

CHILDREN AND FAMILY MINISTRIES

SECOND  PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH  
**ADVENT 2020**



*Who is this Messiah?*

## Parents, Caregivers, and Trusted Adults,

### Will you take a journey with us this Advent season?

The Season of Advent is an invitation to wait with anticipation. It's a season where we know there is something really incredible coming soon that isn't quite here yet. But we can already sense how amazing it is going to be even when the waiting is so hard. So we stand on our tiptoes; we hold our breath; we strain our eyes to see what is coming - who is coming. We can even feel the change that will come as a result. This Advent, we invite you into the story in a new way. We invite you into a practice of active waiting full of HOPE, PEACE, JOY, and LOVE. We invite you into the expectation that even here and even now God is doing something amazing. Let's journey together!

This year, let's remember the Christmas Story of God's love found in the Bible. Weary travelers with nowhere to stay found a warm and dry place to have a baby. A messenger, an "angel," found everyday people doing everyday things and told them not to be afraid. The wise ones seeking a king found one who cannot be pushed into violence in the face of bullies.

This story is found in the Bible, yes, but it is also found in our homes, our lives lived each day. Advent is about waiting, so as we wait together this year, the stable scene will be found in your house. The promises kept will take place in your home. This year, the manger is in your house. Someone's coming. Who is coming? Jesus is coming. Come into our homes, Lord Jesus. There's room in our homes for you.

#### What You'll Need:

- Advent candles - traditionally 4 purple candles for waiting and 1 white candle for Christmas!
- Various materials from around your house. How can what you have be used to make a space for what we need? Advent is about waiting, so as we wait together this year, the stable scene will be found in your house. The promises kept will take place in your home. This year, the manger is in your house.
- *Spark Bible* or NRSV - Take turns reading, Luke 2: 1-7. Read it every week. If possible, have every person tell the story. It is their story. It is our story.

In this packet you have a **red heart** for December 23 when you join the "Meet at the Manger" Zoom Children's Christmas Story. There are also **twelve stars** to journey with the wise folks during the twelve days of Christmas before Epiphany. We are actively waiting and preparing for the arrival of the Christ Child on Christmas Morning.

On the [SecondChurch.org/Children](http://SecondChurch.org/Children) webpage you will find a coloring sheet and a weekly interactive Advent space for your children to explore. PLUS there will be videos of Christmas carols and information about church events.

Let's make a space in our Sacred Space, our Peaceful Place, to remember the Christmas story in our own homes. For that is surely where we will find that it is still Christmas.

Peace,  
Kat.  
Ann

Brian  
Karen

Amy  
Megan

Carol  
Patrick

The season of Advent includes the four weeks leading up to Christmas Eve.

- Advent Week 1 - HOPE - November 29 - December 5
- Advent Week 2 - PEACE - December 6 - 12
- Advent Week 3 - JOY - December 13-19
- Advent Week 4 - LOVE - December 20 - 23

This booklet outlines themes and activities for each week along this journey to the birth of Jesus.

**Let's add some color!  
Have fun decorating this page  
and the front cover!**

Cover Art by  
Chris Jeanguenat. Used with  
permission of the artist.



*Thank you, Julia Lowe, for this nativity drawing!*



## Online Advent Living Room

Visit [SecondChurch.org/Children](http://SecondChurch.org/Children) each week during Advent to play in the Online Advent Living Room, an interactive space for discovery and fun. Watch how the room changes as we get closer to Christmas!

# HOPE

## Advent Week 1

### *Being Advent, waiting for the Christ Child*

Gather in your Sacred Space, your Holy Place in your home.

Take four candles and cluster them together. You may want to label them "Hope, Peace, Joy, and Love." Traditionally, they would be purple. Light the Hope candle each night of the first week of Advent. Take turns leading and responding.

Leader: *Someone is coming. Who is coming?*

Everyone: *Jesus is coming!*

All: *Come into our home, Lord Jesus. There is room in our home for you.*

Read Luke 2:1-7 or tell the Christmas story.

