

# JOHN WESLEY UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

DECEMBER 2023

# The Partner

## *“Christmas Full of Grace!”*

*“Mary’s husband Joseph, being a righteous man and unwilling to expose Mary to public disgrace, planned to dismiss her quietly”*

— Matthew 1:19

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The Christmas Story is so remarkably Full of Grace! Every actor in Jesus’ Bethlehem Birth is Full of Grace! ... from the prophets, to Mary and Joseph, to Elizabeth, to the innkeeper, to the shepherds and the Magi! Christmas is so full of Grace!

Throughout the Season, we will celebrate this Grace and all of its Joy! It will be the centerpiece of our sacred and very special worship. We will celebrate it especially on Christmas Eve with our Service of Lessons and Carols and Candlelight at 7 pm! We’ll experience it in the fellowship we enjoy at our Christmas Supper Club on Saturday, December 9th! ... and during Coffee Fellowship before worship on December 10th! Our youth will have fun telling of a Christmas full of Grace at the Christmas Pageant they are presenting on December 17th during worship!

This month, I am excited about focusing my preaching on the outstanding role that Joseph played in advancing the Grace of Christmas! My sermon series is titled, “Joseph, Full of Grace!” I will be leading an Advent Study on Joseph on Wednesday nights at 7 pm on Zoom. If you would like to join this study, it’s not too late. Call the church office, and we will get you a study book and a link to join us online.

Joseph is the only major player in the Gospel accounts of Jesus’ birth, who does not have a single quote. Isn’t that something!? Even if he was a quiet man (we don’t know), I’m sure he had a lot to say. Can you imagine what it was like to be Joseph!? He goes on to play an irreplaceable part in Jesus’ remarkable birth! The Grace he shows is an exquisite testimony to the righteous man he is! The Grace he shows is also a foreshadowing of the Amazing Grace that Jesus will go on to give the world as our Savior!

*“Pastor’s Letter” continued on p. 2*

"Pastor's Letter" continued from p. 1

Before the Lord visited Joseph in his dream to assure him that Mary's pregnancy was conceived by the Holy Spirit, Joseph was already giving Grace to Mary by refusing to disgrace her publicly. Then when he hears of Mary's miraculous part in Jesus' birth, Joseph believes and obeys God's Will!

While celebrating Joseph, we will celebrate everything there is about Christmas that is so richly Full of Grace! Please join us for as many of our celebrations as you can! If you are not able to be with us in person, you will be with us in Spirit, and we with you. Pray for us, and we will be praying for you!

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!  
And may your Christmas be Full of Grace!

Pastor Doug



## **A SPECIAL SUPPER CLUB CHRISTMAS**

### **Saturday, December 9**

### **2:00 pm**



On Saturday afternoon, December 9, we will gather once again at 2:00 pm in the Social Hall for a covered dish luncheon. Chicken and drinks will be provided. Bring a dish or dessert to share. Following the meal, we will be treated to a performance by the Christian musical group, *Second Chances*. Second Chances were with us last year, and we welcome them back. So if you missed them last year, you have another opportunity to hear them. The afternoon will be concluded with a short Caroling Sing-along so that we will still sing a few of our favorite carols.

This should be an exciting afternoon of good food, good music and good fellowship. Plan to join us in the Social Hall on Saturday, December 9 at 2:00.

Plan to join us! Be sure to let us know by December 4 if you are planning to attend so we have enough seating and refreshments.

Either call or email the church office: 301-733-0391 jwumcmd@yahoo.com  
or Barb & Greg Hoover: 301-797-5157 bhoov72@aol.com

## BE AN ANGEL THIS CHRISTMAS...

Our Angel Tree with tags expressing the needs and desires of the eight children ages 18 months to 9 years we have adopted this year for the Christmas season has been in the sanctuary during November. Christmas wishes have included clothing, coats, musical and/or light up toys, blocks, Legos, cars, educational toys, crafts, and books. The Mom of four of the children is hoping for a set of pots and pans, cleaning supplies and paper products such as paper towels and toilet tissue. We will also be providing food for these persons.

