

# Parents,

Advent can be a time for the entire family to celebrate the birth of Jesus.

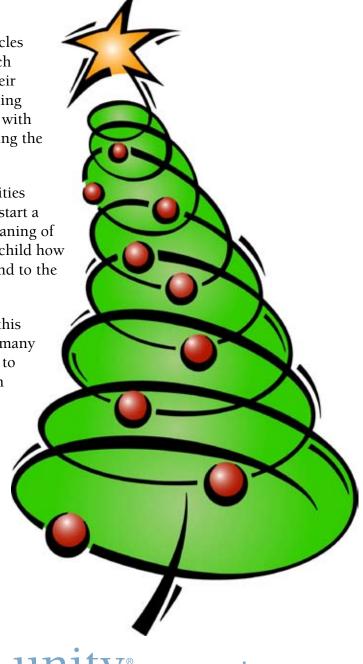
This e-booklet features fun articles to read together and a place each Sunday for children to write their prayers. For each of the remaining days, there are relevant themes with a message and an activity to bring the ideas to life.

These daily messages and activities create a perfect opportunity to start a family discussion about the meaning of Christmas and to remind your child how important he or she is to you and to the world.

You are welcome to download this booklet and print and share as many copies as you want. It's our gift to you in celebration of the season and with gratitude for the love and support you share with us throughout the year.

Merry Christmas and happy holidays!

—Your friends in Unity



# Hello, kids!

You probably already know this—Christmas is coming soon. But do you know what the days leading up to Christmas Day are called? *Advent!* 

The word *Advent* means "coming" or "arrival" and people all over the world celebrate Christmas Day as the arrival of the baby Jesus. The Christmas story in the Bible explains how everyone got ready for this big event. That's what you can do during the days leading up

to Christmas: Get ready by reminding yourself that, just as in Jesus—God lives in and through you.

So how do you remind yourself? That's where this e-booklet comes in.

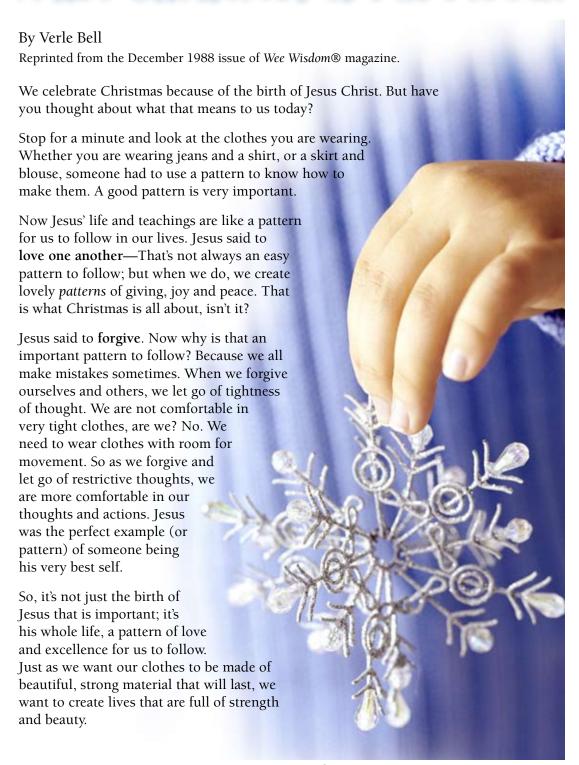
For each of the 26 days of Advent, we have chosen a word to think about and an affirmation you can say to remind yourself about God and how special you are. We've also included fun games and projects to do alone or with your family and friends.

So get ready. Have fun. Christmas is coming!

—Your friends in Unity



### What Christmas Is All About





## Affirmation: Peaceful thoughts and actions begin with me. I am peaceful.

When you become quiet and pray, your body relaxes. This peaceful feeling helps you be happy and treat others and yourself with kindness.

### Activity—Write and Say a Prayer

### Dear God,

I am praying for	



#### Affirmation: I am awesome!

At first glance, other kids may seem to look and act like you. But there is so much more to you than the way you look or the things you do. The outer you that everyone sees is your physical self. The God in you is your spiritual self that makes you totally original and special.

### Activity—Fingerprint Kit

No two fingerprints are alike. That's why police use special kits to find fingerprints that identify people. You can create your own fingerprint kit to see your fingerprints and your friends' fingerprints.

