The Covenanter

December 2026

Winter Park
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH



Worship Services: 8:15 & 10:30 AM | Sunday School: 9:15 AM
Newsletter Submissions: cindym@winppc.org
Watch us online at https://www.youtube.com/@audio-visualministryatwppc5595/streams
400 S. Lakemont Avenue | Winter Park, FL 32792 | 407-647-1467 | www.winppc.org

December

		Tuesday 1	Wednesday 2	Thursday 3	Friday 4	Saturday 5
		Scout Troops Mtg 7pm, Rms 202/204 **Pack 246 Mtg** 7pm, FH	**WPPC Handbells** 6pm, Rm 102 **Chancel Choir** 7:15pm, Sanctuary		**Tai Chi** 11:30am, FH	
Sunday 6	**Monday 7**	**Tuesday 8**	**Wednesday 9**	**Thursday 10**	**Friday 11**	**Saturday 12**
Communion Toy Drive **Worship Services** 8:15am-Chapel 10:30am-Sanctuary **Sunday School** 9:15-10:15am **Children's Church** 10:30am **CLOC Mtg** 11:45am 1:30pm **Blue Christmas** 4pm, Chapel	**Tai Chi** 11:30am, FH	**Scout Troops Mtg** 7pm, Rms 202/204 **Pack 246 Mtg** 7pm, FH	**PS Board Mtg** 10am, Rm 301 **WPPC Handbells** 6pm, Rm 102 **Chancel Choir** 7:15pm, Sanctuary	**Budget/Fin Mtg** 4pm, Rm 303	**Tai Chi** 11:30am, FH **KNO** 5pm, FH	
Sunday 13	**Monday 14**	**Tuesday 15**	**Wednesday 16**	**Thursday 17**	**Friday 18**	**Saturday 19**
Service Of Lessons & Carols 10:30am-Sanctuary **Sunday School** 9:15-10:15am **Children's Church** 10:30am	**Tai Chi** 11:30am, FH **Hannah Circle** 6pm, Rm 301	**Scout Troops Mtg** 7pm, Rms 202/204 **Pack 246 Mtg** 7pm, FH	**WPPC Handbells** 6pm, Rm 102 **Chancel Choir** 7:15pm, Sanctuary	**N&F Lunch** 11:30am, FH	**Tai Chi** 11:30am, FH **Living Nativity** Performances 6:30 & 7:15pm	
Sunday 20	**Monday 21**	**Tuesday 22**	**Wednesday 23**	**Thursday 24**	**Friday 25**	**Saturday 26**
Worship Services 8:15am-Chapel 10:30am-Sanctuary **Sunday School** 9:15-10:15am **Children's Church** 10:30am	**Tai Chi** 11:30am, FH	**Scout Troops Mtg** 7pm, Rms 202/204 **Pack 246 Mtg** 7pm, FH		**Office Closes at Noon** **Christmas Eve Svcs** 5pm - Family 7pm – Candlelight 	**Office Closed** 	
Sunday 27	**Monday 28**	**Tuesday 29**	**Wednesday 30**	**Thursday 31**		
Worship Services 8:15am-Chapel 10:30am-Sanctuary **Sunday School** 9:15-10:15am **Children's Church** 10:30am				**Office Closes at Noon** 		



ADVENT

a season of preparation

Winter Park Presbyterian Church

Advent Services
November 29, 8:15 & 10:30am
December 6, 8:15 & 10:30am
December 13, One Service at 10:30am
December 20, 8:15 & 10:30am

Blue Christmas Service of Hope & Remembrance
December 6, 4pm | Chapel

Kid's Night Out
December 11, 5-8pm | Fellowship Hall

Lessons & Carols
December 13, 10:30am | Sanctuary

Living Nativity
December 18, Performances at 6:30 & 7:15pm

Christmas Eve Services
5pm, Family Service | 7pm, Candlelight Service





Advent - From Darkness to Light

The church year begins in the dark days of early winter–reminding us that creation began with the separation of light from darkness. Every year during the season of Advent, we prepare to celebrate God breaking into history once again with the birth of Jesus who is the light of the world. However, Advent is more than preparing to celebrate the first coming of Christ, the incarnate Word. Advent is a season of hope, during which we anticipate the future coming of Christ to judge and to establish his rule over all things. In the light of Christ's first coming, we have hope for fulfillment of the realm of God in the future.

