

Calvary Presbyterian Church



Connections

Merry Christmas! Here's your December issue of Connections! Please remember: be sure to click OPEN when your email provider delivers your newsletter so you don't miss any content.

While you are reading this month's newsletter: if you see a word or phrase in **bold** and **evergreen** like **THIS**, or if you see the word **HERE** - click on it! These are links that will automatically open a website or document. There are also some images that link to either websites or printable forms - each link is labeled.

From the Desk of Session

As we turn the calendar page from November to December, most of us immediately go to December 25 – the day of our Lord's birth. In the church calendar, Christmas is celebrated on that day and that day alone. Preceding Christmas is Advent. "Advent" means "coming" or "arrival." During the season of Advent, we celebrate Christ's coming into the world and watch with expectant hope for his coming again. In its historical origins, the season of Advent was patterned after the season of Lent, a six-week period of penitence and preparation for Easter. Similarly, the four weeks of Advent present an opportunity for communal discernment and personal examination, as the church prepares to celebrate the Nativity of the Lord and looks with hope for Christ's return.

PC-USA's provided resources for the 2022 season of Advent focus on the Gospel of Mark. The Gospel of Mark?!? Where's the Baby Jesus? Where's the warm and comforting Christmas story we remember? Mark's gospel at Christmas is like bringing the box labelled "Nativity" out of the attic and finding it empty – no Magi, no camels, no Mary and Joseph, and no Baby Jesus. Mark picks up the story of Jesus at his baptism. It then embarks on an accounting of Jesus's ministry that can be described in one word – disruptive. Jesus challenges his followers (and us) to not accept the status quo. We are instructed to restore the afflicted, the tormented, and the grieving while being reminded that healing has come in Christ. We long for the beating of swords into plowshares, yet we rejoice that the Prince of Peace has appeared. We yearn for the barren deserts of our inner cities to flourish, yet we laud the desert Rose that has bloomed. We dream of the land where lions and lambs live in harmony, yet we acclaim the child born to lead us into the promised land.

Yes, Mark probably has no business in recounting and celebrating Christmas. Mark is instructive during Advent; however. Its chapters discuss the coming of Christ into our lives and world. While Mark's Gospel does not give us a conventional cozy Christmas message, it does help us to discover a fresh understanding of the holiness of Christmas – the holiness when God's transformative love is born in us.

Steve Gilbert

December Worship Service Schedule

12/4 David Watts

12/11 Rev. Dick Herman

12/18 Rev. Dick Herman

12/24 Christmas Eve Service, Saturday, 7pm, Rev Bill Gaskill

12/25 Sunday Service, Christmas Day, 10am, hymns and scripture, Diana and Bobbie, 10am

Be Social!

Links to our Facebook page, Live streaming services, YouTube and the Church Website all in one place. Just click on the buttons and stay connected!



Staying connected to your church family online is EASY! Use the links below to worship with live streaming services on Facebook. Our YouTube channel is a repository for services.

You can access videos, websites and streaming services right from this email! Just click on the buttons for a direct link!

[Visit the Calvary Facebook Page](#)

[Visit Calvary Website](#)

[Visit the YouTube Channel](#)

Covenant December Sunday School

Celebrating the Holidays with Joyful Music

12/4 The Calvary Hand Bells

ring the beautiful French carol "He Is Born, the Divine Christ Child" and Fanfare on "Adeste Fideles" ("O Come All Ye Faithful").

12/11 The Chancel Choir sings "An Advent Credo" by Joseph Martin, with Dorothy Talavera on flute.

12/18 "Hurry Shepherds Run" is a joyous arrangement loved by the Choir.

12/24 Christmas Eve - The Chancel Choir sings the prayerful "O Holy Night"; the exciting Spanish Carol "Sing Gloria!" with Box Cornatzer on trumpet; "In the Bleak Midwinter" by Gustav Holst and the ever favorite "Hallelujah Chorus" by G. F. Handel.