### *Prayer*

*God of Hope, you keep promises made to us and to all people. Help us to find you in our home this week. Help us to see your presence in each other's faces and to feel you here with us in our times together.*

*We pray this in your son Jesus' name.*

*Amen.*

### *Advent Waiting, finding the Christmas story in your home*

Have you ever made a pot or plate out of clay or playdough? When the dough comes out of the bag or jar, it doesn't look like much, does it? But you KNOW that it can become. You KNOW that if you rub it and shape it, then it can be almost anything!

This Advent and Christmas, let's find the story in our own homes. Let's think about the ways that **HOPE** can warm us and fit into spaces we did not even imagine last year. Where have you found the most **HOPE**? Where have you remembered that God is with you? Where have you asked hard questions and felt great big hugs? That place is the space to land, the spot to rest. Like the people of Israel waiting for generations for a promised messiah, or one who makes you safe in times when bad things happen, we remember promises made by God. We know that God will keep those promises. We do not know what the **HOPE** will look like, but we make a space for it in our lives. Let's make a space for it in our homes.

**Let's build a stable.** There was no room for Mary and Joseph in the expected place, an inn, so they stayed in an unexpected place, which was a stable. Set up an unexpected place to welcome Jesus in your home. Will you use sheets and chairs? Will you use an old cardboard box? Do you have a playhouse you can use?

This year, we will find room for the **HOPE** of the trust in God's promises in our own homes.

# HOPE



**Let's  
Make  
A  
Stable!**

*Thank you,  
Nemirovsky Family!*

# PEACE

## Advent Week 2

### *Being Advent, waiting for the Christ Child*

Gather in your Sacred Space, your Holy Place in your home.

Light the Hope and Peace candles each night of the second week of Advent. Take turns leading and responding.

Leader: *Someone is coming. Who is coming?*

Everyone: *Jesus is coming!*

All: *Come into our home, Lord Jesus. There is room in our home for you.*

Read Luke 2:1-7 or tell the Christmas story.

### *Prayer*

*God of Peace, you make and keep promises not just to us but to all people. Help us point to those promises at work in the world. Help us to share the excitement of you here with us in our times together. Help us to live so that others can see your promises kept in the world. Help us to shine with your peace.*

*We pray this in your son Jesus' name.*

*Amen.*

### *Advent Waiting, finding the Christmas story in your home*

How do you know something BIG is about to happen? Do you hear it on the news? Do you read it in an email? Do you see a poster about it at the grocery? Does a friend tell you? How do you KNOW something BIG is about to happen?

This Advent and Christmas, let's find the story in our own homes. Let's remember the promises made by God. Think of last week. God promised a "messiah," or one who makes us safe in times when very bad things happen. We had HOPE, because we KNOW that God is a promise keeper. We don't keep that news to ourselves! We share it! We tell others. We get ready. We want everyone to be on the look out for that promise kept! In the Bible, how do people know the time is close for the promises to be kept? A baby, John, will tell EVERYONE! Then when the wonderful event happens, how do people find this promise kept? A STAR shines. There is a light unlike any other light. Seeing promises kept and shared out in the world, that is PEACE. Sharing the good news, helping other people see the light, that is PEACE.

**Let's make a star for our stable!** Make a bright light so that everyone in your house, or maybe your neighborhood, can see that God's promise is kept. Will you draw a star and hang it up? Maybe you will put a bright light on your tree near your stable. How will you help people know God's PEACE, God's promises kept in the world?

# PEACE



## Let's Make A Star!



# JOY

## Advent Week 3

### ***Being Advent, waiting for the Christ Child***

Gather in your Sacred Space, your Holy Place in your home.

Light the Hope, Peace, and Joy candles each night of the third week of Advent. Take turns leading and responding.

Leader: Someone is coming. *Who is coming?*

Everyone: *Jesus is coming!*

All: *Come into our home, Lord Jesus. There is room in our home for you.*

Read Luke 2:1-7 or tell the Christmas story.

