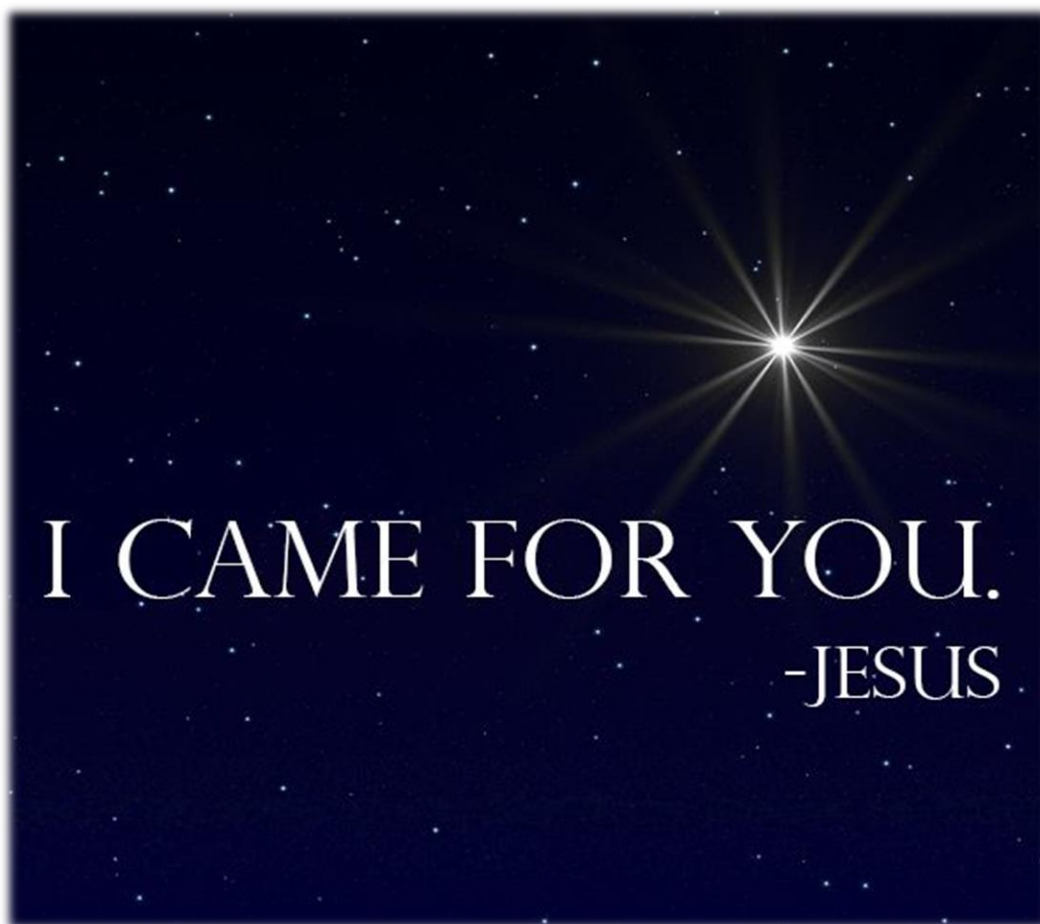


J N N E R G L O W

*First Reformed Church
Boyden, IA*

LaVonne Sietstra & Teresa Harms, Editors



December 2024



The Christmas within Thanksgiving

Thanksgiving is probably my favorite holiday of the year, and the older I get the greater my appreciation grows for what this holiday means for me personally. As I have been contemplating on what to share in my article to you this month the passage from 1 Timothy 1:12-17 kept coming to mind.

The subtitle Paul uses for this passage of Scripture is entitled *“God’s grace to Paul”*. I think this passage of Scripture is fitting for this time of year we are in with the season of Thanksgiving being upon us.....but yet the season of Christmas is coming. We see in this passage the reasons for our thanksgiving in what God did for us on Christmas morning when our Savior, Jesus Christ, was born into this world. If it wasn’t for God sending his one and only Son into this world to show us *“the way and the truth and the life”* and that *“No one comes to the Father except through me.”*(John 14:6) there would be no reason for Thanksgiving.