Mark Your Calendars:



Caroling at Riverton's Christmas Village December 3rd, 2pm-3pm

Calvary Choir singers will be caroling at the Riverton Christmas Village on December 3rd 2pm-3pm. Come out and listen.



Riverton Candlelight House Tour

Calvary will be participating in this year's Candlelight House Tour with guided tours of our church. The tours, led by Dorothy Talavera, are from 4pm-9pm, December 3rd, at the Church.

Covered Dish Luncheon

We will be hosting a covered dish luncheon following worship on December 11th. Ham and coffee will be provided. We ask members to bring side dishes, salads, and desserts. Contact **Lyn**.



The Holidays are a busy time for charitable giving! Your Deacons are asking for your support with a number of charitable endeavors. We appreciate your generosity in helping us and our community at-large serve the needy!

Remember: we have a bin out front for canned food donations for the **Bread of Life Pantry** at **Epworth Methodist Church** in Palmyra.

Cathedral Kitchen Sandwiches

Friday, December 2 at 10am, sandwich making for Cathedral Kitchen in the Social Hall. Call **Georgie** at 856-316-2910 if you'd like to help.

The Christmas Giving Tree

The Mitten Tree is back, and you can find it in the Assembly Room. Your Mission Team hopes that you will decorate it with hats, scarves and mittens for both adults and children. Male adult gloves and socks are particularly welcome.

This year we hope to add a paper chain made of links you will be able to purchase for \$1 in the Narthex as you enter the church or leave! All the money collected will be sent to Presbyterian Disaster Assistance for their work with the people of Ukraine. Let's hope for a chain that circles the tree a lot! The hats, mittens, scarves, gloves and socks will be divided between Bread for Life food bank here in our local communities and Cathedral Kitchen in Camden.

Looking for Used Magazines for PPMC

Looking for a way to recycle your used magazines and catalogs? Linda Fioretti is collecting them for Penn Presbyterian Medical Center's Patients Comfort Cart. Volunteers at the hospital visit the patient rooms and handout activity books, coloring books and the magazines to help the patients keep busy between testing and during recovery. Bring the used magazines with you to church, choir or book club and give them to Linda. There will also be a marked box in the Assembly Room for the magazines. Contact **Linda**

Soles4Souls Update!



November 27th was the last day for our Soles4Souls drive. Sarah Wood reports that 215 pairs of shoes were collected, as well as, \$215 in donations! Plus, participants benefited from the exercise. Congrats to Sarah and everyone that contributed and/or walked!

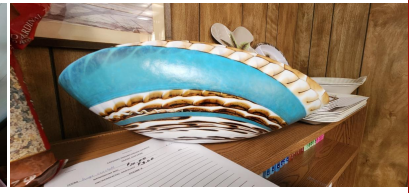
SOLES4 SOULS

Stewardship

As of November 13, Stewardship Sunday, we have approximately \$47,000 in pledged giving for next year. We currently need an income of \$70,000 to balance out our expected expenses. Although our congregation is remarkably generous, pledging lets us know how much income we can generally expect during the year. This helps us to plan for the future. Please pray that we can make our budgeted goal of \$70,000 and pledge if you are able to do so.

Silent Auction till December 11th!

Here's just a few of the items available during our Silent Auction, open to the public through December 11. We have lots of great items for sale, including vintage quilts, a dinnerware set - service for 12 for the upcoming holidays, Phillie Phanatic memorabilia, antiques, plus much more. Items can be viewed Wednesdays 12:30-1:30, Thursdays 6-7 and Sundays 11-12 until December 11th. Think Holiday gifting!





Our Church Family



Happy December Birthday to you!