You will need:

- Sharpened pencil
- Sandpaper
- Small makeup brush or paintbrush
- Scotch tape
- Paper
- 1. Pick up a clean plate or cup. Remember where you had your fingers and get your kit ready.
- 2. Take the sandpaper and carefully sand the sharpened end of the pencil over a piece of paper to catch the pencil dust.
- 3. Take the brush and tap it into the pencil dust. Then gently tap it onto the place where the fingerprint could be. The graphite dust from the pencil will stick to the fingerprint.
- 4. After you've dusted the print, tear off a piece of tape bigger than the place you dusted, and carefully place it over the top.
- 5. Slowly peel the tape off, and the fingerprint will be on the tape. Now you can place the tape on the piece of white paper and you'll be able to see it clearly.
- 6. After you've made some of your prints and some of your friends' prints, compare them to see the differences.





Affirmation: God and I are one.

Through prayer and quiet time or meditation, you can connect with God and see the good in your life. When you pray, you will feel God's love and know you are one-of-a-kind.

#### Activity—Color a Mandala

A mandala is a design that uses different shapes and colors. The beautiful patterns help people feel peaceful inside. Color this mandala any way that you choose. There's no wrong way to do it!

After you've finished, make a copy of your artwork and have an adult help you send it to us. We'll post your picture on our Unity Web site for everyone to see at www. unity.org.

*Note to parents*: Please identify your child's first name and age. The artwork will not be returned, so please make sure you send a copy rather than the original.

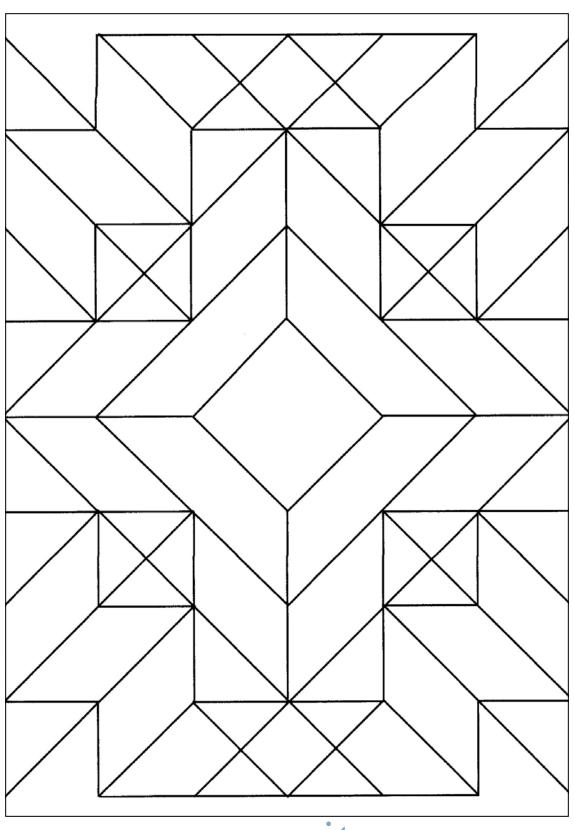
#### E-mail it to:

webcontenteditor@unityonline.org (Please scan the picture at 150 dpi for a smaller file that will still look good on the Web site.)

#### Mail it to:

Web Content Editor 1901 N.W. Blue Parkway Unity Village, MO 64065-0001

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Affirmation: I see things in new ways when I use my imagination.

Everyone has an imagination. With your imagination you can think of things that no one else ever has. You can do or be anything when you use your imagination as you play. Use your imagination and see the world in a whole new way!

#### Activity—What Is It?

When you look at things in a whole new way, you'll be amazed at what you discover. Look at the picture below and see if you can figure out what it is. The answer is on the last page. If you're not sure, take a guess. You may be surprised.











#### Affirmation: Being honest is the right thing to do. I am honest.

When you are honest, you feel good inside. If you've done something that you shouldn't have, telling the truth can take courage. But remember that honesty has its own reward—a peaceful feeling inside. Happiness thrives in an honest heart.

#### Activity—Make a Christmas Card

You will need:

- Construction or cardstock paper
- Crayons, stickers, glitter—anything to decorate with

1. Fold the piece of paper in half to make your card.

- 2. Decorate the front with a Christmas tree, snowman or your favorite Christmas scene.
- 3. Write a message inside and sign your name.
- 4. Share it with someone you love.





#### Affirmation: Every day I learn something new.

Your brain works like a computer. You have a huge "memory bank" where all kinds of useful facts and information are stored.

Did you know that you learn by asking questions, reading books and doing your homework? These kinds of activities help you grow smarter every day.

