

# Getting Ready for Christmas

Advent: a time for getting ready

At this time of year, lots of people are getting ready for Christmas. They rush around the shops, buying things, getting ready, wrapping presents, having parties, but they might miss the real meaning of Christmas because they're so busy, or they don't know it is there.

In the church, we get ready for Christmas by going on a journey through the story to Christmas Day. We call this time Advent. Advent happens around the four Sundays before Christmas Day. At church during our Advent journey we take time to think about the things that happened when God came among us. And each week we light a candle on the Advent wreath to help us think about what Christmas means: Hope, Peace, Joy and Love.

This year we are thinking about how the lives of the people in the story were changed by that first Christmas. The main people in the story are a young woman named Mary and her husband-to-be Joseph. And there are angels, lots of them. In today's story Mary has an amazing visit from an angel, who tells her she is to have a baby, not just any baby, but one that is very special to God. This baby offers Hope to the world for a new way of living, living in peace and showing love for each other. He is often called the Prince of Peace, and if we follow his teaching people will learn how to live in peace with each other.

The news that the angel brought to Mary changed her life and Joseph's in a way they'd never imagined.

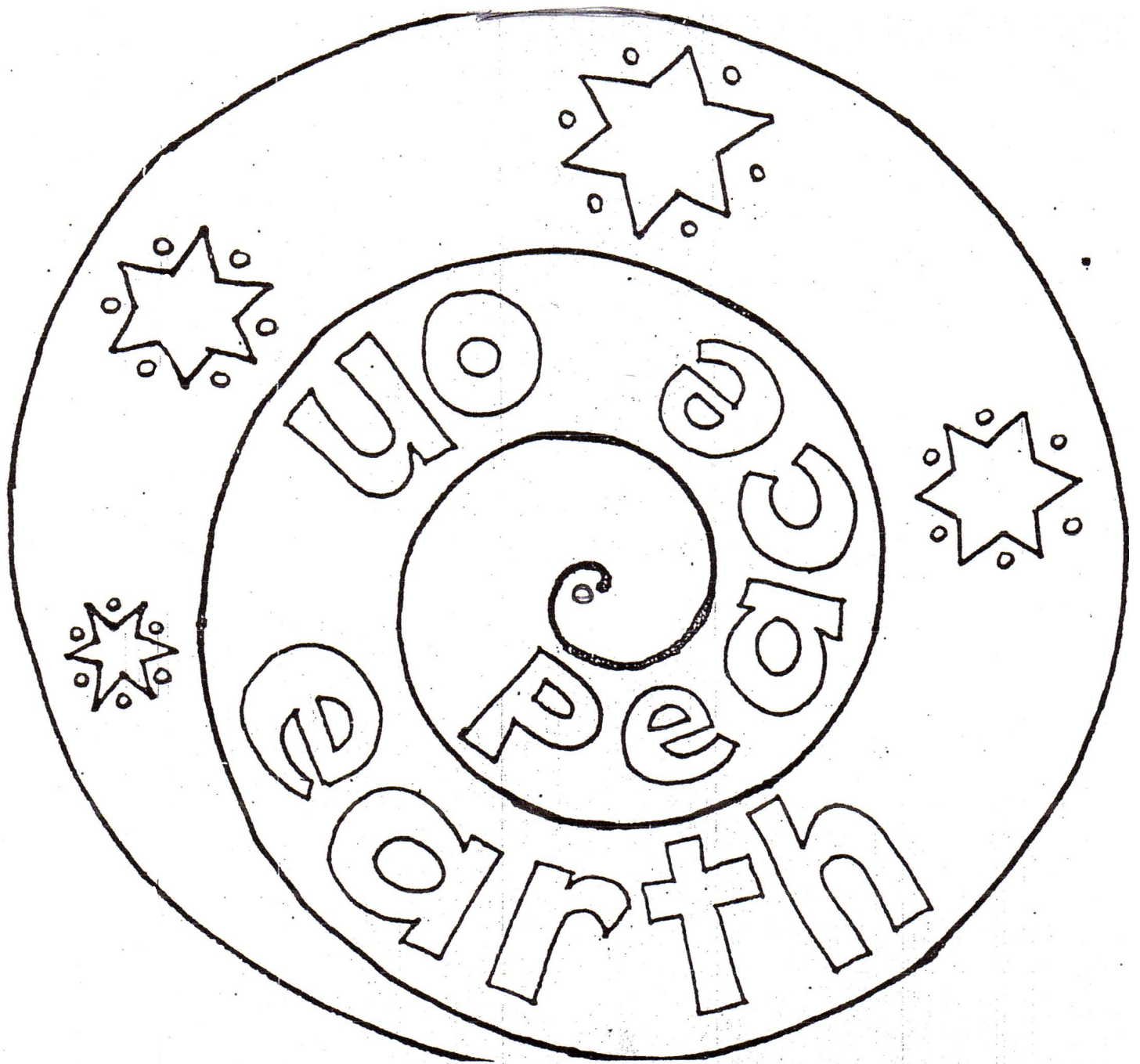
You can find the story in the Gospel of Luke chapter 1: verses 26-38. If you don't have a Bible you can find it online.

As we think about the coming birth of the Prince of Peace, think about what it would be like if we all learnt to live in peace with each other. Make this peace spiral to hang in your house to remind you of the message of peace at Christmas.

Print the spiral on plain or coloured paper. Colour it in and decorate it however you like. You might find stickers or stars, or draw pictures or patterns on it.

Cut the spiral along the solid line. Make a small hole in the centre at the top and thread a ribbon through it to hang it with. Hang it where the breeze can make it swirl.





Colour and cut out the spiral.  
Hang with coloured ribbon.

What else can you do to decorate your tree? You might like to make some angels to hang on your tree or around your house. Look online to find different angel patterns and ideas.

Decorate your angels to remind you of the people in your life who have been like an angel to you, or have been angels in our society this year.