Please record the gift tag(s) you choose with your name and telephone number beside your Gift Tag Number in the book provided and **bring your gift(s) to church by Sunday, December 3rd.**

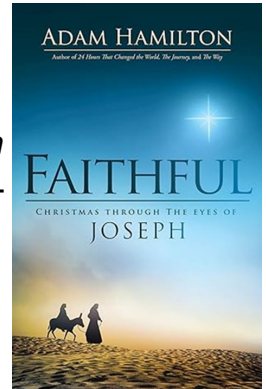
There is also a display of gifts you may sponsor by removing the tag on the gift, signing the gift registry book, and then returning the tag with your donation. We hope to have all the gifts sponsored by the end of worship on December 3rd. Any donations for the sponsored gifts may be returned December 10th.

To help fulfill the Christmas wishes you may desire to give a monetary donation or provide a gift card to someplace such as Walmart, Target, Martins, Aldi, and/or Kohl's. Please make sure you note on your check or envelope that this donation is for the holiday giving ministry. Checks/Gift cards may be mailed to the church, placed in the offering plate or given to Sheila or the Rowans. If you prefer your donation be used for a gift or food or whatever is needed, indicate such and your wishes will be honored. ***These donations need to be received by Sunday, December 10th.***

As you can see there are several ways you may be involved in this giving ministry. Thank you for prayerfully considering how you can be a part of bringing joy as we share our love with the individuals we've adopted. If you need any additional information, please feel free to reach out to Sheila (301-730-7997). Thanks, also, to each one of you for making Christmas happier for these eight children and the single working mom of four of them. May you experience joy by sharing your love participating this year in our holiday giving ministry.

## WEDNESDAYS HEAVENLY LIVING WORKSHOP

The Heavenly Living Workshop will start its next Wednesday evenings series at 7:00 pm with their four-week Advent study of *“Faithful — Christmas Through the Eyes of Joseph”* by Adam Hamilton. From his beginnings as a humble carpenter to his all-important role as the earthly father of Jesus Christ, Joseph's place in the nativity story is sometimes overlooked but contains valuable lessons for all of us. Join Adam Hamilton as he examines Christmas through the eyes of Joseph.



Exchange your doubt for courage this Advent and Christmas season. The story of Joseph provides us a great example of humbly obeying God even when we don't understand and faithfully moving forward in the strength that God provides.

Session #1 — November 29 — “A Carpenter Named Joseph”

Session #2 — December 6 — “Whose Child Is This?”

Session #3 — December 13 — “Raising a Child Not Your Own”

Session #4 — December 20 — “The Journey to Bethlehem”

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## THURSDAY ZOOM STUDY

We will finish up a Zoom discussion (Meeting ID: 828 4006 3526 Passcode: 404756) on Thursdays from 2:30 pm until 4:00 pm. You can still join us!!!!

Our discussion topic is *“Isaiah: Striving Less and Trusting God More”* by Melissa Spoelstra.

Isaiah served as God's mouthpiece to the nation of Judah but also to the surrounding nations. His message echoes into our lives today as we read his call to rely on the Lord. Using the genres of poetry, narrative, and prophecy, Isaiah communicated clearly that followers of God could trust in Him.



As we study the chapters Isaiah wrote, we learn to rest in God's promises and grow in trust. Unpacking Isaiah's words will reveal that you can trust God more than your own human effort or the counterfeits the world suggests. You will not be striving harder, but instead trusting more deeply the Faithful One who is so worthy of our utter dependence. In Him you will find the comfort and peace you need to sustain you.

November 30: Session 5. “Trust God's Correction”

December 7: Session 6. “Trust God's Coming”

