

SYMBOL OF THE WEEK: MANGER

Song: Silent Night (Verse 1)

*Silent night, Holy night
 All is calm, all is bright
 Round yon virgin, mother and child
 Holy infant, tender and mild
 Sleep in heavenly peace,
 Sleep in heavenly peace.*



PRELUDE

Mary was about to have a baby. The king ordered that all people needed to move and go to the place from where their family originally came. Mary and Joseph had to be uncomfortable when they just wanted a quiet place to start their family. They had to travel when all they wanted was peace.

THE STORY

Baby Jesus was getting ready to be born, but Mary and Joseph (who were Jesus' parents) had to travel to a city that was very far away. Even though she was pregnant, she had to travel very far, and when they got there, there was nowhere for them to stay. All of the hotels were full, and the only place they could go was a stable where all the animals lived.

While they were in the barn, Mary might have sung lullabies to Jesus. When babies cry, mommies or daddies can hold their babies in their arms and let them know that they are safe. When Jesus was born, Mary could remember that God was making a way for her to be safe even when things were hard or scary. And, just like Mary, we can have peace because we know that we are safe in God's arms because of Jesus.

FINALE

Jesus brings PEACE when we have no peace.

VERSE

"For to us a child is born, to us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder, and his name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace." Isaiah 9:6

SYMBOL OF THE WEEK: ANGEL

Song: Joy To The World (Verse 1)

*Joy to the world! The Lord is come
 Let earth receive her King!
 Let every heart prepare Him room
 And heaven and nature sing
 And heaven and nature sing
 And heaven, and heaven and nature sing*



PRELUDE

The shepherds were out in the fields. Most people didn't want to be around them. They were lonely and people thought that they weren't important. Their days were long and not that exciting.

THE STORY

For the shepherds, it seemed like an ordinary night. They were spending a typical evening watching their sheep. To start, it couldn't be more ordinary.

Then, something extraordinary happened. An angel appeared out of nowhere and started speaking to them. It said:

"Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. And this will be a sign for you: you will find a baby wrapped in swaddling cloths and lying in a manger."

Then the shepherds sang with joy! The shepherds were so happy that they went as fast as they could to see this baby that the angels talked about. They were so excited that they shared with Mary everything that the angels said. They were so full of JOY that they returned to their fields singing and praising God.

FINALE

Jesus is the source of the greatest JOY that we could ever know because he saved us!

VERSE

"Though you do not now see him, you believe in him and rejoice with joy that is inexpressible and filled with glory." Peter 1:8b

LOVE

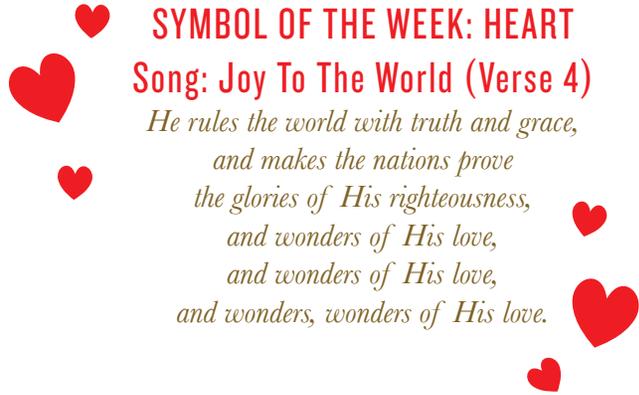
week 4



SYMBOL OF THE WEEK: HEART

Song: Joy To The World (Verse 4)

*He rules the world with truth and grace,
and makes the nations prove
the glories of His righteousness,
and wonders of His love,
and wonders of His love,
and wonders, wonders of His love.*



PRELUDE

Mary was just an ordinary girl in an ordinary home in an ordinary town. Soon, God was going to do something very extraordinary through her life.

THE STORY

Before Mary and Joseph traveled to Bethlehem, Mary (who was Jesus' mother) was visited by an angel. The angel told her not to be afraid but that God loved her and was happy with her. Then the angel shared with her wonderful news! She told Mary that she would have a baby, and that baby would be the person for whom the whole world had been waiting. His name would be Jesus. Even though it seemed impossible, the angel told Mary that nothing was impossible with God!

Then Mary sang. She sang a song to God that said that God is amazing. This song said that he is strong and that he cares for us even when we don't deserve it. That he was going to keep his promises. That he loved us so much that he sent His only son Jesus to save us.

FINALE

God's love is greater than any love we have ever experienced before.

