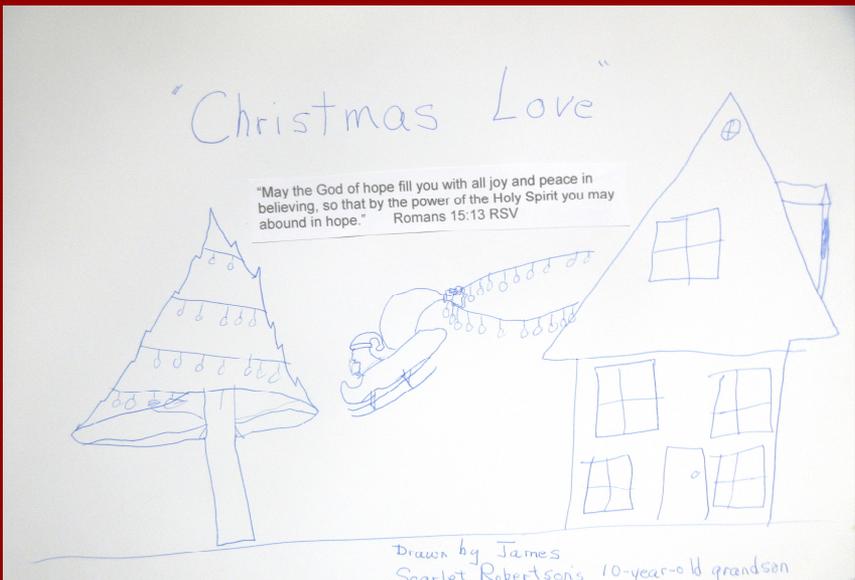
Rev Dr. Jalene C. Chase, Pastor

*The true light that gives  
light to everyone was  
coming into the world.  
John 1:9*

Dec 14th



I have no greater joy than to hear that my children are walking in the truth. 3 John 1:4



Dec 15th

# 3rd Sunday in Advent



**Dec 16th**

In a previous devotional booklet I wrote about an amazing woman whose funeral I attended. I heard story after story about how she would say “Thank you, Jesus” all day long. I decided that I wanted to be more diligent in expressing my appreciation to God for all the blessings that he has bestowed on my throughout the years. So, I made it a habit to Thank God and Jesus all day long. When the green lights on the road went my way, I thanked God. When something good happened unexpectedly, I thanked God. Even when things didn’t seem to go my way, I thanked God for seeing me through.

This year has been an excessively stressful year. Pat and I are hoping to retire next year, which isn’t an easy task when you own a business and have to sell that business to move on. Then, there’s getting our house ready to sell. After 32 years, you collect a lot of “stuff” that has to be sorted and redistributed. There’s also the impending move and leaving what I know to go to someplace different and learning all over again. All of this is exciting and frightening at the same time.

More than any year previous, this year has shown me how life is in constant change; kids grow up and I don’t see them as much; friends and family have changes in their lives that occupy more of their time and I don’t see them as much of them; surroundings change and there is a new learning curve. But, through it all, God is with me, guiding me on the journey. Thank you, God!