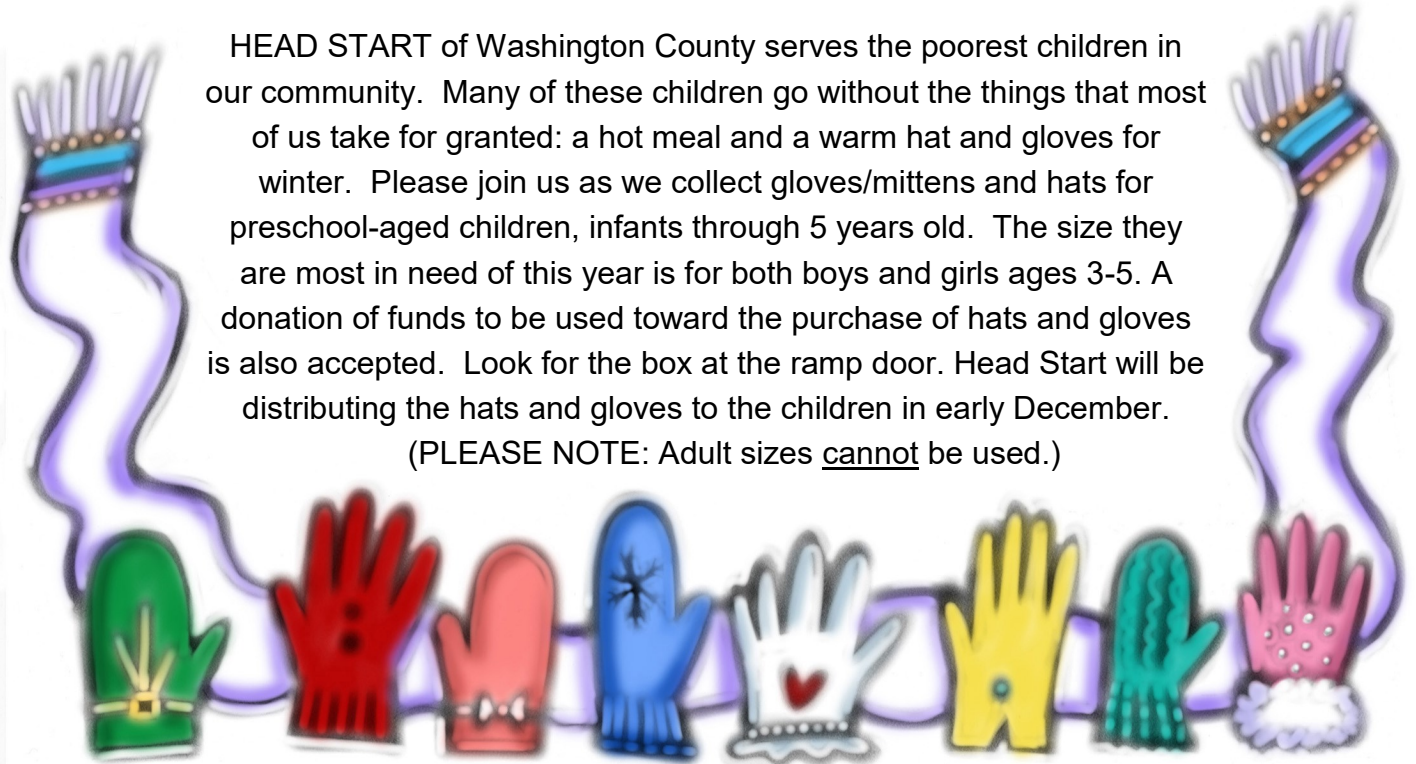
NOTE: We will be on break for the Christmas weeks. Our next study of *“The Miracles: Understanding What Jesus Did”* by Gary Inrig will begin January 4th.



## HAT AND GLOVE COLLECTION

HEAD START of Washington County serves the poorest children in our community. Many of these children go without the things that most of us take for granted: a hot meal and a warm hat and gloves for winter. Please join us as we collect gloves/mittens and hats for preschool-aged children, infants through 5 years old. The size they are most in need of this year is for both boys and girls ages 3-5. A donation of funds to be used toward the purchase of hats and gloves is also accepted. Look for the box at the ramp door. Head Start will be distributing the hats and gloves to the children in early December.

(PLEASE NOTE: Adult sizes cannot be used.)



## PLEASE DONATE TO THE PASTOR'S DISCRETIONARY FUND

As we enter the cold weather season, including its several holidays, please prayerfully consider making a donation to the Pastor's Discretionary Fund. This fund allows the Pastor to grant emergency help to families in our community in need of financial assistance. Through this Fund, neighbors will receive help to prevent a utility turn-off, prevent an eviction, pay a deposit for a new apartment, purchase groceries, or meet other pressing needs. Normally, we give our assistance in cooperation with assistance from other churches and agencies, in order to meet the total need presented by a family. This allows our Fund to assist a larger number of families throughout the cold-weather season and throughout the year. Thank you for considering your donation to our Fund.