Activity—Create a Magic Paper Tree

You will need:

• Colorful Christmas wrapping paper

Scissors

• Scotch tape

1. Unroll the wrapping paper until it measures about three feet. Cut it from the roll.

2. Cut this piece into long strips each about ten inches wide and place the strips on top of each other. (Important: Always check with your parents first before using scissors!)

3. Beginning on the short side, roll the strips of wrapping paper into a tube. Tape the side to keep it from unrolling.

4. Take the tube you've just made and cut six cuts into one end, about six inches long.

5. With one hand holding the bottom or uncut side of the tube, slowly pull up from the center of the cut end with your other hand. Your tree will slowly begin to grow until it's several feet tall.





### Affirmation: The light of God surrounds me. I am safe.

You are never alone because God is always with you as your protector. The Spirit of God is within you. If you feel afraid, you can pray, using the words of the "Prayer for Protection." As you say this prayer, know that God loves you.

#### Activity—Make a "Prayer For Protection" Magnet

#### You will need:

- Construction paper
- Pen or marker
- Glue
- Magnetic strips or dots

1. Write out, type or print out the following prayer.

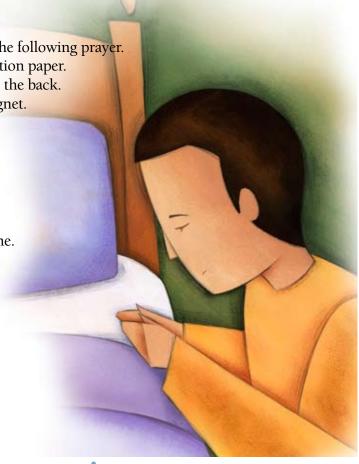
2. Glue it to a piece of construction paper.

3. Glue a magnet strip or dot to the back.

4. Enjoy or share your new magnet.

#### **Prayer for Protection**

The light of God surrounds me; The love of God enfolds me; The power of God protects me; The presence of God watches over me. Wherever I am, God is!





### December 6, 2009

### Affirmation: I try my best with everything I do.

Sometimes things work out like we expect, and other times life doesn't go as we had hoped. When you try your best, no matter what, you will have a good feeling inside.

#### Activity—Write and Say a Prayer

## Dear God,

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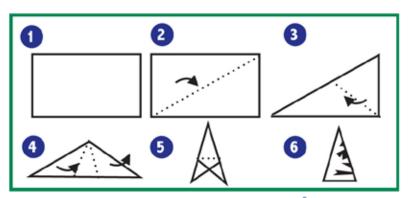
#### Affirmation: I am strong in body, mind and spirit.

God is always with you, helping you be strong. Your body is strong. You use muscles to help you walk, run and play. Your mind is strong. You learn new words, new games and new ways of getting along with others every day. God loves you all the time. You are strong in spirit.

### Activity—Make a Paper Snowflake

You will need:

- Paper
- Scissors
  - 1. Fold a square piece of paper in half diagonally.
  - 2. Fold it in half again.
  - 3. Fold the paper (shaped like a triangle) into thirds—one side to the front; the other side to the back.
  - 4. Trim the piece at the end of your triangle.
  - 5. Cut squiggles, circles or other patterns into your triangle.
  - 6. Unfold and see your unique snowflake.
  - 7. Make lots of snowflakes, using different sizes and colors of paper.
  - 8. Decorate your home or share them with people you love,





#### Affirmation: I am nice to others.

Being kind to other people helps you feel good inside. Treat others as you would like to be treated.

### **Activity—Make Paper Chains**

You will need:

Construction paper (red and green are great Christmas colors)

Scissors (Have an adult help you)

Glue or stapler

1. Cut the construction paper into strips about one inch wide.

2. Link the pieces together with either glue or a stapler to make a chain.

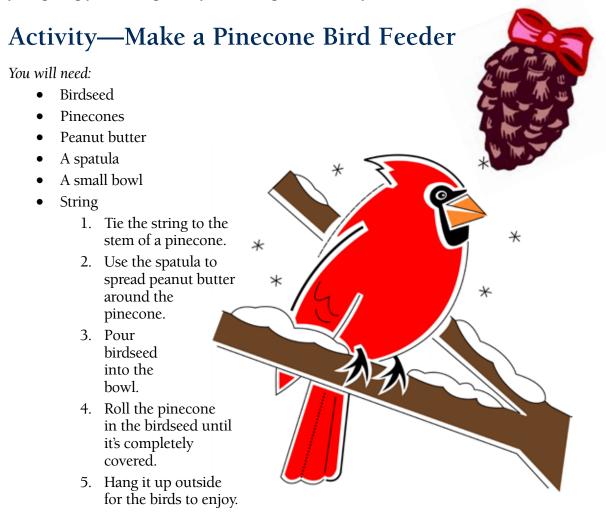
3. Use the chain for a Christmas decoration on your tree or around the house.