Advent is a season of light which we celebrate by lighting candles to begin worship–one more each week as we get closer to Christmas; and then on Christmas Eve by lighting the Christ candle. Lighting the Advent candle is often a child's first experience with helping lead in worship. Gathering as the family of faith on Christmas Eve in a sanctuary filled with candles lit from the Christ candle while we sing Silent Night is a cherished memory for all generations. And for those who are carrying burdens of grief or loss, lighting candles in memory or honor of a loved one at a Blue Christmas service is another way of welcoming Christ's light into our hearts and lives.

May the light of the incarnate Word, Immanuel, who took on flesh to dwell with us, and who died to be our resurrected Lord and Savior, be the lamp to guide your way.

Wishing you the hope, peace, joy and love of the season,

Pastor Melanie

WPPC NEWS

Stewardship 2027 Update

There has been an outpouring of generosity and giving by you, the members of the Winter Park Presbyterian Church family of faith! Session asked you to prayerfully consider how God was calling you to give in 2027 and you did so. Throughout the Stewardship Campaign in October and November, there has been a steady number of member commitments each week which is enabling Session to plan for the 2027 budget year. Thank you to those who have already submitted a pledge and thank you to those who are still planning to do so. We are blessed by your faithfulness.

~ Budget & Finance Committee

Relationship In Action Sunday School Class
A Christmas Musical Tradition | December 13

It's time once again for a beloved Christmas tradition! The R in A class invites you to join us at 9:15am in Room 301 for a special morning of Christmas music featuring two wonderful musicians: harpist Vicky Schultz and wind player Craig Thomas. Vicky, a well-known Central Florida harpist, delights audiences with her performances at Walt Disney World and has played with the renowned Irish group The Chieftains. Joining her once again is Craig, a master of both modern and antique wind and string instruments. Together, Vicky and Craig bring a special blend of musical talent, playful improvisation, and easygoing banter that makes every performance a joy. Their music and warm personalities are sure to put us in the Christmas spirit!

Come celebrate the season with us! We look forward to sharing this special morning of music, fellowship, and Christmas cheer.

Seekers Sunday School Class

The Seekers are continuing their Advent Study on Incarnation and welcome you to join them at 9:15am in Room 315 on any Sunday during this study. It will conclude Sunday, December 20. The study will use excerpts and a video from the book "Incarnation" by Pastor Adam Hamilton and will explore the meaning of Jesus's birth by examining the titles given to Him in the Gospels that illuminate his divine nature.

Christmas Joy Offering | Sunday, December 20
The Season of Advent and Christmas

The Christmas Joy Offering will be taken Sunday, December 20. Presbyterians have long celebrated the birth of Jesus Christ by giving generously to an Advent Offering. Fifty percent of receipts from this offering are distributed to the Board of Pensions for assistance programs that provide support to retired and active church workers and their spouses/families. The other fifty percent supports Presbyterian-related ethnic schools and colleges through the Racial, Ethnic and Women's Ministries of the Presbyterian Mission Agency. Please give generously to those who serve the church: past, present and future.

Hope CommUnity Center

TOY DRIVE

T oy Collection: December 6th

HOW TO HELP

No time to shop?
Browse the Amazon wish list by scanning the QR code.
https://a.co/jh6iIVv
Send your order to:
Hope Comm. Center, Christmas Toy Sale
1016 N Park Ave., Apopka, FL 32712

GIFT IDEAS

BICYCLES, SKATEBOARDS, SCOOTERS, HELMETS, TRICYCLES; DOLLS OF ALL ETHNICITIES; ARTS & CRAFTS KITS; PLAY PRETEND KITS (MAKEUP, JEWELRY, TOY CONSTRUCTION KITS & MORE); SPORTS BALLS OF ALL KINDS; TOY CARS/TRUCKS (ESPECIALLY MEDIUM/LARGE SIZES); EDUCATIONAL GAMES (STEM SCIENCE & MATH KITS); BOARD GAMES FOR ALL AGES; CHILDREN'S BOOKS (FICTION, ADVENTURE OR PICTURE BOOKS); HOUSEHOLD ITEMS (KITCHEN TOWELS, UTENSIL SETS, ETC.); SOCKS, PAJAMAS, & UNDERWEAR FOR BOYS/GIRLS; INFANT/TODDLER TOYS, CLOTHING & BLANKETS; BABY DIAPERS (SIZES 1-6)

PLEASE BRING NEW TOYS ONLY.



NEIGHBORS & FRIENDS

JOIN US!