### ***Prayer***

*God of Joy, who makes and keeps promises that bring peace to the world, shower us with your joy. Help us tell of your goodness and share your good news so that others can feel the bubbling-up joy of your presence.*

*We pray this in your son Jesus' name.*

*Amen.*

### ***Advent Waiting, finding the Christmas story in your home***

Some news is just too good to keep. Some news is a bubbling fullness of feeling that fills up the space in us and around us. That is **JOY!** It fills the space between waiting in hope and the promises at work in peace. It makes the promises explode with **JOY** out into the world for everyone.

We have a star to help people find the stable, how will they know what it means? How will people know that this news is for them? **ANGELS!** Angels are messengers sent from God. They are the shouting cheerleaders of Good News!

When a promise is made, a promise is trusted, a promise is shared and active in the world, then a promise is **SO BIG** it showers our lives with **JOY**. Does it go to the palace gates and get announced calmly? Does one fancy group get the news before another? Is it the most important people who get the most important news? Well, this is not that kind of promise. This good news promise is too big for one building, one group, one voice. A whole group of angels, God's messengers, will tell shepherds in a field. They were about the most ordinary of the everyday people and places.

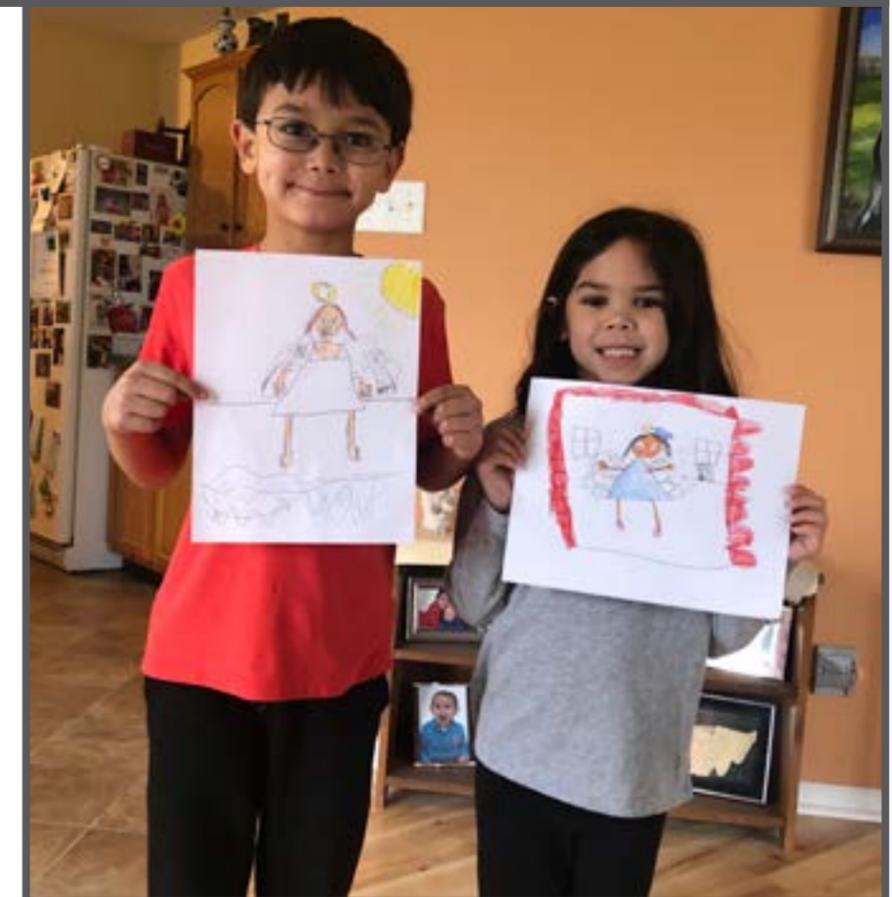
**Let's make an angel**, a messenger from God, who brings the "bubbling up too big for any space" news to your stable in your house. What will they look like? They will bring a promise of **JOY** to the ordinary people in ordinary places through ordinary voices that are made bigger by the "too big" news that is full of **JOY!**

# JOY



***Let's  
Make  
An  
Angel!***

*Thank you,  
Miyamoto Family!*



# LOVE

## Advent Week 4

### *Being Advent, waiting for the Christ Child*

Gather in your Sacred Space, your Holy Place in your home.