Terry Pahl 3
Lyn Wargny 10
John Joseph Wood 11
Laurie Beck 13
Joann Ryan 15
Dorie Cecchini 17
Jackson Kreifels 19
Karen Gilbert 19
Janet Adams 22
Timothy Beck 25
Darice Ciandella 26
Bruce Gunn 27
John Cecchini 27

*Poinsettia Order Form for
at Calvary*

POINSETTIA DEDICATIONS

Please return this form and cash or a check made payable to "Calvary Presbyterian Church" **by Monday, December 19th.** The cost is still \$8.00 for each dedication. The form and payment may be placed in the offering plate or mailed to the church. The Remembrance List will be in the Christmas Eve Bulletin.

POINSETTIAS

Looking toward Christmas we will have a very small display of poinsettias, and will gladly accept dedications of \$8 for each dedication, but we will not be asking people to take poinsettias home. Your dedication will be printed in our Christmas Bulletin, but will be symbolic only. Our mission partners will be the recipients of your financial gift.



MISSION PARTNERS

The organizations that may benefit from this include:

Bread of Life Food Pantry Cathedral Kitchen
Crossroads, Inc. Urban Promise

Please return this form and cash or a check made payable to "Calvary Presbyterian Church" **by Monday, December 20th.** The cost is still \$8.00 for each dedication. The form and payment may be placed in the offering plate or mailed to the church. The Remembrance List will be in the Christmas Eve Bulletin.

✂-----
The listing in the bulletin will read: The poinsettias are presented by.....

PLEASE PRINT YOUR NAME AS YOU WISH IT TO APPEAR

"In loving memory of" or "In honor of" CIRCLE YOUR DEDICATION CHOICE

PLEASE PRINT THE NAME(S) OF THE PERSON(S) YOU WISH TO REMEMBER

\$8 PER DEDICATION Amount included: _____

Volunteer's Needed for Covenant Nursery

Calvary Thrift Shop

December 3rd

Christmas Open House at the Thrift Shop



Calvary Thrift Shop will be open with extended hours for your Christmas shopping! Plan a visit during our Open House on December 3rd, 10am till 8 pm. All of Riverton will be out enjoying the season.

Christmas gift shopping? There is something for everyone here!

Come in to see the fabulous Christmas decorations we have for sale. While you're there, be sure to enter to win a raffle bag of great things. You better look around since there could be more than one bag - or---maybe more!

Last day shopping before Christmas, December 22. Big 50% off Sale on all Christmas decorations on December 29.

Fun & Games!