YOU ARE INVITED TO

A Spectacular Musical Event

FEATURING

The Lake Nona High School Singers

DIRECTED BY JUSTIN CHASE

DECEMBER 17

11:30 AM
Fellowship Hall

The Lake Nona High School Singers will perform at 11:30 followed by a catered lunch. All who attend will be treated to a delightful time of fellowship. The intergenerational conversations around the table are just as delightful as listening to the performance. It's a wonderful way to celebrate the many gifts of the Advent Season!

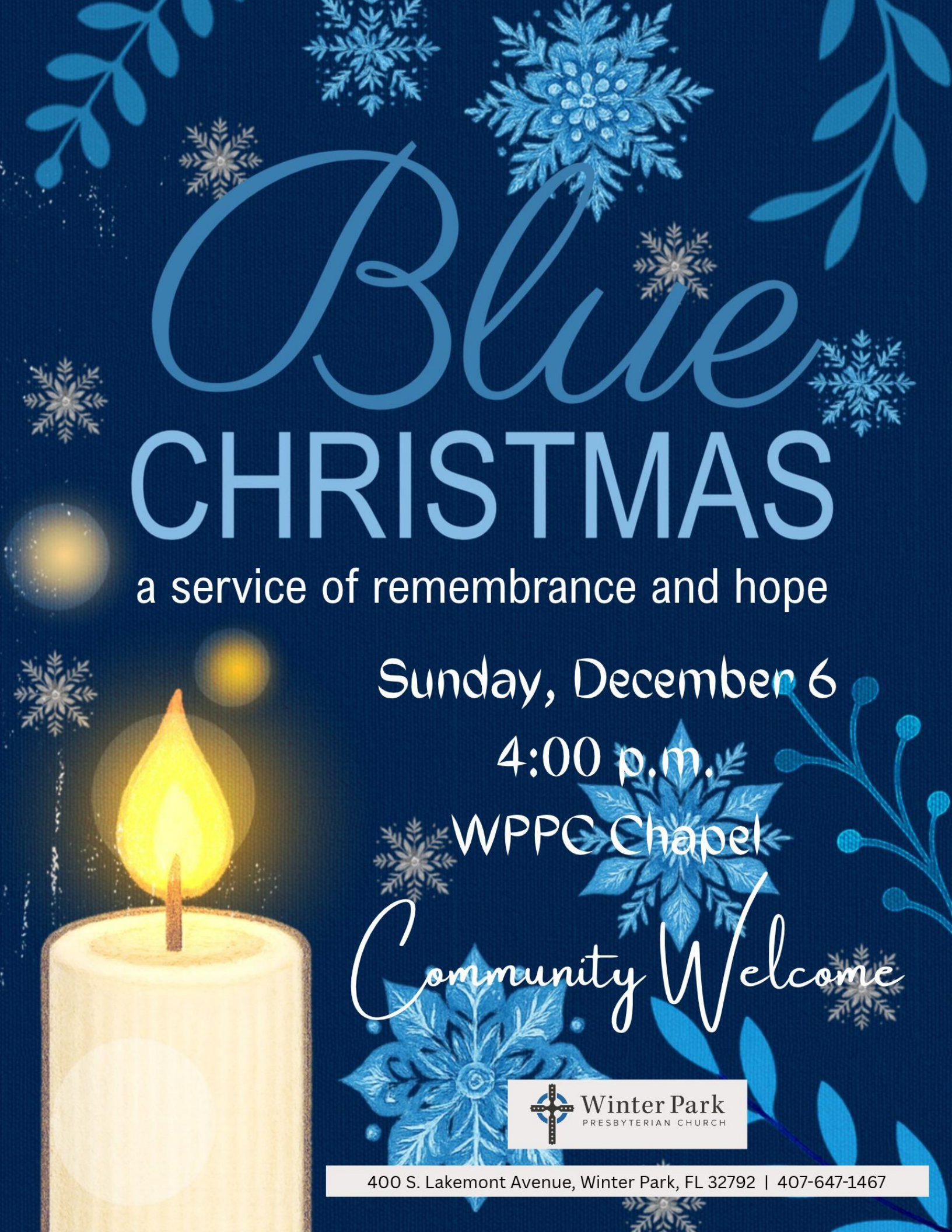
Meals are $15 and reservations are due by Monday, 12/14. RSVPs are a commitment to pay. If your plans change, let us know by 12/14 by calling the church office or texting Paula at 407-782-5621 so we don't have to use church funds to cover empty seats. You are welcome to join us for only the performance, and you are also welcome to bring your own lunch and join us around the tables.