My encouragement for all of us this holiday season is to truly be in a place of thanksgiving as we remember (1) what it is Jesus did **for us**, by (2) coming down **to us**; so (3) by his salvation he can live **through us**. Always remember my brothers and sisters.....Thanksgiving day to this world is just the 4th Thursday in November, but to Christians everyday is Thanksgiving Day!!

As we celebrate Thanksgiving and look forward, with anticipation, to Christmas I ask as a way of preparing our hearts for the coming of the Christ child you put your name in the blanks of the passage from 1 Timothy. I ask you to put this passage someplace you can read it daily during the Advent season and ask yourself these questions and then respond your answers to God in prayer.....

What am I thanks-giving for today?? Where is God’s mercy and grace evident in my life?? Who is Jesus using me “as an example” to display for someone else “his immense patience”??

“ _____ thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who has given _____ strength, that he considered _____ trustworthy, appointing _____ to his service. Even though _____ was once a blasphemer and a persecutor and a violent man, _____ was shown mercy because _____ acted in ignorance and unbelief. The grace of our Lord was poured out on _____ abundantly, along with the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus. Here is a trustworthy saying that deserves full acceptance: Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners—of whom _____ am the worst. But for that very reason _____ was shown mercy so that in _____, the worst of sinners, Christ Jesus might display his immense patience as an example for those who would believe in him and receive eternal life. Now to the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only God, be honor and glory for ever and ever. **Amen.**” 1 Timothy 1:12-17

“Grace and peace to you from him who is, and who was, and who is to come”
HAPPY THANKSGIVING AND MERRY CHRISTMAS!!

Pastor Heath

Praise & Thanks for...

***successful hand surgery for Janice Sneller, knee surgery for LuEtta Heemskerk, foot surgery for Ken Hoogendoorn and any others that you know who has had surgery, whether it's church family, your family and/or friends, neighbors, co-workers, etc.**

***Boyden Association of Churches for the Harvest Festival**

***those planning and serving the Christmas activities here at FRC – caroling, advent candle, Christmas programs, decorating, etc**

***the greatest gift of all – Jesus Christ is Lord!**

***Christ's birth at Bethlehem that fulfilled the promise of a Savior to the world!**

***the Truth that Jesus loves you and me!**

***Awana leaders, volunteers & clubbers and everyone who helps out by giving donations and praying for us**

***Secret Sisters who lift up their Sisters-in-Christ!**

***God-sightings that warm our hearts and bless us**

***the Fruits of the Spirit – love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness & self-control**

***God's Word that is filled with promises and expressions of love**



Pray for...

- *continued healing and strength for those who have had surgery, therapies, treatments and those experiencing health issues
- *Bev Kooiker & Carla Starkenburg's brother Jerald and everyone living with a cancer diagnosis
- *Shari Fedders and her family as they learn to live without her Mom Christine Schouten; and for all of our congregational family who are grieving
 - *Roger Nelson's mom and any loved ones with illnesses and difficulties
 - *military families separated during the holidays
- *the lonely, especially during the holidays – ask yourself, "What can I do to encourage or help those who are alone?"
 - *safe travels during the holiday season
 - *someone to turn to Jesus for the first time today!!!
- *our church to be a House of Prayer, Love and warmth to ALL
- *our focus to be on Christ during our holiday celebrations and parties
 - *all of us to live more like Jesus everyday!
- *the Congregational meeting this month – Dec 4th



SUNSHINE FOR THE MONTH:

12 Ways to Spread Holiday Cheer

(Taken from *The Pioneer Woman Magazine* Holiday 2023)