Light the Hope, Peace, Joy, and Love candles each night of the fourth week of Advent. Take turns leading and responding.

Leader: *Someone is coming. Who is coming?*

Everyone: *Jesus is coming!*

All: *Come into our home, Lord Jesus. There is room in our home for you.*

Read Luke 2:1-7 or tell the Christmas story.

### **Prayer**

*God of Love, you make and keep promises that bring peace to the world. God whose presence fills the whole world with joy, thank you for loving us. Thank you for being with us. Thank you for sending your son, Jesus as the hope of promises kept, the peace at work, the joy surrounding us, and the love that holds us. Just as Mary held Jesus in her arms and whispered comfort to her new baby boy, you hold us close wrapped in your love. Help us to hold each other close and to love the world as you love us.*

*We pray this in your son Jesus' name.*

*Amen.*

### **Advent Waiting, finding the Christmas story in your home**

All of these promises made, trusted, kept, and shared need somewhere to land. What space can we make for the promises in our homes, in our lives? The Christmas story is a story of God's **LOVE** for the world. It came for everyone and everywhere. It came in an unexpected place in an unexpected way. The STRONG KING to SAVE the world was a small baby. The world was not sure what to do with this gift! But first, the baby needed a place to sleep. It needed a place to be safe and cared for. It needed what all babies need. This is the first of a whole lifetime of unexpected ways that this baby will care for us and help us to care for each other. It starts with making a space for the promises to rest.

**Let's make a place for the baby in our stable**, under our star, near our messenger. The Bible story of Jesus' birth has Mary and Joseph making a space for Jesus in a manger. What can you build or find to fill with warm cloths? Maybe an empty box or a cradle is available? Put it in your stable as a reminder that the promises made a long, long time ago are yours, too. They were promises kept in a stable in Bethlehem though God's gift of **LOVE** in the baby Jesus. We have made a bed for baby Jesus in our stable because we want to remember that God's **LOVE** has a place in our hearts and homes every year, and maybe in a new way this year.

# LOVE



Supplies



**Let's  
Make  
A  
Manger!**

*Thank you,  
Demaree Family!*

# Meet at the Manger

**Christmas Eve-Eve**  
**Wednesday, December 23, 6:30 - 7:15 p.m.**

**Let's gather with your family**, your church family, and your friends. Find a comfy spot in or near your stable. Bring your red heart. Have a marker or pencil for each person around your manger. We will celebrate communion at home, so bring bread and juice or something to eat and something to drink. Be thinking about what you will give to the baby Jesus. How will you show your love for him, and your love for the ordinary people in ordinary places? (Hint: We will put this on the red heart as a gift for the baby Jesus!)

At 6:30 p.m., come to the Children's Ministries Zoom Room! Email [CFM@SecondChurch.org](mailto:CFM@SecondChurch.org) if you need Zoom information.

Feel free to dress up as your favorite character in the story. Together we will sing the songs of our faith and remember the story of how God's love came down to us at Christmas.



## Found Nativity

*Thank you,  
Rev. Brian Shivers!*

# Meet at the Manger

God,  
We find you in surprising places and in wonderful ways.  
This Advent, as we have been waiting,  
We have seen you show up in our homes  
Through the creativity of our imagination  
And through the work of our hands.

You are **HOPE**.  
You keep your promises  
And have shown them to us  
In a stable.  
A place where the animals slept  
Became a nursery for the Promised One, the Messiah.

You are **PEACE**.  
You quiet us in the midst of noisy times  
And speak your stillness to us  
In the shining stars of night.  
A Silent Night when the stars shown bright  
Became a blanket to hold the Prince of Peace.