Come and celebrate the birth of Christ.

Don't forget to bring a neighbor or friend!

Winter Park
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

400 S. Lakemont Avenue
Winter Park, FL 32792
407-647-1467


Blue
CHRISTMAS
a service of remembrance and hope
Sunday, December 6
4:00 p.m.
WPPC Chapel
Community Welcome
Winter Park
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
400 S. Lakemont Avenue, Winter Park, FL 32792 | 407-647-1467



Living Nativity

Friday, December 18

Two Performances

6:30 & 7:15 PM

Live Animals

Refreshments in Fellowship Hall

Candlelit Sanctuary

Winter Park
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

400 S. Lakemont Avenue, Winter Park, FL 32792 | 407-647-1467 | www.winppc.org

Poinsettia Orders

Our WPPC sanctuary will once again be decorated with beautiful poinsettias. The plants will be distributed to the sick and shut-ins, or you can pick up your plant after the 7pm Christmas Eve Service.

The cost for each plant is $15. If you would like to purchase a plant in honor or memory of a loved one, please fill out a form and return it with your check to the church office by December 14th. Order forms are available in the front office, in the narthex, and on the last page of this newsletter.

Deacons' Den

What Wondrous Love is this!



For unto us a Child is born,
unto us a Son is given,
and the government shall be upon His shoulder;
and His name shall be called
Wonderful, Counsellor,
the Mighty God,
the Everlasting Father,
the Prince of Peace.

Winter Park
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Children's Church

A dedicated time of worship for the children, where they are encouraged to grow in the kingdom of God and reflect on teachings of the Bible as it relates to their own lives – and also have fun!

EVERY SUNDAY | 10:30 AM

DECEMBER EVENTS

- Kid's Night Out, 12/11
- Living Nativity, 12/18
- Christmas Eve Services
  5pm, Family Service
  7pm, Traditional Service

CONTACT US

Jessica Grablewski
Children's Ministry Coordinator
kidsministry@winppc.org



All children (potty trained) are welcome!

HOW TO RELIEVE AND PREVENT STRESS HEADACHES

-Article submitted by Wendy Stafford

You had a rough day and suddenly your head starts to ache. With the holidays coming, added stress can even exacerbate the problem. Stress headaches can be debilitating in the moment, but you don't have to suffer indefinitely. If you're struggling with stress, you're not alone. A common headache trigger, stress can at least somewhat affect your sleep.

Tension headaches are the most common type of headache, according to Harvard Health. They may be episodic, meaning they happen fewer than 15 days a month. If they happen 15 or more days a month for at least three months, they're considered chronic, according to Mayo Clinic. Researchers still aren't sure exactly what causes tension headaches. Experts once blamed them on tight muscles in the head and neck. But newer research suggests that people who get them may have a more sensitive pain system, and the sore muscles that often come with these headaches may result from that sensitivity rather than cause it, Mayo Clinic experts say.

Stress is still the trigger people report most often. It can set off physical changes that contribute to headaches, including:

- Neck, shoulder, scalp, face and jaw muscles tensing
- Teeth grinding or jaw clenching
- Problems with sleeping
- Skipped meals

Emotional stressors like depression and anxiety, as well as physical stressors like prolonged sitting with poor posture or straining the eyes, can also cause stress headaches. Other common triggers include drinking alcohol, not getting enough water, having too much caffeine (or cutting back suddenly) and being sick with a cold, the flu or a sinus infection.

Stress headaches are most common in adults and older teens and are slightly more common in women than men, according to the National Library of Medicine. They also tend to run in families.

How To Relieve A Stress Headache

Treating stress headaches starts with identifying the cause. A good strategy is to keep a headache journal or make calendar notes each time you experience a headache. Watch for potential stress triggers such as sleep deprivation, long work hours, prolonged sitting, or feeling anxious or depressed. Over time, you may notice a consistent connection between certain circumstances and your headaches, and you can create strategies to avoid triggers or to change your response to deal with stress more effectively.

Typical treatments include the following, according to Harvard Health:

- Over-the-counter pain medicines like aspirin, ibuprofen or acetaminophen
- Muscle tension relief in tight neck and shoulder areas with massage, heat or ice
- Relaxation techniques
- Deep breathing exercises

Go easy on the pain relievers, though. Taking them too often can backfire and cause "rebound" headaches when you stop. Harvard Health recommends using them no more than two or three days a week. If you need medicine for headaches more than twice a week, your headaches are changing or they're getting in the way of daily life, see your healthcare provider.