1. "I make baked goods and hot cocoa for our trash-collection guys. They're out in the cold and deserve appreciation and treat!" @nancyhunter59
2. "My son and I fill drawstring bags with nonperishable food, a small blanket, a pair of socks, a beanie and gloves. Then we go out into the community and deliver them to homeless people we see on the streets. Most of them are receptive and thankful." @ehlamb75
3. "I keep 10 Christmas cards in my purse, each with \$10 inside, and I randomly pass them out during the holiday season. I don't stick around to see them opened - I just hope they spark joy." @ann.shutters
4. "When I was young, my dad got baklava from someone and decided that he was going to learn to make it himself. It became a family tradition. My dad is gone now, but I still bake it for all my friends." @annbloomfield
5. "Throughout the year, I recycle plastic bottles and save the money in a jar. At Christmas time I decorate it and deliver it anonymously to someone who has impacted my life or is in need of hope." @ia2oc
6. "It's not the holidays until our friends do our annual book thing. We get together at the local Barnes & Noble for a fun evening of picking out children's books for kids who are spending the holidays in the hospital. We're just a group of book geeks who want to help kids." @wendysallison
7. "We have a few elderly people who live near us and my husband clears the snow from their driveways." @irenesilva2642
8. "My husband buys a stack of coffee gift cards and races out to deliver them to every snowplow operator, delivery person and crossing guard. He loves it as much as the recipients!" @coley713
9. "I bake treats for the people who work at my fave local café. My boyfriend and I eat their cakes all the time, and it's my way of saying Thank You and Merry Christmas." @bbarella2020
10. "My family has a sleepover at my house and we bake about 5,000 cookies in 18 varieties. We divide them up and give them to family and friends. This will be our 49th year! @jpbuckingham
11. "I do my own kind of Advent calendar. Every day I add a food and a nonfood item to a box. At the end of the countdown, I bring it to a local food pantry or shelter." @kregan16
12. "I make roasted red pepper and tomato soup for friends, wrap it up pretty in mason jars and gift it with jalapeno cornbread or spicy crackers. Everyone loves it!" @magberrymaypie

Merry Christmas!

HYMN OF THE MONTH: "JOY TO THE WORLD"

"Shout joyfully to the LORD, all the earth; Break forth in song, rejoice, and sing praises."
Psalms 98:4 (NKJV)

Until Isaac Watts came along, most of the singing in British churches was from the Psalms of David. The church - especially the Church of Scotland - had labored over the Psalms with great effort and scholarship, translating them into poems with rhyme and rhythm suitable for singing. As a young man in Southampton, Isaac had become dissatisfied with the quality of singing, and he keenly felt the limitations of being able to only sing these Psalms. So he "invented" the English hymn.

He did not, however, neglect the Psalms. In 1719, he published a unique hymnal - one in which he had translated, interpreted, and paraphrased the Old Testament Psalms through the eyes of a New Testament faith. He called it simply, *The Psalms of David Imitated in the Language of the New Testament*. Taking various Psalms, he studied them from the perspective of Jesus and the New Testament, and then formed them into verses for singing.

"I have rather expressed myself as I may suppose David would have done if he lived in the days of Christianity," Watts explained, "and by this means, perhaps, I have sometimes hit upon the true intent of the Spirit of God in those verses farther and clearer than David himself could ever discover."

Watts' archenemy, Thomas Bradbury, was greatly critical of Watts' songs, which he called *whims* instead of *hymns*. He accused Watts of thinking he was King David. Watts replied in a letter, "You tell me that I rival with David, whether he or I be the sweet psalmist of Israel. I abhor the thought; while yet, at the same time, I am fully persuaded that the Jewish psalm book was never designed to be the only Psalter for the Christian church."

"Joy to the World!" is Isaac Watts' interpretation of Psalm 98, which says: "Shout joyfully to the LORD, all the earth" (verse 4). As he read Psalm 98, Isaac pondered the real reason for shouting joyfully to the Lord - the Messiah has come to redeem us. The result, despite the now-forgotten criticisms of men like Bradbury, has been a timeless carol that has brightened our Christmases for nearly three hundred years.

Let joy be
your way of
responding
to the world.