VERSE

"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



LIGHT

week 1



SYMBOL OF THE WEEK: STAR

Song: Silent Night (Verse 2)

*Silent night, holy night
Son of God, love's pure light
Radiant beams from thy holy face
With the dawn of redeeming grace,
Jesus, Lord at thy birth
Jesus, Lord at thy birth*



PRELUDE

The wise men were kings who studied the stars. When they looked up at the stars, they searched everywhere for a sign that Jesus had come. They were looking for a light in the dark night sky.

THE STORY

God had been quiet for over 400 years and things felt dark. Darkness meant that there was no light to show them the way; there was no light to guide them. Without light, they did not know where God was leading them. God's people were looking for someone to lead them, just like a light in the darkness. They were waiting for a Messiah. They were waiting for a light to shine in the darkness.

The wise men were looking for a star as a sign that this someone was born. Finally, they looked up and saw that a bright star was shining in the East. They knew this was the star they had been waiting for. They left and went to find him. When they got there, they saw that this someone was Jesus!

They probably sang to Jesus, because they knew that this was no ordinary baby. They bowed down and worshipped him because they knew that this baby was sent by God and was here to save them.

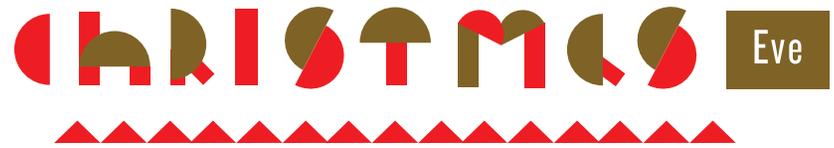
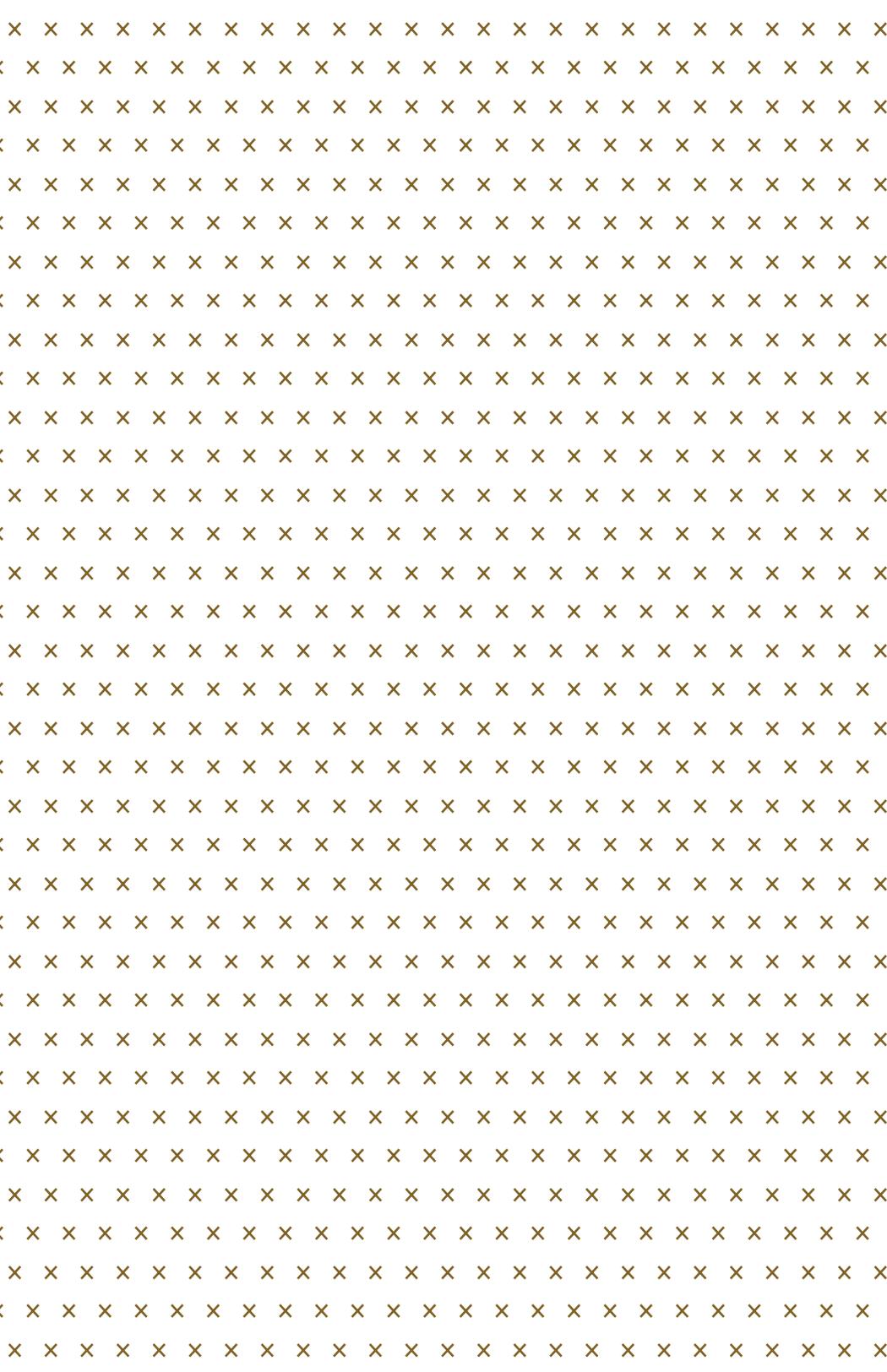
FINALE