## NEWS FROM MICAH'S BACKPACK

We are now sponsoring 19 students a week at Ruth Ann Monroe and everything is running smoothly. In addition to our regular weekly bags to our students, we also supplied 32 bags in early November for the pupil personal workers to take to students in transitional housing. The coordinator at the Central Office of the BOE was very appreciative and thankful for our support with those bags.



We are going through food quickly with the increase of students. We just received our second food bank purchase this year of 57 cases costing \$1,319. Our purchase included juice, shelf stable milk, fruit, cereal, beef stew and soup just to name some of the items. Even with this purchase we still need:

- \* Microwave mac and cheese
- \* Cheese or peanut butter crackers
- \* Breakfast bars
- \* Snacks such as pudding cups, individual packs of cookies and microwave popcorn.

Our next big project will be packing the bags for the Christmas break. Each student will receive 2 3-day bags to take home for the break.

Thank you all for your continued support!

MERRY CHRISTMAS!

Wilson Wright Circle I

### Hanging of the Greens!

Christmastime is almost here! Come join us for the decorating of our church for Advent and Christmas on Saturday, December 2nd at 9:00 am. Enjoy some coffee and donuts. Please call or email the church office if you can help.

Thank you!



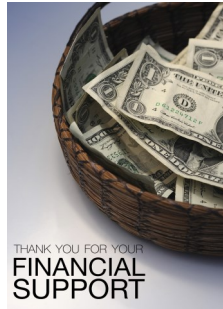
### Refrigerator Needed!

If anyone has a usable refrigerator they are looking to get rid of, we could use one in our basement area that the Hope & Gratitude NA group uses twice every week. The one that is in there is not working. So it doesn't have to be big, it doesn't have to be beautiful, but it needs to work. And then we will need to figure out how to get it from Point A to Point B. Let the office know if you can help. Thank you in advance!



## A NOTE FROM THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY

Thank you to everyone who provides financial gifts for the ministries of John Wesley United Methodist Church. This year, New Year's Eve morning, Sunday, December 31st will be the last time we have the opportunity to place offerings in the plate at Church to be reflected on your 2023 Giving Statement. Many of our congregants mail their contributions to the church office or give electronically through VANCO. It would be most helpful if any contributions you wish to have reflected on your 2023 Giving Statement are mailed early enough to reach the Church Office by Friday, December 29th. If you are giving electronically, please remember that there is a two-day transaction period, so these gifts as well should be made by Wednesday, December 27th so that they will post by Friday, December 29th for credit in this calendar year. If you have any questions or concerns, please reach out to me (301-730-7997), and again, thank you for your continued financial support of the ministries of John Wesley United Methodist Church. May each of you and those you love have a blessed Advent and Christmas season!



~ Sheila Collins, Financial Secretary

## A NOTE FROM THE TRUSTEES PROPERTY COMMITTEE

The key lockbox on the back door has been temporarily removed from the door. Due to a faulty locking mechanism, we will be replacing it with a new key lockbox with a new combination. If you need access to the building, please try to arrange your arrival during the hours that Karen is in the office, which is Monday-Friday, 8:30 – 2:00. Once the new lockbox is in place, contact Karen for a new code. Sorry for any inconvenience.



## CHRISTMAS PAGEANT

December 17, 2023

at the 10:30 worship service

### “Dr. Bill’s Christmas Special”

All are invited to this modern drama that was written, produced and performed by our youth of John Wesley!