Get emergency care for a headache that:

- ✓ Comes on suddenly and is very severe, or feels like the worst of your life
- ✓ Comes with a fever, stiff neck, confusion, seizures, double vision, weakness, numbness or trouble speaking
- ✓ Follows a head injury, especially if it's getting worse

Stress Headache Prevention Tips

Familiarize yourself with your headache triggers. For example, if you notice you tend to get headaches when you're sleep-deprived, schedule extra sleep after a few nights of sleep deficit. If you feel irritable or anxious, pause and notice what's going on in your life that may be causing those feelings. Try a nature break to break the stress cycle. If you can't get out into nature, try relaxation exercises, deep breathing, mindfulness meditation, guided imagery and mind-body exercises like tai chi or restorative yoga. Biofeedback and cognitive behavioral therapy (a type of talk therapy) can also help some people manage stress and have fewer headaches. If you work at a computer or do other close work, stop often to stretch your neck and shoulders, and pay attention to your posture. A healthy lifestyle that includes regular physical activity, healthy foods, adequate hydration, good sleep and social support also helps reduce stress and tension headaches.

Bible Quiz



The New Testament describes Jesus Christ as **"Lord of lords and King of kings."** In which book of the Bible is this title found?

A. Revelation
B. Acts
C. Colossians
D. Matthew

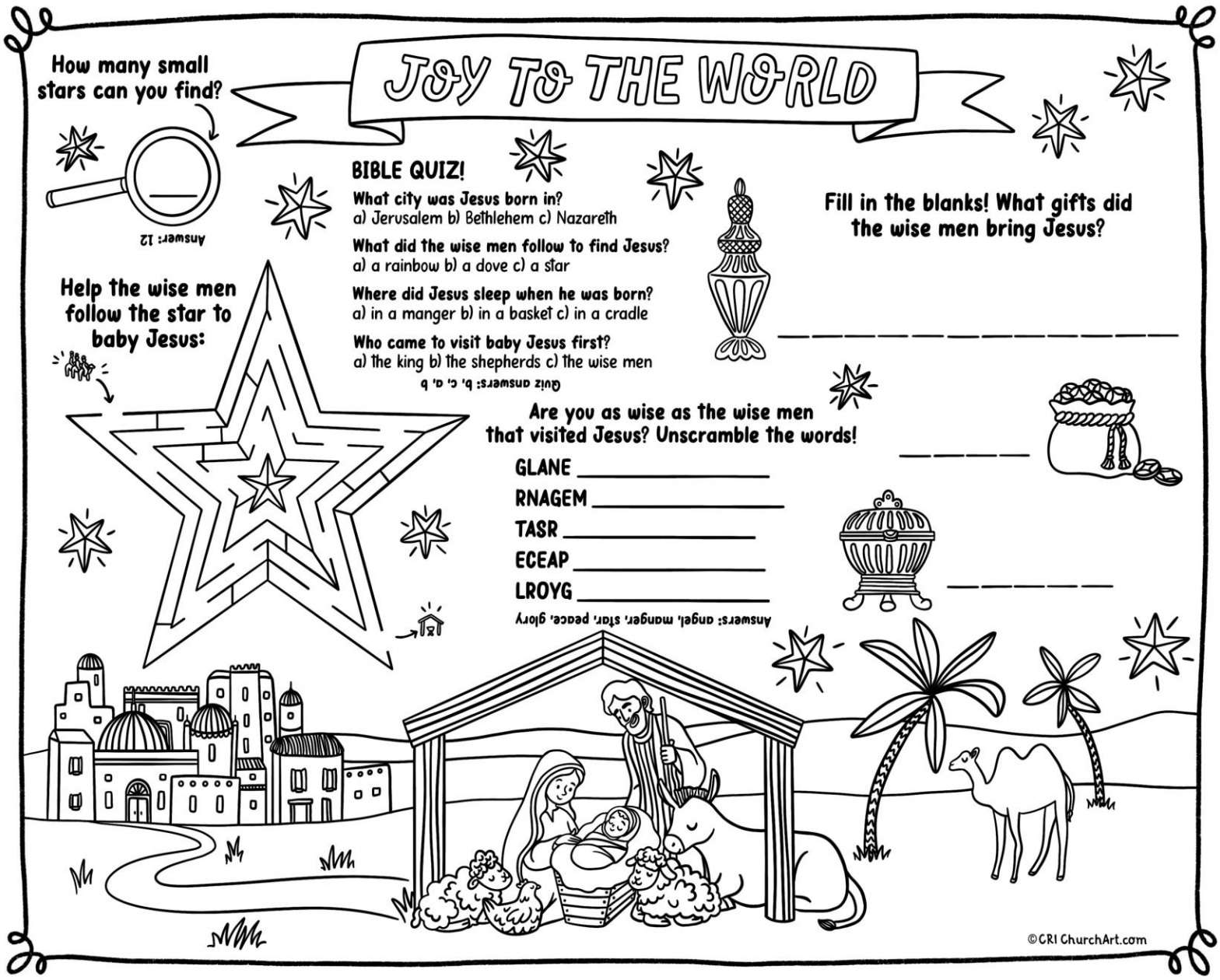
Answer: A. Revelation (See Revelation 17:14)