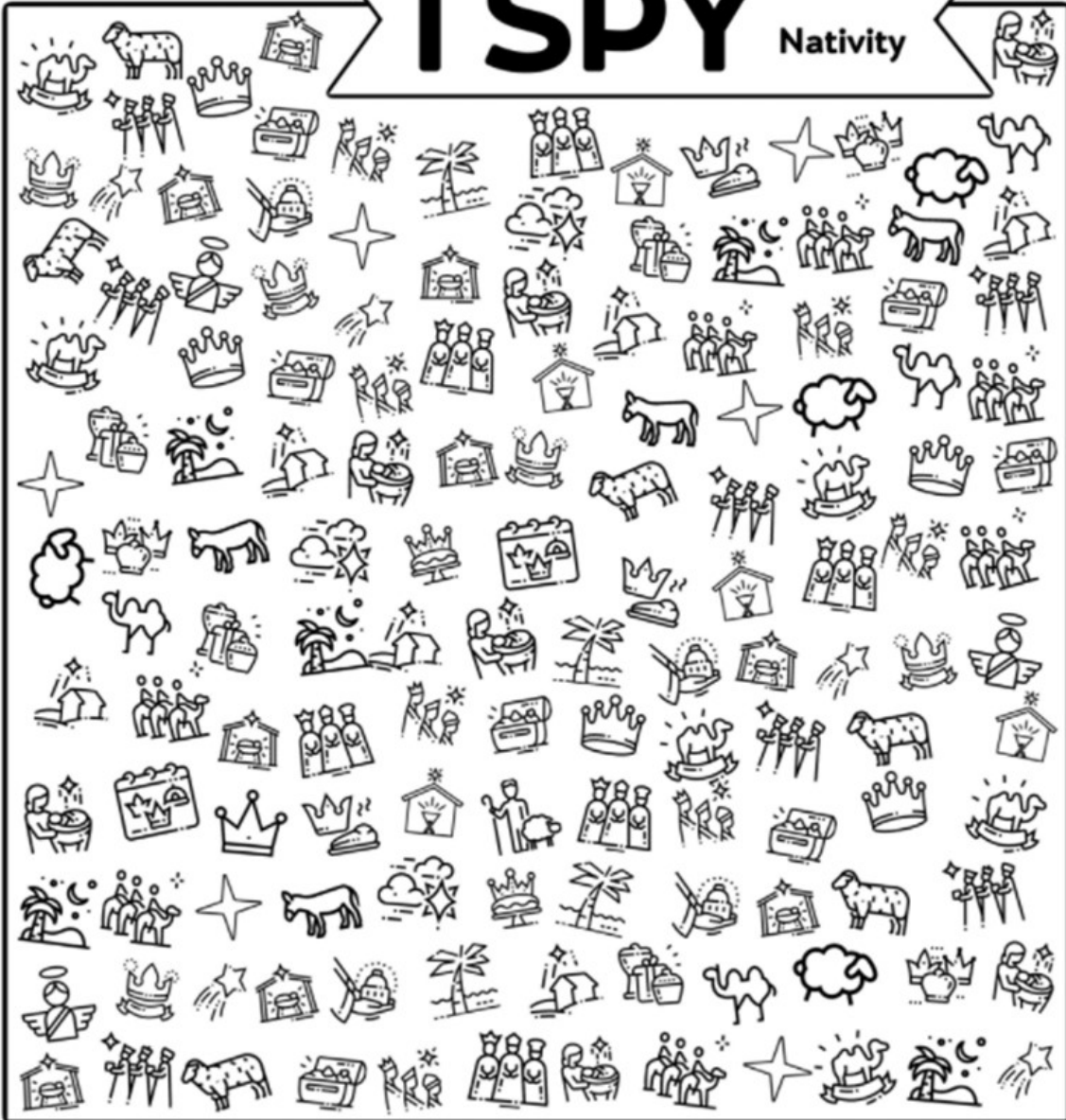
Kids Korner Activities

Enjoy these Christmas Activity Sheets for kids young and old!
Click on any activity to print out a sheet.