Joy To The World

Isacc Watts

Handel

D A/D G/D D Em/G D/A A⁷ D D/F#

1. Joy to the world! The Lord is come; Let
 2. Joy to the earth! The Sav - ior reigns; Let
 3. No more let sings and sor - rows grow, nor
 4. He rules the world with truth and grace, and

5 G A D G/D D

earth re - ceive her King; Let ev - 'ry
 men their songs em - ploy; While field and
 thorns in - fest the ground; He comes to
 makes the na - tions prove the glo - ries

9 G/D D

heart pre - pare Him room. And and na - ture
 floods, rocks, hills and plains, re - peat the sound - ing
 make His bless - ings flow far as the curse is
 of His righ - eous - ness. And won - ders of His

13 A A⁷ D/A A

sing, and heav'n and na - ture sing. And
 joy, re - peat the sound - ing joy. Re -
 found, far as the curse is found. Far
 love, and won - ders of His love. And

16 D G/D D Em/G D/A A⁷ D

heav'n and heav'n and na - ture sing.
 -peat, re - peat the sound - ing joy.
 as, far as, the curse is found.
 won - ders, won - ders of His love.

In Years Gone By ...

50 YEARS AGO – December 1974

Sympathy wishes were extended to the family and friends of Leonard Korthals and John Dokter.

Congratulations were expressed to Gerrit Uittenbogaard who celebrated his 88th birthday.

Baptism was held for Bobby Jay Van Der Brink, infant son of Mr & Mrs Henry Van Der Brink.

The individuals elected to the office of Elder were Gerrit Alons & Henry Van Aalsburg – to the office of Deacon were Delmar Slykhuis & Calvin Heemstra.

25 YEARS AGO – December 1999

Sympathy wishes were extended to the family and friends of Erwin Boone and Lydia Starkenburg.

To be installed as Elders were Tom Reuvers and Delmar Slykhuis – to be installed was Deacons were Steve Kleinwolterink and Kevin Van Roekel.

The RCYF held a poinsettia fundraiser where individuals could purchase poinsettias in memory or in honor of others.

10 YEARS AGO – December 2014

Sympathy wishes were extended to the family and friends of Duane Alons.

The Youth Group sold calendars as a fundraiser.

An open house for Trudy Blankers' 85th birthday was held at the Christian Retirement Home.

5 YEARS AGO – December 2019

A surprise birthday party was held for Trudy Blankers' 90th birthday at the Christian Retirement Home.

A Hat, Glove, Mitten & Scarf tree was put up to get donations for kids at Boyden-Hull Elementary.

Donations were accepted for the College boxes that will be sent to our church family college kids.

Christmas Memories

FUN WITH PICTURES!

This month we have a picture from Facebook that Janice Sneller shared. It was taken in the basement of the church the Sunday before Janice left for Arizona. I loved what her daughter said with the picture "I love this tribute to the 'Church Basement Ladies!' So thankful for the wonderful training I received in that church basement."
Beautiful Ladies!!



(Left to right are Janice Sneller, Carla Starkenburg, Joan Wiertzema, Shirley Baartman, Ranae Kleinwolterink, Jeri Hoogendoorn, Wanda Slykhuis & Leila Moret)



Fund Balances October 2024

Awana	\$3,553.06
Benevolent Fund	\$24,506.60
Building & Repair Fund	\$10,188.57
General Fund	\$23,600.35
Memorial Fund	\$8,623.32
Mission Fund	\$6,959.19
Women's Ministry	\$2,837.19
Youth Funds	\$2,382.10



Bringing Christmas Outdoors

As you're decorating the outside of your home for the Holiday Lighting contest in Boyden, think of this story to understand how bringing lights outside started.

The first colored electric Christmas lights on outdoor evergreen trees appeared in Denver in 1914. The tradition began thanks to a sick boy bedridden in the top floor of his home. Ten-year-old David Sturgeon couldn't see his family's Christmas tree downstairs, so his grandfather, a pioneering electrician, painted some light bulbs red and green and strung them on a tree outside David's window.