You are **JOY**.  
You are the good news, a secret too big to keep,  
And it is sung to us  
In the voices of your messengers, angels among us.  
A heavenly chorus, joined by the joy-filled sounds of animals,  
Became a lullaby singing comfort to the people,  
Joy to the World.

You are **LOVE**.  
You are what holds us all together and keeps us safe,  
And show it to us  
In the care, protection, and safety given to us by others.  
Those who watched their sheep  
Became an expression of love for the one who is love,  
the Good Shepherd.

You are **LIGHT**.  
You show us the way even when we aren't sure where to go  
And shine brightly for all to see  
Even in the deepest night.  
This light is given so that all may see  
The Light of the World born as a gift for the whole world.

Thank you, God,  
For Jesus, who is  
**HOPE,**  
**PEACE,**  
**JOY,**  
**LOVE,**  
And **LIGHT**  
For me, my family, and everyone everywhere.

Amen.

# Christmas Day

## The Christ Child is Here!

Gather in your Sacred Space, your Holy Place in your home.

Light the Hope, Peace, Joy, and Love candles. Take turns leading and responding.

Leader: Someone is coming. *Who is coming?*

Everyone: *Jesus is coming!*

All: *Come into our home, Lord Jesus. There is room in our home for you.*

Leader: *But wait! Jesus is here! Jesus was here all along.*

Light the Christ Candle.

Leader: *Jesus is found in our home every day, and we can find God's HOPE, PEACE, JOY, and LOVE all year long.*

Read Luke 2:1-7 or tell the Christmas story.

## Prayer

*God, we found Christmas; or did Christmas find us? We waited and watched and prayed. Thank you for this Advent time to remember that in your son we find the HOPE of promises kept, the PEACE of promises at work in the world, the JOY of promises proclaimed to all, and the LOVE of promises made new in your son Jesus. Thank you for this Christmas LIGHT. Help us to find it in our hearts and homes all year long.*

*We pray this in your son Jesus' name.*

*Amen.*

Let's add a picture here of YOUR Nativity scene!



# Epiphany

## Season of Knowing

Once the good news of those long ago promises kept was out...everyone wanted to see! There were wise folks from the East who followed the star to Bethlehem! At first, they looked in the usual places, the expected places. They looked in the palace. They asked the king. Where is this *new king*? "We want to find him and worship him," but the new king was not here. Where was he? They looked into the heavens and saw a star. They followed it and found the promised KING of ISRAEL. It was a baby. A BABY? A king would have a crown, but would a baby wear a crown? What kind of crown do you think the wise folks brought from the east? What kind of crown would the baby Jesus wear? Jesus will be called "The King of Love." How might his crown be different from a regular king's crown?

**Let's add a crown to our stable scene.** The crown is for a king that does not boss others around and decide who is best, but a king that welcomes everyone and gives everyone a piece of the Hope, Peace, Joy, and Love of God. You might take turns hiding the crown and finding it. Where will the crown rest in your stable scene?