**What can you spy with your little eye?
Baby Jesus, Wise Men and a Star in the sky!**

I SPY

Nativity

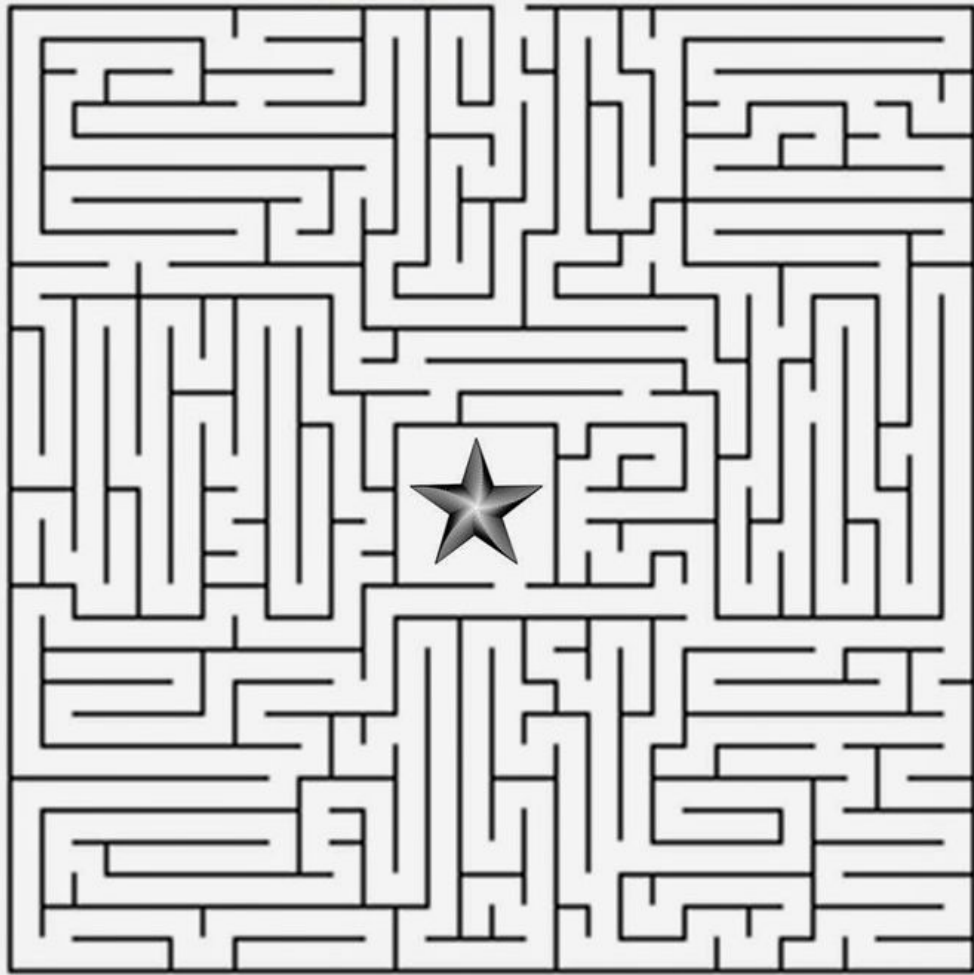


- 2 4 4 5 4 5 7 4 6 5 1 6 7 1 3 6 7 4 7 5 3 3 4 6 2 7 5 9 6 3

The shepherds followed a star to find the Baby Jesus and help celebrate his birth. Can you help the shepherds find the way to the stable?

Christmas Maze

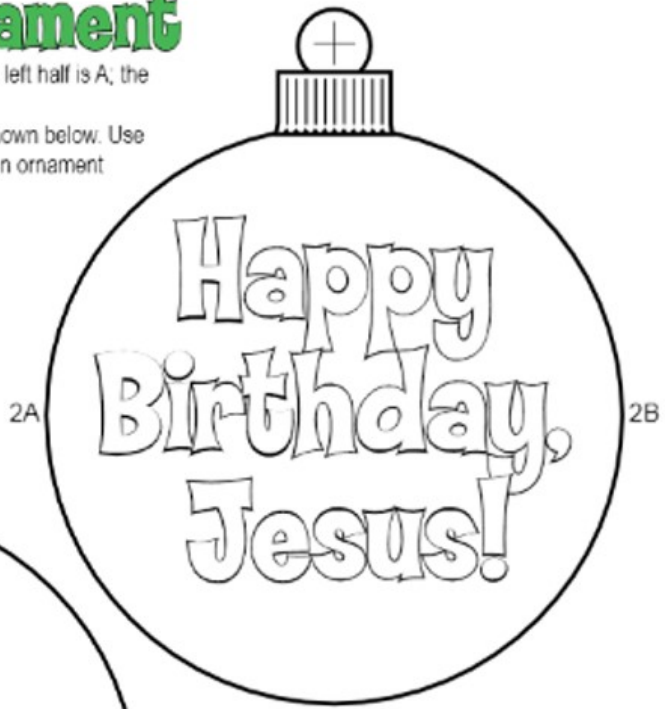
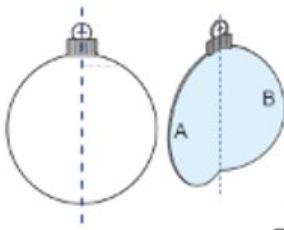
Can you help the wise men follow the star to find Jesus?