Not only did the lights brighten what would be David's last holiday, but residents throughout the city came by to admire the display. Just as David's innovative grandfather brought light into the boy's dark times and joy to the whole community, God revealed the True Light by sending Jesus into our dark world. For "the Light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it" (John 1:5 NRSV)



**It takes a village to be a loving and friendly church family –
Thank You!**

***church secretary, organists/pianists, Backyard Singers, greeters/ushers, audio/video/powerpoint people, kitchen helpers, cookie makers, nursery volunteers, childrens' message givers, Sunday School teachers, Children in Worship leaders, the little ones whose voices add beauty to the services, Awana leaders & volunteers, Prayer Chain Warriors, Pastor & his wife, Consistory members, janitors, work groups, Committee members, card sender, website designer, social media volunteers, study group leaders & attendees, transportation providers, and all those behind the scenes that go above and beyond just because ...**

**A prayer for everyone that your Christmas is touched by grace and
blessed with heartfelt praise.**

LaVonne & Teresa

**Please don't forget the widows & widowers of our church, as well as those who are confined to their
homes and care centers. May God bless us one and all!**

John Beek

1119 E Prairie St
Boydton IA 51234

Gert De Groot

2501 E 6th St, #121
Sheldon IA 51201

Rosie Diekvevers

1001 Sunshine St, #1
Boydton IA 51234

Max Morgt

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Sheldon IA 51201

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Kathy Van Diepen

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Mary Van Es

1004 Railroad St
Boydton IA 51234

Clarella Van Marzi

2501 E 6th St #222
Sheldon IA 51201

Ginger Van Rokkel

1351 13th Ave SE
Sioux Center IA 51250

Elaine Ver Meer

3750 320th St
Boydton IA 51234

And our missionaries – Seung & Amy Kim, Barry & Terryll Bruce, J.J. Ten Clay – you can find their contact information at Reformed Church in America's website.

HAPPINESS IS ...



HAPPINESS IS

...lighting the Christmas tree.



facebook.com/isthehappyday

(c) lastlemon.com 2013



HAPPINESS IS...

holidays together



Thank goodness you're home...
...The Christmas Tree Fainted.