1st: Gloria Donat

2nd: James Snurr

4th: Luke Grove

Jack Mesner

5th: Michelle Bolt

Pete Kresge

Tracy Morgan

Histon Tolbert

6th: Ben Guessford

10th: Shayla Morgan

11th: Carol Behan

14th: Martin O'Connor

15th: Evelyn Donley

18th: Owen Mesner

Krista Wagner

Jill Will

19th: Michael Rowan

20th: Wendy Chapin

23rd Tina Snurr

Christopher Stone

24th: Gregory Eckard

Trumer Wagner

25th: Scott Brandt

Marilyn Galley

Pat Hansford

Jonathan Kresge

30th: Bob Bell

Joanna Suddueth



22nd: John & Carole Keyser

26th: Jeremy & Lori Baughman

27th: Donald & Patricia Eckard

Charles & Cheryl Strong

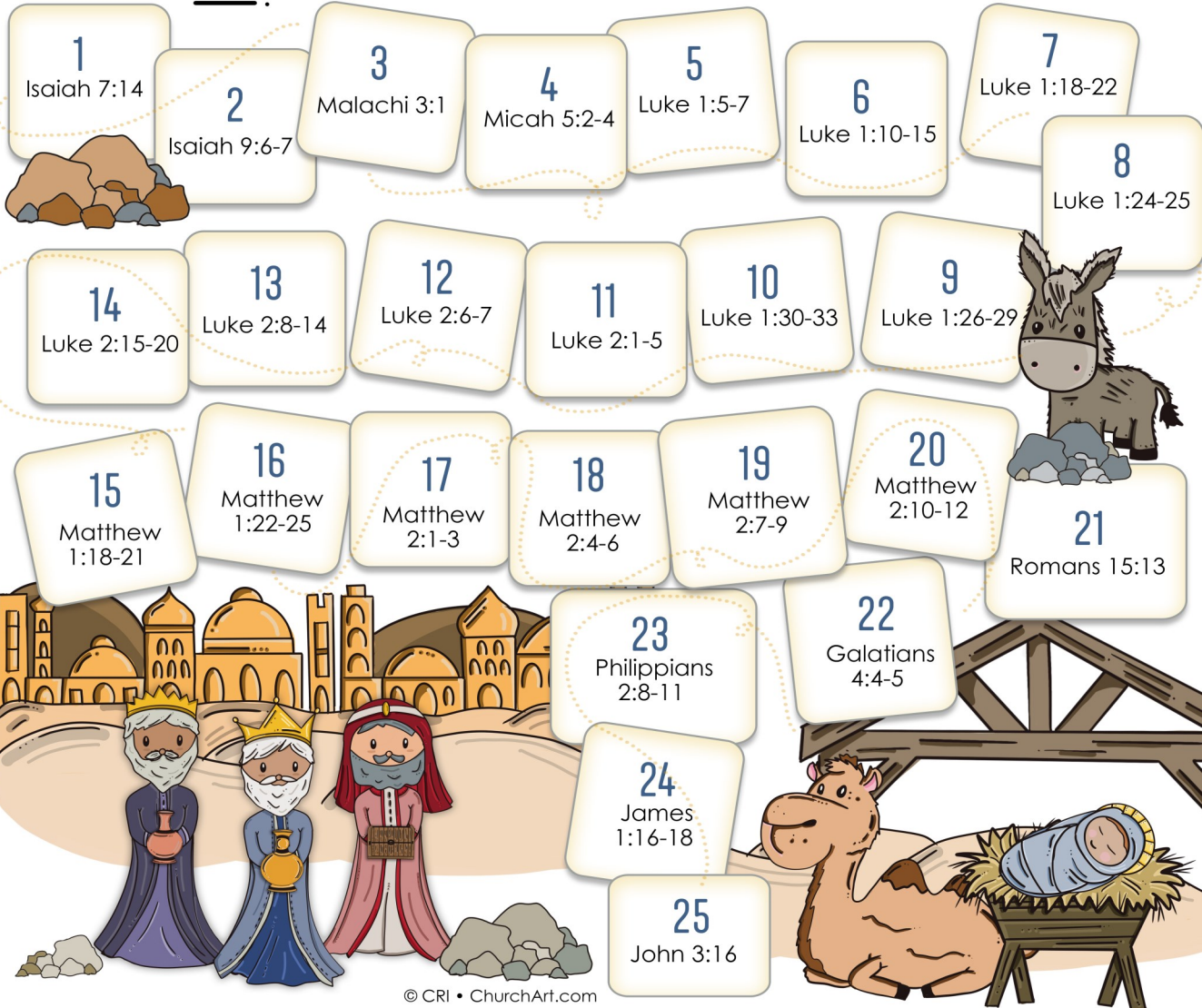
*(If your birthday or anniversary is this month and does not appear on this list or appears incorrectly, please call the church office or email us at [jwumcmd@yahoo.com](mailto:jwumcmd@yahoo.com) and let us know. Thank you!)*









# A CHRIST-CENTERED CHRISTMAS ADVENT READING PLAN

Explore the true meaning of Christmas as you travel through God's Word. Discover God's promises he fulfilled through the birth of His only Son, the **KING OF KINGS.**