#### Affirmation: I have a "can-do" attitude. I believe in me.

Whenever you try something new, have a positive attitude. Know that God is with you, giving you courage to try new things. Believe in yourself!





#### Affirmation: I have great ideas.

Kids have some of the best ideas! You can share your ideas with your family and classmates or teachers. What ideas do you have?

If you need an idea, close your eyes, get quiet and think about God. Soon, great ideas will come to you.

Activity—Make a No-Bake Treat (Adult help is needed)

You will need:

- 1 stick of margarine or butter
- 2 cups of sugar
- 1/2 cup cocoa
- Dash salt
- 1/2 cup milk
- 1 teaspoon of vanilla
- 1/2 cup of chunky peanut butter
- 3 cups of quick oats
- 1 sheet of wax paper
  - Combine the first six ingredients in a saucepan and cook on the stove for five minutes.
  - 2. Stir in the peanut butter.
  - 3. Remove from heat and add quick oats.
  - 4. Mix well.
  - 5. Drop from a teaspoon onto wax paper.
  - 6. Let them cool, then enjoy!





#### Affirmation: I am creative.

You may do things differently than other people, but that's okay, because you are unique and creative.

## Activity—Create a Potato Stamper (Adult help is needed)

You will need:

- Potato
- Sharp knife (Have an adult with you)
- Toothpick
- Paint
- Paper
- A shallow dish
  - 1. Wash the potato.
  - 2. Have an adult cut it in half.
  - 3. Use the toothpick to draw a shape such as a star or heart into the potato where it was cut.
  - 4. Now have the adult use the knife to carve away the area surrounding the shape until the shape is about half an inch high.
  - 5. Pour some of the paint into the shallow dish.
  - 6. Dab your potato stamper in it.
  - 7. Use your stamper to decorate paper.



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#### Affirmation: I do everything with a smile.

You can choose to be happy no matter what is happening around you. Choose to be happy today.

#### Activity—Draw a Happy Picture

Use your artistic talents to make the picture on the left match the one on the right.





Affirmation: My talents are God's gift to me.

You have unique abilities and talents. What are some of the things that you think you do best?

### Activity—Write and Say a Prayer

## Dear God,

I am praying for	



#### Kiki the Christmas Mouse

By Elaine Meyer

Hailey.

Kiki the mouse was excited. From her little room she'd carved out in the wall, she smelled the most wonderful smell.

> Sniff, sniff. Cookies! The kind with sugar sprinkled on the top.

> > Sniff, sniff. Cake! If her nose served her right, it was chocolate. Kiki could picture it with lots of fudgy icing on top, layered with curly little shavings from a chocolate bar. Yum.

Kiki knew what those smells meant— Christmas was coming soon and that meant crumbs on the floor. She considered it her duty to keep the floor clean from scraps for Mr. and Mrs. Parker and their little girl

Tonight Mr. Parker was busy unpacking a box. The mysterious box had arrived by a delivery man earlier and Hailey was bouncing up and down with excitement, her curls bobbing up and down with each bounce.

From her mouse hole, Kiki could see Mr. Parker tearing open the brown paper and reaching inside.

"What is it? What is it?" Hailey asked, jumping even higher as he lifted



something out.

"Grandma sent us a manger scene," announced Dad.

In his hands was a stable made of twigs and dried grass. He set the manger gently on a nearby shelf, unwrapping first Joseph, then Mary, the baby Jesus, the animals and wise men.

Hailey told her dad that she knew what a manger was—they'd studied the Christmas story in Sunday school. Kiki listened with interest as Hailey launched into a story about the baby Jesus.

"Mary, is this one right here," Hailey explained, pointing to the figure of a woman. "She was going to have a baby. She and this man," pointing to the figure of Joseph, "went on vacation."

Her father laughed. "They went to a town called Bethlehem, honey," he said with a smile.

"Will you finish the story, Daddy?" Hailey asked. Her father had settled into a chair, and Hailey scrambled into his lap, waiting for the story to continue. Kiki crept closer, carefully staying in the shadows and settling in with her little feet tucked underneath her.