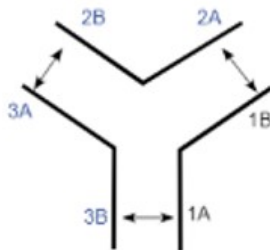
Print out this Christmas ornament to color and make!

Christmas Ornament

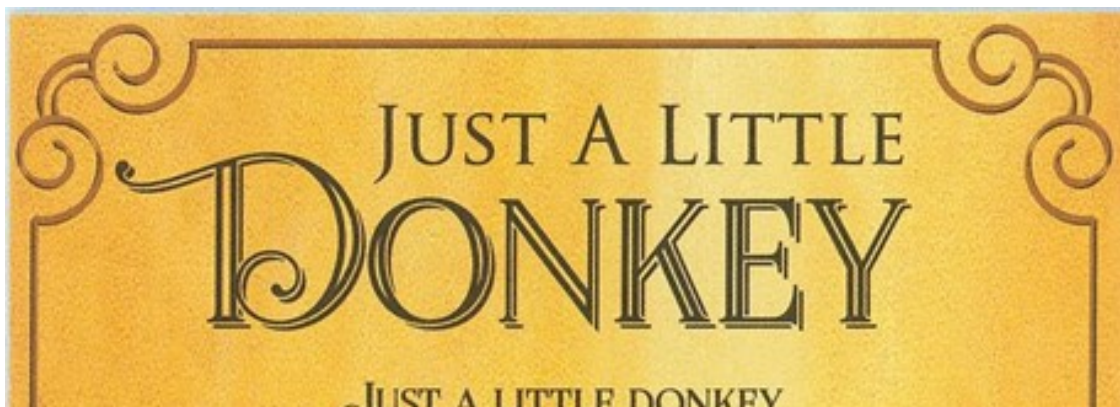
1. Cut out the three pieces and fold each in half. The left half is A, the right half is B.
2. Glue the backs of the folded halves together as shown below. Use a hole punch to make a hole in the top ring. Use an ornament hanger or string to hang the ornament.



1. Glue the back of "1B" to the back of "2A."
2. Glue the back of "2B" to the back of "3A."
3. Glue the back of "3B" to the back of "1A."