## Second Church Star Search

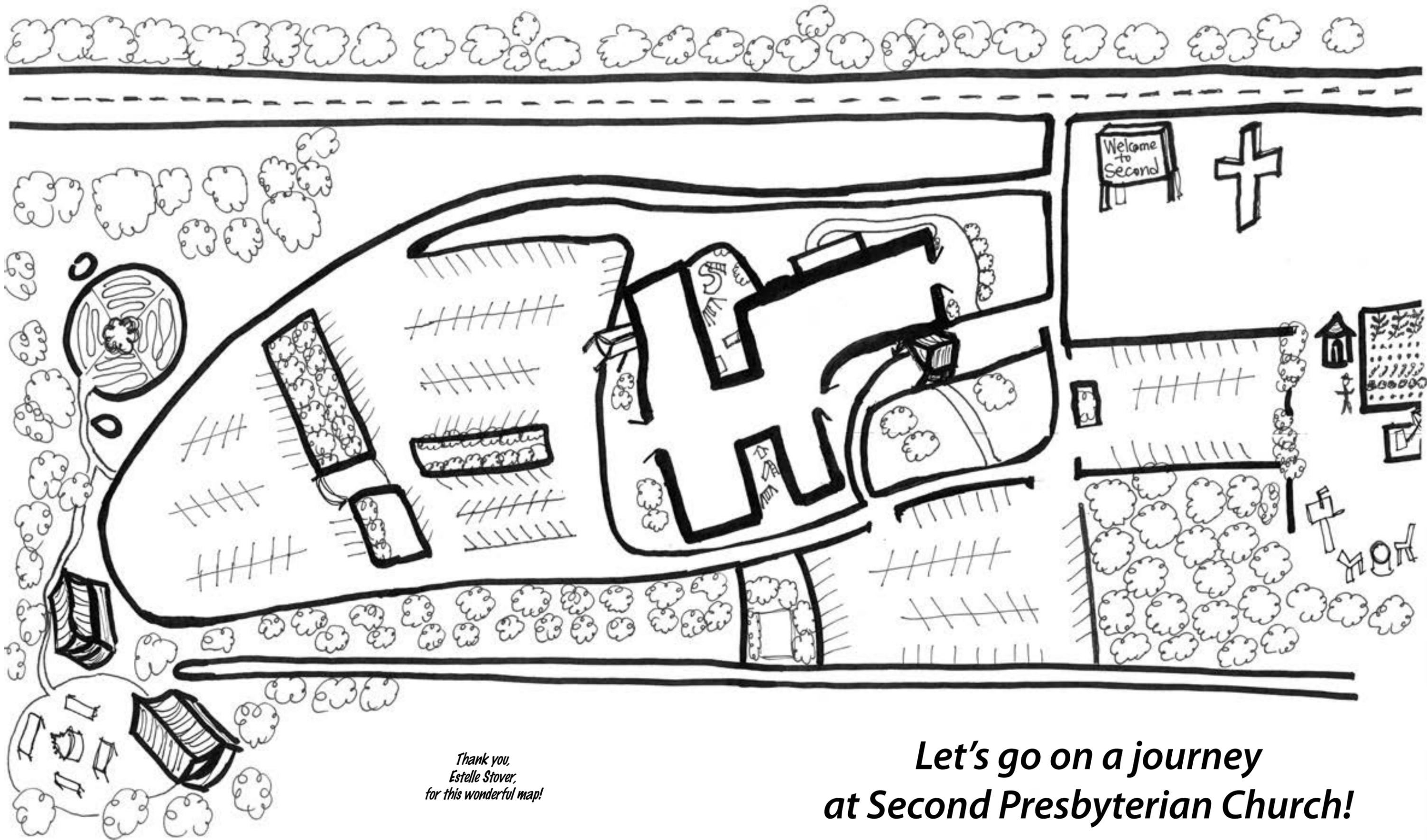
**Let's go on a journey!** "Epiphany" means "I realize" or "Aha." It means to find Jesus, to see Jesus, and to know that Jesus is here. We have found Jesus in our homes this Advent! Now, for the 12 days between Christmas morning and January 6th or the day of Epiphany, let's look for Jesus around us.

It's a Second Church Star Search! Take the map in your booklet and see if you can find 12 places where Jesus can be found around Second Church. If you want to, go walk around the church grounds. You'll find 12 hidden stars. Find one star, and it will lead you to another, until you end up where you started. Mark those locations on your map with star stickers. Maybe you could make a map of your home or neighborhood. Where would you find stars? Where would you find Jesus?



## Let's Make A Crown!

*Thank you,  
Eckerle Family!*



*Thank you,  
Estelle Stover,  
for this wonderful map!*

**Let's go on a journey  
at Second Presbyterian Church!**

# Parent Reflections

## Week 1

### Counting on Hope

We count to know the days of the week,  
The number of days until summer,  
The number of days before birthdays.  
The people of Israel waited for so many days, too many to count!