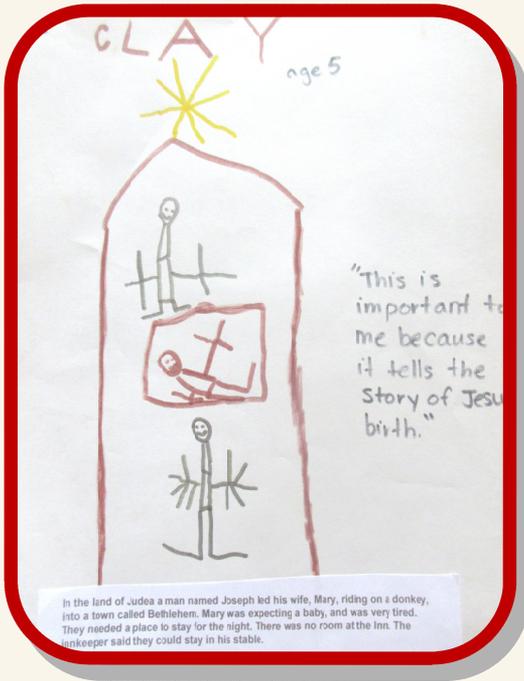
Kathy Mellott

**I WILL GIVE THANKS  
TO YOU, LORD,  
WITH ALL MY HEART;  
I WILL TELL OF ALL YOUR  
WONDERFUL DEEDS.**

PSALM 9:1

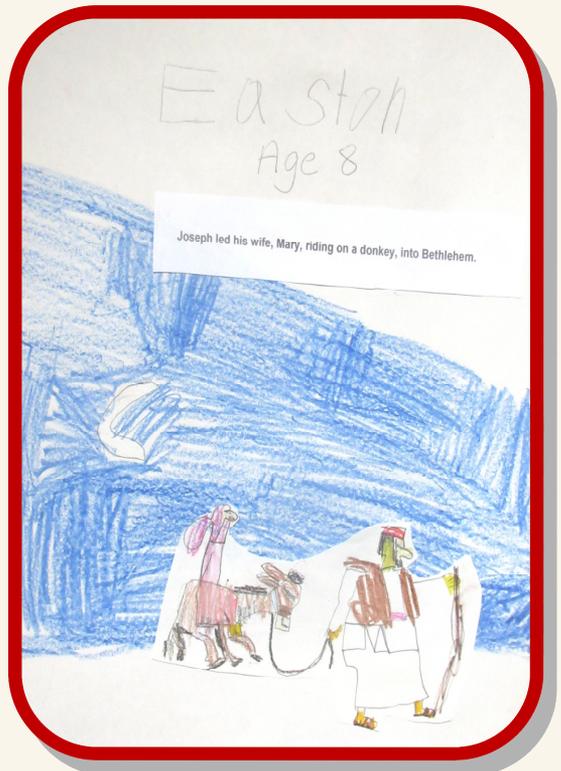


Dec 17th



"Do you hear what these children are saying?" they asked him. "Yes," replied Jesus, "have you never read, "From the lips of children and infants you, Lord, have called forth your praise'?"

Matthew 21:16



**Dec 18th**

Jesus stay near me,  
With all the crazy things I do  
I'm one of the sheep,  
You need to pursue.  
I am wandering here and  
My thoughts stray there...  
Please keep me centered on serving  
And focused on You!  
You, Jesus, are the only way.  
We remember that especially on Christmas Day!  
You are my help and my strength.  
You were sent from above.  
Please do me a favor-  
Send my Mother my love.

- Debbie McNitt

*Part of me went with you  
the day you left.*

*Sending my  
love to Heaven*

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

John 3:16 ESV

# A Carol for Children

By Ogden Nash

Dec 19th

God rest you merry, Innocents,  
Let nothing you dismay,  
Let nothing wound an eager heart  
Upon this Christmas day.

Yours be the genial holly wreaths,  
The stockings and the tree;  
An aged world to you bequeaths  
Its own forgotten glee.



Soon, soon enough come crueller gifts,  
The anger and the tears;  
Between you now there sparsely drifts  
A handful yet of years.



Oh, dimly, dimly glows the star  
Through the electric throng;  
The bidding in temple and bazaar  
Drowns out the silver song.

The ancient altars smoke afresh,  
The ancient idols stir;  
Faint in the reek of burning flesh  
Sink frankincense and myrrh.

Gaspar, Balthazar, Melchior!  
Where are your offerings now?  
What greetings to the Prince of War,  
His darkly branded brow?



Two ultimate laws alone we know,  
The ledger and the sword --  
So far away, so long ago,  
We lost the infant Lord.

Only the children clasp His hand;  
His voice speaks low to them,  
And still for them the shining band  
Wings over Bethlehem.

God rest you merry, Innocents,  
While innocence endures,  
A sweeter Christmas than we to ours  
May you bequeath to yours.

And she shall bring forth a son, and thou  
shalt call his name Jesus: for he shall save  
his people from their sins. Matthew 1:21

Dec 20th

CHRISTMAS

This the season we all anticipate  
Children so excited they can't seem to wait.  
Beautiful trees are trimmed just so.  
Houses are lit up and all aglow.  
Decorations of red and green are a delight to see,  
As we plan and shop for gifts under the tree.  
There's baking and making wonderful things to eat,  
The smells of Christmas, oh what a treat.  
Children tell Santa and he certainly will know,  
How anxious they wait for toys he will bestow.  
Carolers sing of long ago on this day,  
A child was born in a manger of hay.  
Rejoice! Rejoice! The angels did sing.  
God sent his son salvation to bring.  
On Christmas Day we celebrate with joy,  
The birthday of Jesus, our savior, a baby boy!

*By: Carolyn Hicks*

Rejoice in the Lord always: and again I say, Rejoice.

Let your moderation be known unto all men. The Lord is at hand.

Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God.

And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.