1 Isaiah 7:14 	2 Isaiah 9:6-7	3 Malachi 3:1	4 Micah 5:2-4	5 Luke 1:5-7	6 Luke 1:10-15	7 Luke 1:18-22	8 Luke 1:24-25
14 Luke 2:15-20	13 Luke 2:8-14	12 Luke 2:6-7	11 Luke 2:1-5	10 Luke 1:30-33	9 Luke 1:26-29		
15 Matthew 1:18-21	16 Matthew 1:22-25	17 Matthew 2:1-3	18 Matthew 2:4-6	19 Matthew 2:7-9	20 Matthew 2:10-12	21 Romans 15:13	
				23 Philippians 2:8-11	22 Galatians 4:4-5		
				24 James 1:16-18	25 John 3:16		

## HISTORIC HOUSES OF WORSHIP TOUR

The Historic Hagerstown Houses of Worship Tour is back! Tuesday, December 26th from 3 - 7 pm (snow date December 27th). This will be the 10th year anniversary.

It's a wonderful opportunity to visit other houses of worship, see the interiors, learn about the architecture and ecumenical heritage, enjoy the beauty of their sanctuary, and just share the joy of the Christmas season with others.

John Wesley UMC will be participating in the tour again this year. If you can give an hour or two of your time to welcome visitors to our sanctuary on the 26th, please call the church office.



### Attendance & Offering Report

October	29	55	\$ 1,369.46
November	5	50	1,995.92
November	12	53	2,849.46
November	19	51	1,644.46

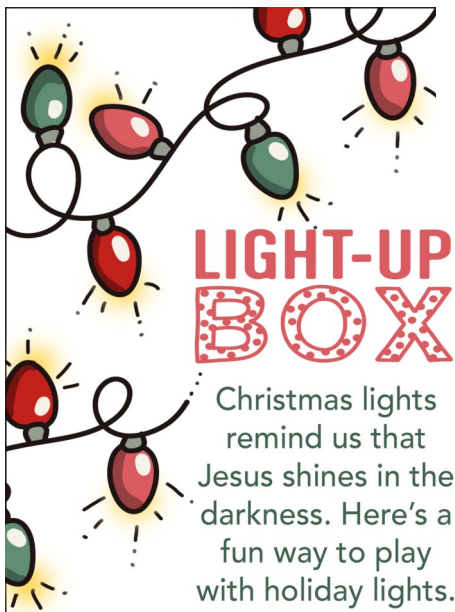
Blessings, Sheila & Sherry



- 2nd: 9:00am, Hanging of the Greens
- 3rd: 9:00am, Sunday School for all ages
- 3rd: 10:30am, Advent 1 Worship
- 6th: 7:00pm, HLW - Advent Study
- 7th: 8:30am, Men's Breakfast
- 7th: 2:30pm, Thursday Zoom Study Session 6 - "Trusting God's Coming"
- 9th: 2:00pm, Christmas Supper Club
- 10th: 9:00am, Sunday School for all ages
- 10th: 10:00am, Coffee Fellowship
- 10th: 10:30am, Advent 2 Worship
- 13th: 7:00pm, HLW - Advent Study
- 17th: 9:00am, Sunday School for all ages
- 17th: 10:30am, Advent 3 Worship/Pageant
- 18th: *Partner deadline*
- 19th: 6:00pm, Wilson Wright Circle
- 20th: 10:00am, Susanna Circle
- 20th: 7:00pm, HLW - Advent Study
- 24th: 10:30am, Advent 4 Worship
- 24th: 7:00pm, Christmas Eve Service
- 25th: Church Office Closed
- 26th: 3:00pm, Houses of Worship Tour
- 31st: 9:00am, Sunday School for all ages
- 31st: 10:30am, Sunday Worship



# PUZZLE PAGE

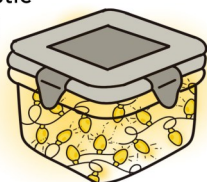


## LIGHT-UP BOX

Christmas lights remind us that Jesus shines in the darkness. Here's a fun way to play with holiday lights.