"Well, the story is that Mary was told that she was going to have a baby—a very special baby. She and Joseph went to Bethlehem. They wanted to stay at an inn, but they were told the only place they had available was the stable where the animals were kept. That's where Mary had her baby. They named him Jesus. During his life, Jesus taught people that God has given them all of the love, wisdom, peace, kindness and joy that they need if they know where to look. Do you know where that is, Hailey?"

"In me!" shouted Hailey.

"That's right," Mrs. Parker spoke. "You never have

to worry about being alone or afraid, because God is within you, right now and forever," she added.

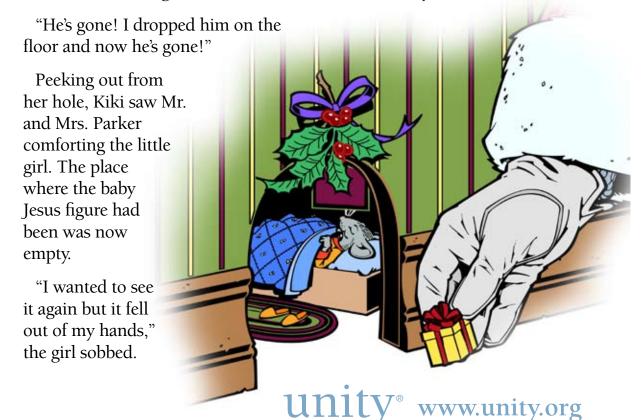
Soon it was time for bed. Before going to her bedroom, Hailey stopped by the manger to pick up the tiny carving of the baby Jesus. She kissed it on the head.

"Thank you for my gifts, baby Jesus," she said, gently placing it back in the straw bed.

After the family had settled in, Kiki crawled out of her hole, running and jumping her way across the room to the manger. She looked closely at the one Hailey had called Jesus. *I wish I had those gifts*, she thought to herself. Think of all the great things I could do with them. But, she sighed, I'm just a mouse.

She headed back for the comfort of her bed. Suddenly Christmas didn't seem so much fun. Not even the crumb of cookie she saw on the floor could bring a smile to her little mouse face. Kiki felt so alone. Reaching her bed, she closed her eyes and fell asleep, a tear rolled slowly down her cheek.

The next morning, Kiki awoke to the sound of Hailey's cries.



Mr. Parker got down on his hands and knees and searched the floor. "I think it may have rolled into the heating vent," he said, peering into it. "We have to go to work and to school now, but I'll look when we get home," he reassured Hailey. When Hailey wasn't looking, he crossed his fingers as a sign of luck to Mrs. Parker. Hopefully they could get it.

After they'd gone, Kiki sat thinking at the entrance of her home. Hailey was sad, which made Kiki sad. She liked the little girl a lot, not only because she was a messy eater and left a lot of crumbs on the floor, but she made Kiki smile when she laughed. Hailey was so happy when she shared with her parents about the meaning of Christmas and the wonderful gifts that Jesus told everyone about. But what could a mouse do to make a little girl smile again?

An idea came to Kiki: she could look down the dark hole where Mr. Parker said the figure might be. She was small; maybe she could reach it! But she was also afraid. Kiki had never ventured down that hole. It was much too scary. Even the thought of going down there made her heart beat faster.

Kiki looked at the empty straw bed again. She could do it. She would try for Hailey's sake.

Kiki walked to the vent. She imagined how happy the girl would be to have the figure back. Kiki noticed that her heart wasn't racing quite as fast as it had been a moment ago. No, the fear was going away. She had a job to do—a job only a mouse could do!

"For Hailey!" she shouted as she jumped off the edge, into the darkness of the vent. Kiki felt herself falling, sliding down the metal vent as it curved round. Landing with a thump, she lay still for a moment to let her eyes get used to the dark.

What's that? Directly ahead of her she saw something. The shadow in front of her seemed darker than the rest of the area. Suddenly Kiki was terrified. What was this shadow? Was it going to hurt her?

She took a deep breath. She was on a mission, and mice with jobs to do are not afraid.

Taking a deep breath, Kiki began to move forward. The closer Kiki got to



the shadow, the smaller it got. Why, it wasn't so huge after all! Kiki studied the shape.

With a sense of relief, she realized it was the baby Jesus doll! She'd found it! Kiki felt like bouncing up and down like Hailey had when they first opened the package from Grandma. She carefully took the baby's wrapping in her mouth and began dragging it. Going up the slippery metal vent she just came down wouldn't work. She'd have to find another way back.