A Christmas Story for Children



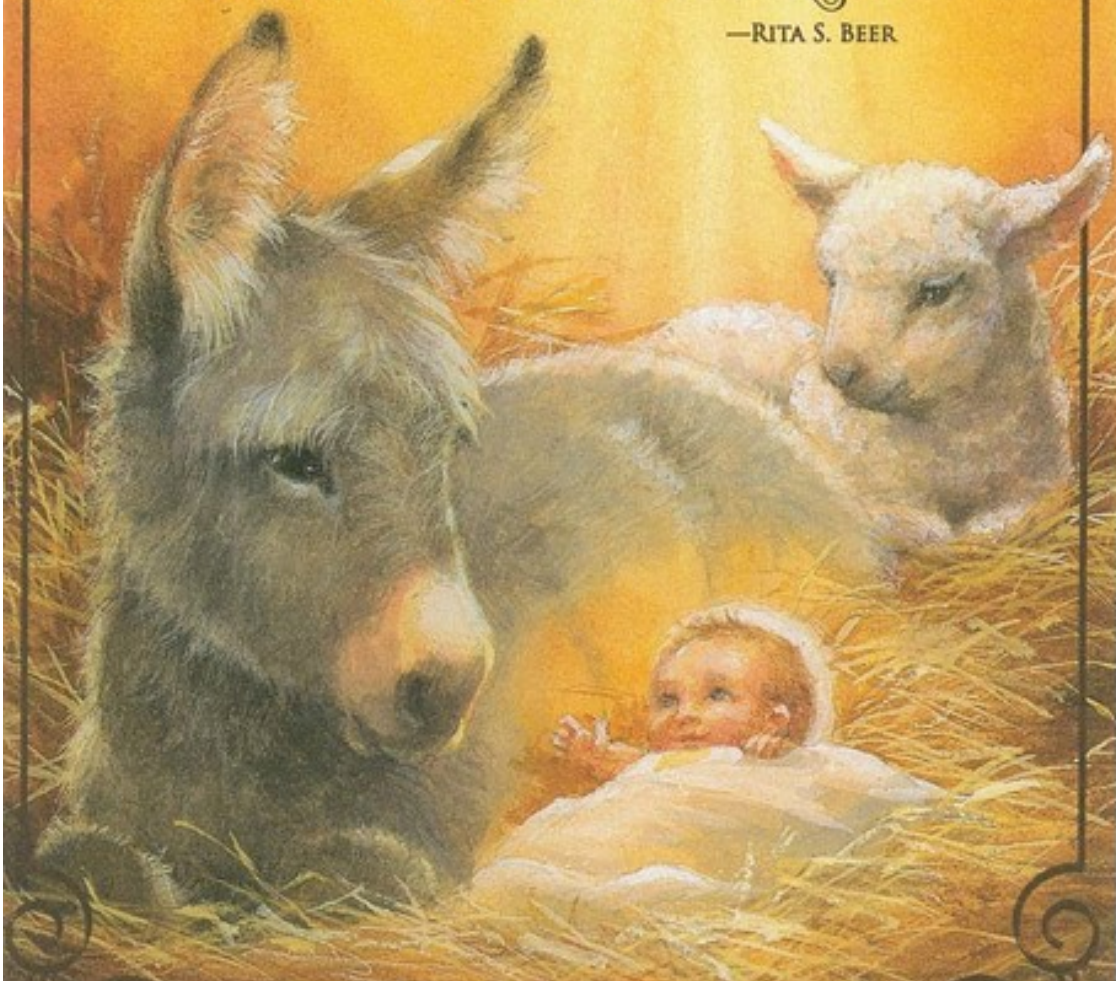
JUST A LITTLE DONKEY,
BUT ON MY BACK I BORE
THE ONE AND ONLY SAVIOR
THE WORLD WAS WAITING FOR.

JUST A LITTLE DONKEY,
BUT I WAS STRONG AND PROUD—
I GLADLY CARRIED MARY
THROUGH THE CHAOS OF THE CROWD.

I BROUGHT HER TO A STABLE
WHERE SHE MADE A TINY BED...
A PLACE FOR BABY JESUS
TO LAY HIS LITTLE HEAD.

I PRAY THE WORLD REMEMBERS
THAT SPECIAL CHRISTMAS NIGHT
WHEN JUST A LITTLE DONKEY
CARRIED HEAVEN'S PRECIOUS LIGHT.

—RITA S. BEER



More Holiday Fun: Adult Diversions

Take a break from the holiday madness and relax with some fun diversions! Click on the sheets below to open printable versions of each.





Christmas Word Search Puzzle



TYULETIDEMCHRISTMASLIGHTSPACBNG
 NSLIHAOAHVHSNBGESNOWFLAKEBDKHCI
 CRHDVCGSCTIGNTOMOTATHREEWISEMEN
 STOYSYUHAOMEDHEWNUTCRACKERVFJWG
 CNLBJCMEYSNCBORNAMENTSUZSWIYZIE
 JOLLYARRUDEHALGAKIGLYMOECRAEOCR
 ITYOJWADXNYEMISTLETOEOELSEHSLLEB
 NSCANDYCANESCDFVGRYPNDOPDURNSAR
 GOBPUACHRISTMASTREEMNGLSTREMNGE
 LCSCROOGEBLNDYCAITNAIAGTREASTYA
 ETGTWDMBVSEULSEVNHCECSFEKRECNAD
 BSNHIAEEFUITVCJRKTSEILUCDNHOIRM
 EILJRHTMRHGSHAEFEMASGEHOQUCOAIA
 LWKFUYZNERHCDISWBGRCGEVERNAKUKN
 LECAEPWVSAYVEQUJBTNALNNCRSRITAE
 SOOINREINDEERHSAOECARAHOMOEAAPV
 NHTNYEVXRNTNSUMEIKUOMCUECHVSARI
 LMSOGSAETAESPODFAVMWSIHSILESNIT
 CEDBUEUNATIVITYOFSOJACKFROSTUHS
 UOGBTNHCOEYKRMUTLNORTHPOLECFWRE
 PSWINTERSLTEISDYSPENSASWRUKRNAF
 IEFRESVOIWRSTZOMTCHLROUCLYMOIRC
 DKLTLLULMEUEPRANCEROGARLANDASETA
 JOSTVYAEAOUIHBNITREICTOEBWITYRG
 NAPWEFRXDELCEMZEPA LRANEZVOXTYNOJ
 CHRISTMASDINNERCDEFBLITZENDFIMK