Milk & Love

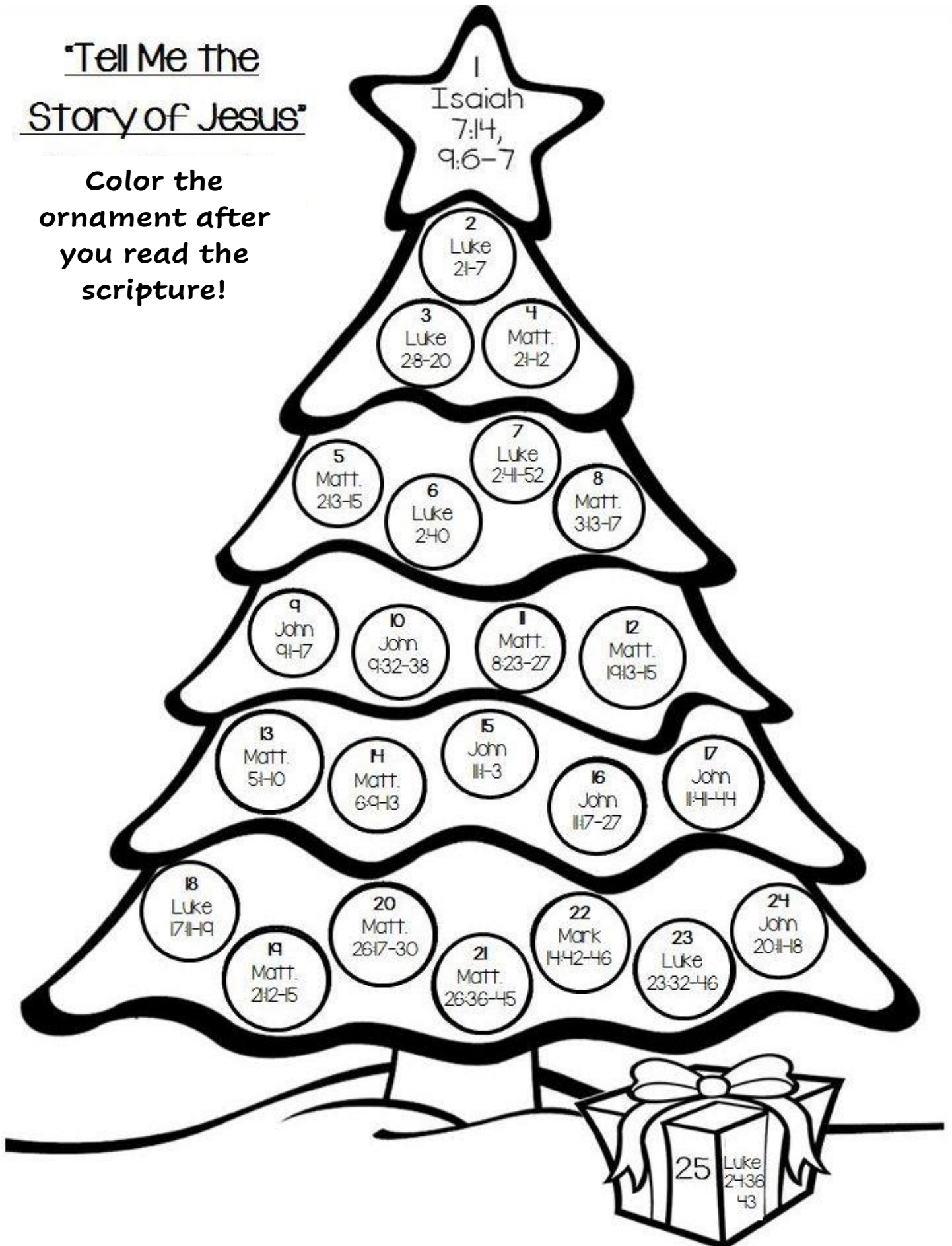
OH CHRISTMAS TREE, OH CHRISTMAS TREE



ALL YOUR ORNAMENTS ARE HISTORY!

"Tell Me the
Story of Jesus"

Color the
ornament after
you read the
scripture!



December

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
1 Rev. Doug Van Aartsen 1st Sunday of Advent Mission Offering Sarah Breems-Diekevers	2 Ken Baartman	3 Men's Group 5:30 am Evening Ladies 7 pm	4 Annual Congregational Meeting 7:00 PM	5 Secret Sister Reveal Party 7:00 PM	6 Misti Fykstra	7 
8 2nd Sunday of Advent Christmas Caroling & Soup Supper Carla Starkenburg	9 Nic Rosenboom	10 Men's Group 5:30 am Evening Ladies 7 pm Elders' Mtg 6:30 pm Deacons' Mtg 7 pm Consistory Mtg 8 pm Mia Darnell Roxa Van Roekel	11 Deanna & Kerry Dahl (4)	12 Wendy De Jong	13 	14
15 3rd Sunday of Advent Building & Repair Offng Les Starkenburg	16	17 Men's Group 5:30 am Evening Ladies 7 pm	18 	19 Mark Warntjes	20	21 1st Day of Winter! 
22 4th Sunday of Advent Jeff Neuman Children in Worship Christmas Program Andrea Maassen	23 Innerglow due!	24 Christmas Eve! Sunday School Christmas Program at UP Church Jeremy Darnell	25 Merry Christmas! Worship Service "Unplugged" 9:30 am Beth Polacek	26 Kevin & Andrea Maassen (26) Dick & Arlys Van Nyhuis (49)	27 Kathy Van Diepen	28 Josh & Marissa Mouw (5)
29 Mike Kooiker	30 	31 Happy New Year! Men's Group 5:30 am Evening Ladies 7 pm	 <p style="text-align: center; font-size: small;">CHRISTMAS IS THE CELEBRATION OF THE BIRTH OF JESUS, THE SAVIOUR OF MANKIND</p>			