### What you need:

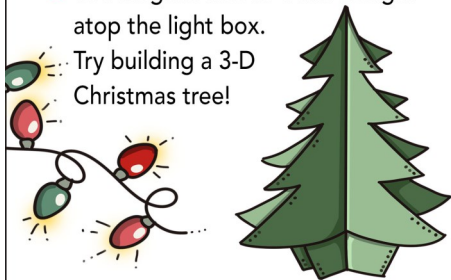
- A strand of Christmas lights
- A large clear plastic container and lid
- Green tissue paper
- Colorful beads



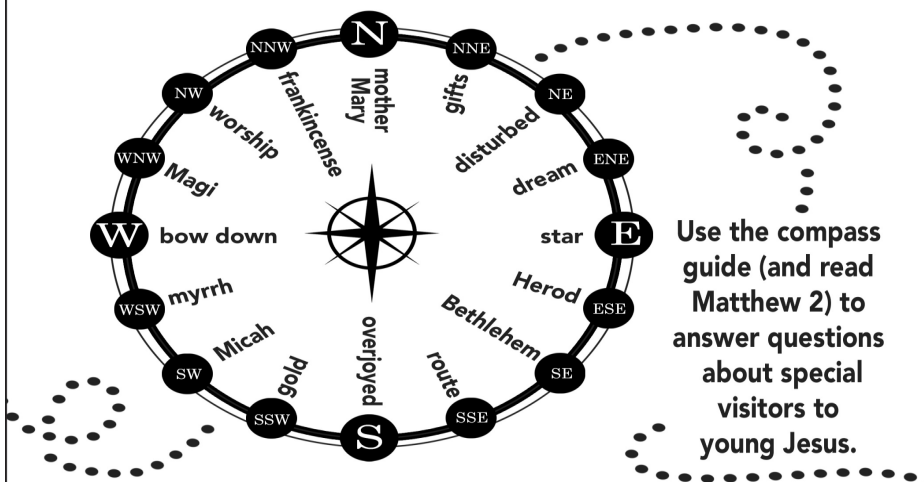
### What you do:

1. Plug in the lights and place them in the container.
2. Put on the lid. (If the lid isn't transparent, flip the box over.)
3. Play with your light box, using these ideas as starters:
  - Cut tissue paper into triangles and arrange them in a tree shape. Decorate the tree with colorful beads.
  - Use the light box for tracing. Place a picture on it, with a clean sheet of paper on top. Then trace the drawing.
  - Use magnet tiles to build designs atop the light box.

Try building a 3-D Christmas tree!



# Puzzle!



Use the compass guide (and read Matthew 2) to answer questions about special visitors to young Jesus.

1. Who was king at the time of Jesus' birth? \_\_\_\_\_ (ESE)
2. Who came from the East to worship the one born king of the Jews? \_\_\_\_\_ (WNW)
3. How did King Herod feel about Jesus' birth? \_\_\_\_\_ (NE)
4. Which prophet did the chief priests and teachers of the law quote when King Herod asked where the Christ would be born? \_\_\_\_\_ (SW)
5. In what city would Christ be born? \_\_\_\_\_ (SE)
6. King Herod lied to the wise men, telling them to search and report back so he, too, could do what to Christ? \_\_\_\_\_ (NW)
7. What did the Magi see in the east and follow to find Jesus? \_\_\_\_\_ (E)
8. When the star stopped, how did the Magi feel? \_\_\_\_\_ (S)
9. Who else did the Magi see with Jesus? His \_\_\_\_\_ (N)
10. Before they worshiped the child, what did the Magi do? \_\_\_\_\_ (W)
11. Name the three treasures the Magi brought for Jesus.  
 \_\_\_\_\_ (SSW) \_\_\_\_\_ (NNW) \_\_\_\_\_ (WSW)
12. These three treasures were all brought for Jesus as \_\_\_\_\_ (NNE)
13. What warned the Magi not to return to Herod? A \_\_\_\_\_ (ENE)
14. The Magi had to return to their country by another \_\_\_\_\_ (SSE)

Answers: 1. Herod; 2. Magi; 3. disturbed; 4. Micah; 5. Bethlehem; 6. worship; 7. star; 8. overjoyed; 9. mother Mary; 10. bow down; 11. gold; 12. frankincense, myrrh; 13. gifts; 14. route

# JOHN WESLEY UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

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CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED

## DECEMBER 2023 *PARTNER*



**TO FULFILL WHAT THE LORD HAD SPOKEN BY THE PROPHET.**

*Matthew 1:22, ESV*