Angels
 Candy Canes
 Chimney
 Comet
 Donner
 Frosty
 Ivy
 Joy
 Noel
 Prancer
 Santa Clause
 Snowflake
 Tinsel
 Yuletide

Bells
 Cards
 Christmas Dinner
 Cookies
 Elves
 Garland
 Jack Frost
 Manger
 North Pole
 Presents
 Scrooge
 Snowman
 Toys

Blitzen
 Carols
 Christmas Lights
 Cupid
 Family
 Gingerbread Man
 Jesus
 Merry
 Nutcracker
 Reindeer
 Season
 Spirit
 Vixen

Bow
 Cheer
 Christmas Tree
 Dancer
 Festive
 Holidays
 Jingle Bells
 Mistletoe
 Ornaments
 Ribbon
 Sled
 Stockings
 Winter

Candles
 Chestnuts
 Church
 Dasher
 Fireplace
 Holly
 Jolly
 Nativity
 Peace
 Rudolph
 Sleigh
 Three Wise Men
 Wreath

A Christmas Tale for Adults

The Holidays can be overwhelming. If you need some perspective, just remember the lesson of La Befana, a fable from Italy.

The Ballad of Befana

Befana the Housewife, scrubbing her pane,
 Saw three old sages ride down the lane,
 Saw three gray travelers pass her door -Gaspar,

Balthazar, Melchior.

"Where journey you, sirs?" she asked of them.
Balthazar answered, "To Bethlehem,
For we have news of a marvelous thing.
Born in a stable is Christ the King."
"Give Him my welcome!"
Then Gaspar smiled,
"Come with us, mistress, to greet the Child."
"Oh, happily, happily would I fare,
Were my dusting through and I'd polished the
stair."

Old Melchior leaned on his saddle horn.
"Then send but a gift to the small Newborn."
"Oh, gladly, gladly I'd send Him one,
Were the hearthstone swept and my weaving
done.
"As soon as ever I've baked my bread,
I'll fetch Him a pillow for His head,
And a coverlet too," Befana said.
"When the rooms are aired and the linen dry,
I'll look at the Babe."
But the Three rode by.

She worked for a day and a night and a day,
Then, gifts in her hands, took up her way.
But she never could find where the Christ Child lay.

And still she wanders at Christmastide,
Houseless, whose house was all her pride,
Whose heart was tardy, whose gifts were late;
Wanders, and knocks at every gate,
Crying, "Good people, the bells begin!
Put off your toiling and let love in."



Faithfully Funny...

BEREA BAPTIST CHURCH

I'M ALSO MAKING A
LIST AND CHECKING
IT TWICE
GOD

WISHING YOU A BLESSED CHRISTMAS!

*For to us a child is born, to us
a son is given, and the
government will be on his
shoulders. And he will be
called Wonderful
Counselor, Mighty God,
Everlasting Father,
Prince of Peace.*

300 4th St.
Riverton, NJ 08077
(856) 829-0783

www.calvaryriverton.org