Jesus is the the LIGHT that will lead us through the darkness and give us life.

VERSE

"I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life." John 8:12





PRELUDE

Everything that had ever happened in all of history was leading up to Jesus. None of us deserved to be with God. Nobody does the right thing all the time. We all deserve to be separated from God. That meant we would be separated from light, hope, joy and love. But God had a different plan.

Note: There is no window for Christmas Eve in order to build anticipation for opening the main door on Christmas Day.



SYMBOL OF THE WEEK: NATIVITY

Song: Go Tell It On The Mountain

*Go tell it on the mountain
Over the hills and everywhere
Go tell it on the mountain
That Jesus Christ is born*



God's people were waiting for Jesus to be born. Most people thought he would be coming into the world in the most important way, and that all the important people of the world would be singing songs of praise to him. Everyone thought that he would have the best singers and musicians making music in celebration of his arrival.

Instead, he arrived on a quiet night. The songs he heard were the sounds of animals in the stable. The quiet lullabies of his parents. The soft sounds of the night. It was not in the way we would expect.

In the same way, he would save us in a way we would not expect. He would take away all of our sins by paying for them on the cross. That way, we can come to God, just like he came to us on that wonderful night! And now, we get to use our LOUDEST voices to sing about how excited we are that Jesus was born and that he saved us!

He is the light that points us to what is right.

He is peace for us no matter what is happening!

We can have joy because he saved us!

And we know that God is love because he sent Jesus to save us.

And when we sing to God and for God, it is one of the most beautiful sounds in the world.

ACTIVITIES



WEEK 1:

Turn off all the lights in your house. Talk about how it is hard to see without light. Turn on all the lights and yell, “JESUS!” as you do. Jesus is the true light that guides us and lets us see.



WEEK 2:

Gather around your bathtub or sink and start to fill it with water. If possible, try to put something that floats in the water. As the water runs, talk about how the ripples are choppy and the floating object seem unstable. Once it gets full, pause and let the water sit until it is still. Talk about how the water looks peaceful. Talk about the peace that we can always have if we trust in Jesus.



WEEK 3:

As a family, gather around and talk about what joy is (great happiness and excitement). Ask your kids what brings them great happiness and excitement, and tell them they can sing or shout them out. When they do, they can jump or dance! At the end, you can all shout, “Jesus!” together to celebrate the one who brings us the greatest joy!



WEEK 4:

Cut out the verse card for “love” and color it in. Give it to someone with whom you want to share God’s love.



CHRISTMAS EVE:

Have your kids draw someone who helps save people (firefighter, doctor, etc.). Ask them to draw how they think Jesus will save them.

INTRO



Hello Apostles Church Families!

I hope you are all enjoying this holiday season.