Inch by inch, Kiki pulled the doll along until she reached a small opening where only a mouse (and a baby Jesus doll!) could fit. Looking through the hole, there was daylight. Sniffing the air she could tell right away that this path led up through the inside of the wall and back to her cozy little home.

Kiki pulled the doll through and began the long climb upward to the living room. It seemed to take hours, but Kiki didn't stop until she reached the legs of the table the manger sat upon.

A rattling in the front door lock told her the Parkers were home. Leaving the doll on the floor next to the table, Kiki scampered into the safety of her hole, watching as Mr. Parker and Hailey came into the room.

Hailey was the first to spot the baby Jesus. Her squeals of delight made Kiki feel good. Watching the girl and thinking about the good thing she—a simple mouse—had done, Kiki realized, this is what happiness feels like! She had done something nice. That was kindness. When she knew what she had to do, she hadn't been afraid. That was courage. Hailey wasn't the only one to have such gifts. She had them too!

In that moment, the little mouse realized the true meaning of Christmas: The gifts of love, wisdom, peace, kindness and joy are for *all* creatures, the best gifts ever given—to a mouse or a human.







#### Affirmation: I share my smile with others.

What is something that is free to give and other people will give it back immediately? A smile! When you smile, you show others that you are happy from the inside out.

### Activity—The Smile Experiment

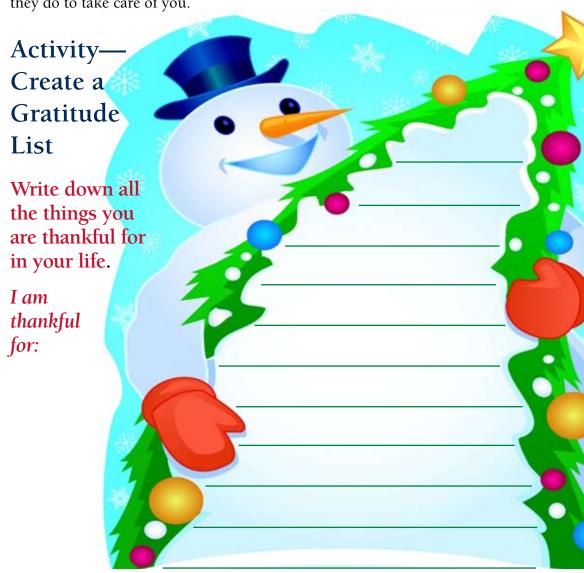
Try the "smile experiment." Wherever you go today, smile at everyone you see. Count how many times you smile and how many people smile back at you. You'll soon see that smiles are catching! They spread from person to person in joyful ways.





#### Affirmation: I am thankful.

Parents and guardians take time each day to cook meals and to earn money for things you need like clothes and a place to live. Show them that you care by helping out around the house. Whether it's cleaning, setting the table or picking up your room—you can take time to show the people you love that you are thankful for all they do to take care of you.





#### Affirmation: I choose not to be afraid of changes.

There will always be change in your life. Some changes are harder than others. Whether you have to move to a new place, start a new grade or try out for a new sport or activity, change can feel scary. But you don't have to feel afraid or nervous.

The presence of God is within you at all times to support you. If you feel uncertain, say to yourself: *God* is with me through everything.

#### Activity—Donate Food or Clothes to a Shelter

Ask an adult to help you gather food and clothes to give away. Look for canned food, boxed food and clothes or toys that you've outgrown. Then deliver them in time for Christmas.





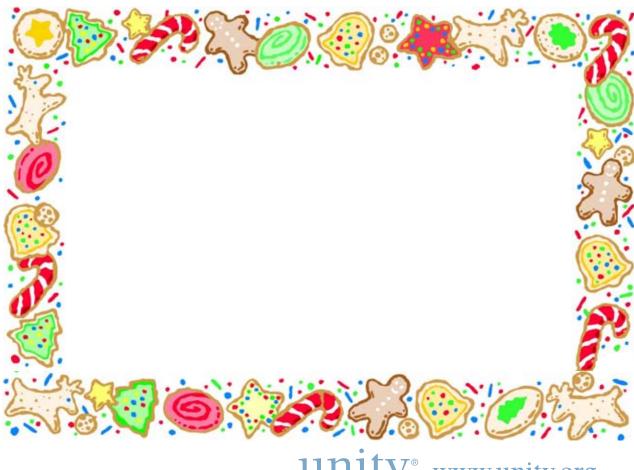
#### Affirmation: I have a great attitude.