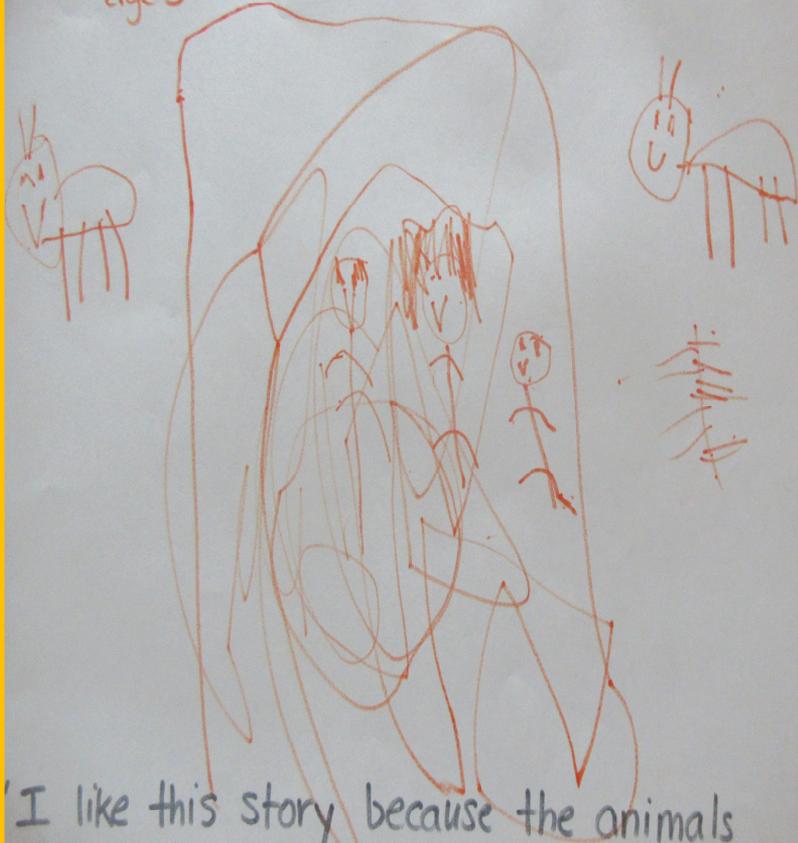
Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things.

Philippians 4:4-8 (KJV)

Dec 21st

Levi,  
age 5

Mary gave birth to her baby, Jesus, in the stable while the animals looked on. There was great joy in the stable that night because Jesus was a very special child.



'I like this story because the animals get to meet Baby Jesus first.' -Levi

Dec 22nd

# 4th Sunday in Advent



# JUST A LITTLE DONKEY

JUST A LITTLE DONKEY,  
BUT ON MY BACK I BORE  
THE ONE AND ONLY SAVIOR  
THE WORLD WAS WAITING FOR.

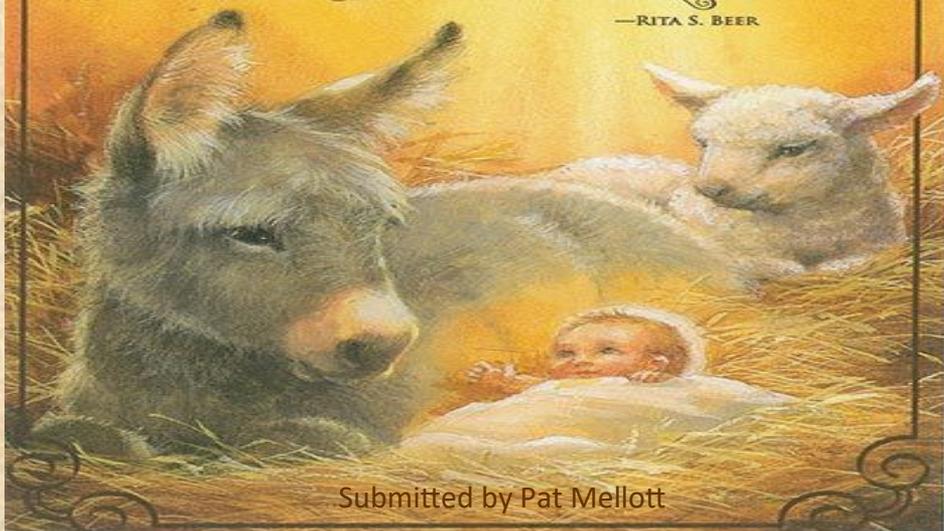
Dec 23rd

JUST A LITTLE DONKEY,  
BUT I WAS STRONG AND PROUD—  
I GLADLY CARRIED MARY  
THROUGH THE CHAOS OF THE CROWD.

I BROUGHT HER TO A STABLE  
WHERE SHE MADE A TINY BED..  
A PLACE FOR BABY JESUS  
TO LAY HIS LITTLE HEAD.

I PRAY THE WORLD REMEMBERS  
THAT SPECIAL CHRISTMAS NIGHT  
WHEN JUST A LITTLE DONKEY  
CARRIED HEAVEN'S PRECIOUS LIGHT.

—RITA S. BEER



Submitted by Pat Mellott

Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! Shout in triumph, O daughter of Jerusalem! Behold, your king is coming to you; He is just and endowed with salvation, Humble, and mounted on a donkey, Even on a colt, the foal of a donkey.

Zechariah 9:9



He tends his flock like a shepherd: He gathers the lambs in his arms and carries them close to his heart; he gently leads those that have young. Isaiah 40:11

**Dec 25th**



# **Merry Christmas!**

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Open hearts. Open minds. Open doors.

**The people of The United Methodist Church™**

KEM 11/2019