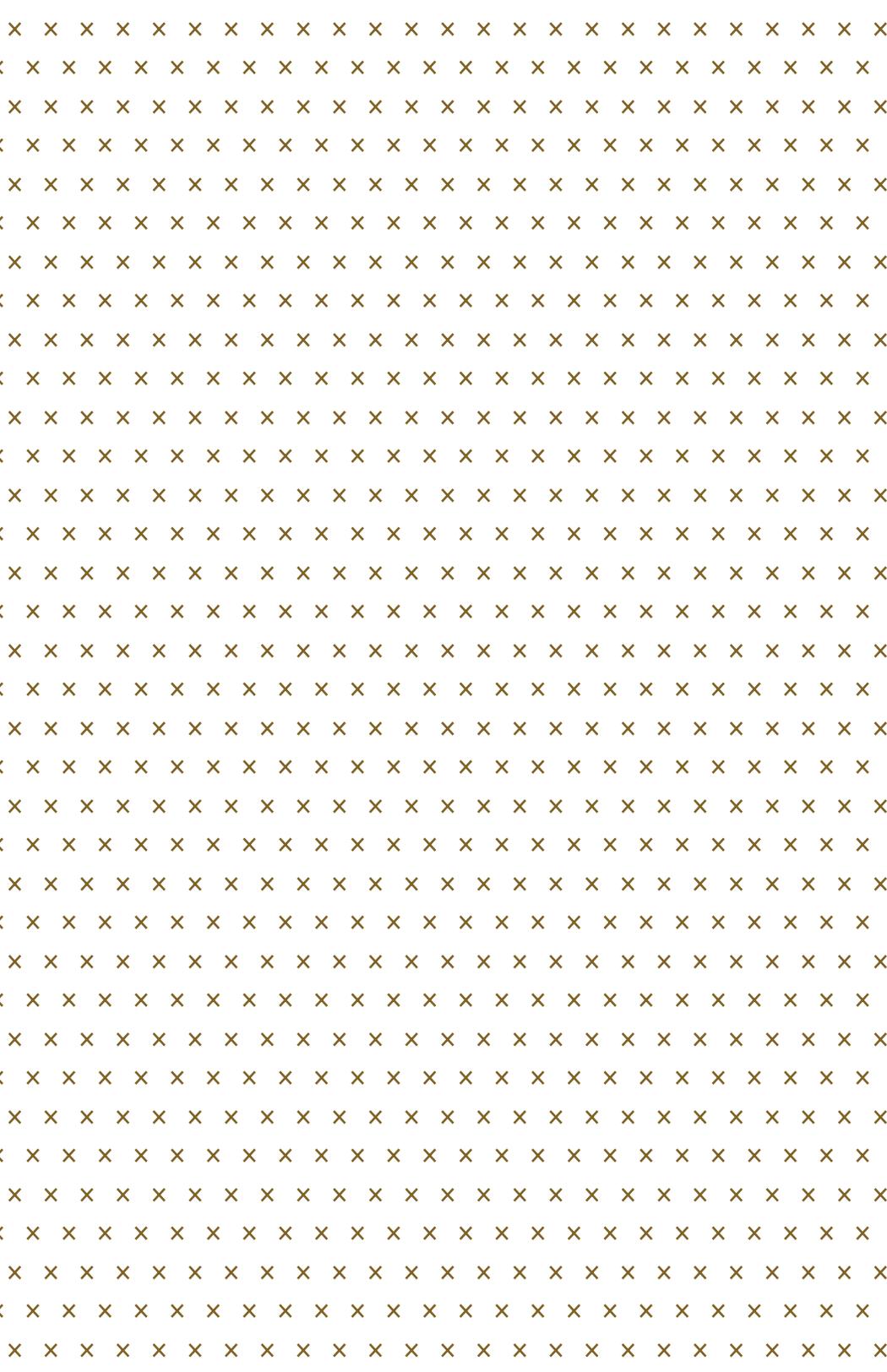
This year’s family devotional is themed “Christmas Songs,” and follows the four themes of advent (Light, Peace, Joy and Love) in the context of different Christmas Songs and parts of the Christmas Story. Even though the songs and stories may be out of order chronologically, your family can connect them with the candles that will be lit during the worship gathering each Sunday. Our hope would be that your family would find time each week to sit down and talk about the birth of Christ together. Through this devotional you can:

- 1) Open the window together on the Advent Calendar
- 2) Sing together in worship
- 3) Read the story together
- 4) Do an activity together (on the activity page)
- 5) Cut out the verse card and post it somewhere around the house (on the verse page in the back of the booklet)
- 6) Pray together as a family

Our hope is this Christmas season will draw your family closer to Christ!

–Freeman Field & The Apostles Kids Leadership Team





WEEK 1:

“I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.” John 8:12

WEEK 2:

“For to us a child is born, to us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder, and his name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.” Isaiah 9:6



WEEK 3:

“Though you do not now see him, you believe in him and rejoice with joy that is inexpressible and filled with glory.” Peter 1:8b



WEEK 4:

“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





CHRISTMAS

SONGS

weekly family devotional