If you have a rough day, remember that tomorrow is a brand-new day. Having a good attitude will help you feel better even when things don't seem to go your way. Try to find the good no matter what is happening. Your great attitude will help others feel better too.

#### Activity—Draw a Picture About Christmas

You will need:

- Paper
- Crayons or colored pencils
  - 1. Think about what Christmas means to you. Do you think about the birth of Jesus? Do you think about family and friends, Christmas trees or sharing gifts with others?
  - 2. Use your imagination to draw a Christmas picture. Then, share it with someone special.





## Affirmation: I give to others because it makes me feel good.

Share your love and joy. Share a smile with a friend. Give a simple gift to a neighbor. Find ways you can give to others throughout the year.

#### Activity—Make and Give a Treat

You will need:

An empty oatmeal box or other container

• Construction or wrapping paper

• Glue or clear tape

• A plastic zipper bag

 Party mix or baked "slice and bake" cookies

1. Decorate the construction paper with stickers or your drawings.

2. Cut the paper just large enough to wrap the empty container and secure the paper with tape or glue.

3. Fill the container with your treat.

4. Give it to a neighbor or friend to show you care.





#### Affirmation: I am caring and understanding.

Show that you care about the people, animals and plants all around you. When you do something loving, you help make the world a better place.

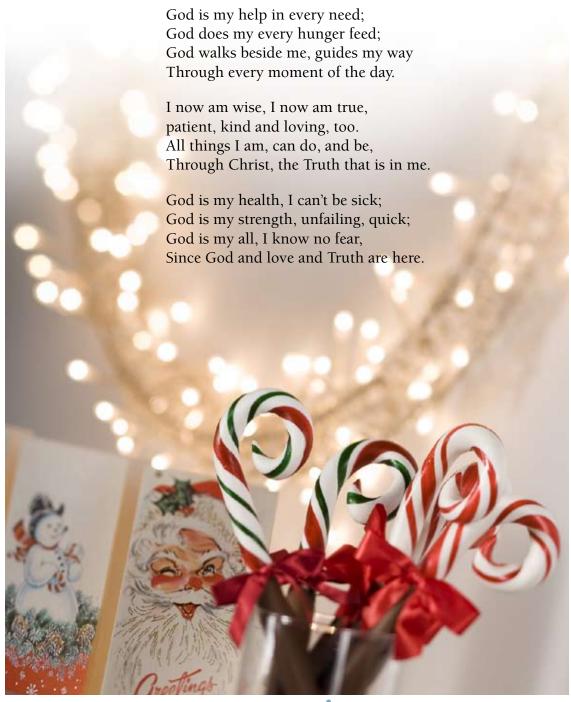
#### Activity—Make an "I Care" List

You can take care of your family by hugging them and helping with chores. You can take care of pets and other animals by giving them food and water and treating them with kindness. You can take care of the earth by recycling. What other ways can you show how much you care?

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### The Prayer of Faith

By Hannah More Kohaus





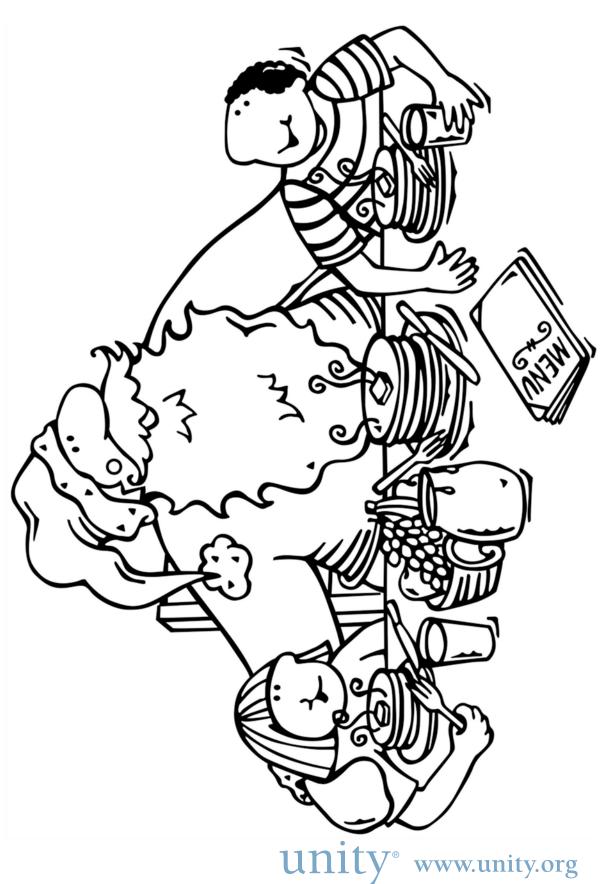
#### Affirmation: I expect and find fun in my life.