CHRISTIAN SYMBOL

HOLLY - With its glossy green leaves and bright red berries, holly is a familiar Christmas decoration rich in Christian symbolism. Its prickly leaves recall Jesus' crown of thorns, while its berries represent the blood He shed. Its evergreen foliage reminds us of eternal life through Him.

Though old legends connect holly with Christ's footsteps and cross, these stories are folklore rather than Scripture. At Christmas, holly reminds us that the child born in Bethlehem came to bring salvation, hope and everlasting life.





12/3
Sara Woodward

12/5
Beverly Tavel

12/8
Sylvia Reaves
Dawn Sumrall

12/10
Reta Jackson
Robert Walker

12/13
Berta Hall

12/15
Linda Beaty

12/17
Ann McDonald

12/18
Betty Gale Case

12/19
Julie Kent
Holly Small

12/23
Cynthia Nants

12/25
William Darcy
Tasha Lampe

12/26
Julie Rankin

12/27
Judy Mitchell
Clark Ranson

12/28
Howard Evans

12/29
Lil Rea
Ellen Skelton

12/31
Patrick LaRue
Glenn Riccio



1/1
Rick Davis

1/2
John Gehrig
Claudia Hafich
Carole Reece
Audrey Santiago

1/5
Nancy Johnson

1/9
Johnnie McCarter

1/17
Vicki Blanchfield
Dennis Schmalstig

1/20
Meg Baldwin

1/26
Rita Chasser
Patricia Kiester

1/28
Flo Tuck

1/30
Chris Galante
Tommye Violette

Winter Park
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

STAFF

Rev. Melanie Ruta, Interim Pastor
Justin Chase, Director of Music
Penny Walsh, Organist
Sandra Shafer, Pianist
Scott Beck, Director of Handbells
Cindy Mitchum, Executive Assistant
Pattie Lavelle, Bookkeeper
Mark Greenleaf, Property Manager
Jessica Grablewski, Children's Ministry Coordinator
Nicole Fye, Director of Preschool Programs
Rosaura Velazques, Assistant Director of Preschool Programs
Katie Daniels, Preschool Administrative Assistant

SESSION

2026
Syd Davis
Betty Johnson
Shaheed Mohammed
Nelson Roe

2027
Maria Garton
Lil Rea
Phyllis Woods

2028
Rusty Baldwin
Steve House
Jayne Leach
Ron Thompson

DIACONATE

2026
Meg Baldwin
Ernestine Beattie
Debby Roberts
Jeanne Vinci

2027
Marilyn Bryant
Cynthia Nants
Robert Nevill
Paula Smathers

2028
Sue Howard
Lynne McKnight
Debbie Pauzar
Frances Swope

MISSIONARIES

Mark Hare & Jenny Bent, Costa Rico
Dr. Dan & Elizabeth Turk, Madagascar

For Covenanter or Sunday bulletin submissions, please email Cindy Mitchum cindym@winppc.org



The Sanctuary will be decorated with beautiful poinsettias. The plants will be distributed to the sick and shut-ins, or you can pick up your plant after the 7pm Christmas Eve Service.

If you would like to purchase a poinsettia in honor/in memory of someone, please fill out the form below and return it to the church office by December 14th.

The cost for each poinsettia is $15.

- I would like to purchase _____ poinsettia(s)
  (Qty)
- Attached is my payment in the amount of $_____
- Donated by

_____

In Loving Memory of

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

In Honor of

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

In Appreciation of

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____