Promises were made for years, for ages.  
Some one would come to end their slavery.  
Some one would come to bring them home.  
Some one would come to set them free.  
The children of Israel remembered the promises, and they trusted God.  
They were counting on hope to bring them one who would save them.

Then one day, a young woman and man set out to be counted.  
They went to their family's town, Bethlehem, but they were counting days.  
The young woman, Mary, was expecting an unexpected baby.  
Joseph was worried that the crowded town of Bethlehem would not have a room for them.

They found a place in a stable.  
It was warm and dry, and that is what counted.

## Week 2

### FOUND

Mary and Joseph, her husband, found themselves in a difficult place.  
Mary was expecting a baby, which they could not explain.  
Gabriel found Mary and told her that she had found favor in God's sight.  
She agreed to be the mother of the Son of God.

Then she found herself in a difficult situation.  
She could not explain who the baby would be.  
She could not explain how the baby would make things okay.  
However, she knew that the baby connected the promises of the past  
To the hope of the future.  
That connection was through God, and that connection brought her peace.

Did everyone else know that there was a light coming into a very VERY dark world?  
Did everyone else know that something new would burst forth and shine on their lives?  
They did not know, but Mary did. Joseph did.  
And everyday things would be made new.

Usual things like babies being born, stars shining in the night sky, and calm after a storm  
Would be seen with new eyes, and new meaning would be found.  
Peace would be found in the connections of old and new.  
This peace would shine like a star at night over the place where those who were left out are kept warm.

## Week 3

### Messengers

Overnight or express? How do we get good news?  
Does it come in a box, an envelope, or shoved under the door?  
Sometimes, good news cannot be kept, cannot wait, cannot be contained.  
The messengers shout it!  
The heavens seem to ring with it!  
The messengers of God fly to those who need it most, to tell them good news.

## Week 4

### Enough love

Is there an inn with enough rooms to make space for the ways that God will be present in the world?  
Is there a song sweet enough to tell all of the feelings of relief, wholeness, and joy that God's presence will  
bring?  
Is there a messenger swift enough to race to our side quicker than the God who is everywhere?  
Is there a space simple enough to hold the love of God?

In a child born in the cold of night, in the shortest days of winter, we find a love so pure and so gentle that it  
draws us in and draws us near to God and to each other. The good news of promises kept, hope held, peace  
at work, joy shared, is love found in our lives, in our homes, in our hearts. And that is enough.

## Music for Advent and Christmas

### Away in a Manger

*Away in a manger, no crib for His bed,  
The little Lord Jesus laid down His sweet head.  
The stars in the sky looked down where He lay,  
The little Lord Jesus, asleep on the hay.*

### Angels We Have Heard on High

*Angels we have heard on high,  
Sweetly singing o'er the plains,  
And the mountains in reply  
Echoing their joyous strains.  
Gloria in excelsis Deo;  
Gloria in excelsis Deo.*

### Silent Night

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

### Go Tell It on the Mountain

Refrain:  
*Go, tell it on the mountain  
over the hills and everywhere;  
Go, tell it on the mountain  
that Jesus Christ is born!*

1. *While shepherds kept their watching  
O'er silent flocks by night,  
Behold throughout the heavens  
There shone a holy light.*

Refrain

2. *The shepherds feared and trembled  
When lo! Above the earth,  
Rang out the angel chorus  
That hailed our Savior's birth.*

Refrain

## Children's Choir Update

Due to the pandemic and to ensure the safest in-person choral experience for our children, Children's Choir at Second Presbyterian Church will continue to meet Sunday afternoons from 4:00-4:50 in McFarland Hall, socially distanced with masks. Because choral singing in live worship is not possible until Covid numbers drastically drop, we will continue making music videos to be streamed during worship. Please refer to the Music and Fine Arts website page for dates and more specific details. If you have any questions, please email Patrick Pauloski at [PPauloski@SecondChurch.org](mailto:PPauloski@SecondChurch.org).

*All music is in the public domain.*