Any time you have a chore to do, choose to make it fun. If you are cleaning your room, make it into a game to see how quickly you can clean. If you have homework, imagine yourself as the teacher leading the class. Be creative and find fun in unexpected places.

#### Activity—Write and Say a Prayer

## Dear God,

I am praying for	
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#### Affirmation: I accept others who are different than me.

Pause for a moment to imagine a world where every tree looks exactly alike, every flower is the same shape and color, every bird sings the same song. The world would seem like a very boring place.

The same is true for people. If everyone looked and acted the same, the world would not be as interesting. God made everyone different and that makes the world a more exciting place.





Affirmation: When I think about God, I feel loved. God is always with me.

Our thoughts are powerful. You can choose to think positive thoughts or negative thoughts about your life. Thinking about God can help you feel peaceful and safe.

Activity—Color Mary, Joseph and the Baby Jesus



## Cut-Out Snowman!



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## Affirmation: I share my time and attention with my family and friends.

Even as a young child, you have a lot to share with your family and friends. Hugs, smiles, kind words and a joy-filled heart are some of the best gifts you can give. Share your love with someone today.

#### Activity—Christmas Word Maze

Find the following words. Look carefully. They can go up, down, backwards or across.

#### Words to find:

- Christmas
- Gifts
- Baby
- Helping
- Joy
- Faith
- Love
- Imagine

f h c s t w t r i l j o y t e y k g n a r q h a e g d h b g s x v c f e n s i k e s r j t r b l h a g t e y k i n t r q f a i o b h b z s x v c f v p s h h g s t w s r i l h a g t e y k l n t r q l a e g t h b g s x v c f e e s i k e s t j t i m a g i n e s y k h n s r q f a p o b h a z s x v c f e y k m n f r q l a e l o v e g s x v c f e y k d n g r q f a p o b h b z s x v c b a b y



### December 24, 2009

#### Affirmation: I am loving.

It's a great feeling to know you are loved. Even if family or friends have disagreements, they still love each other. Love grows with honesty and trust. Show your family and friends that you love them each day.

#### Activity—Look for Signs of God

See how many ways and in how many places you can find evidence of God. (Hint: The more you look, the more you will find!)

I see signs of (	God in:
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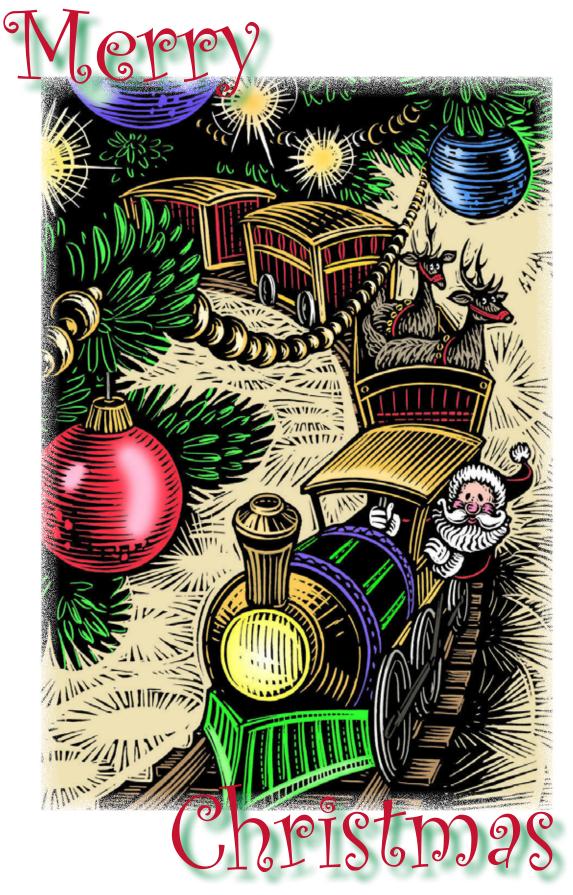
## Affirmation: My life today is the greatest gift I can receive. I enjoy today.

Are you filled with a sense of excitement? Today is a brand-new day. Like the baby Jesus, God's presence is within you. Wherever you go, whatever you do, you are connected to God.

#### Activity—Have Fun!

Enjoy your day because it's Christmas Day! Share your joy with your family and friends with hugs, smiles, laughter and prayer.





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