

# Christmastide

6-Week Morning Time Session from Advent through Epiphany | [AwakenToDelight.com](http://AwakenToDelight.com)



Christmastide: From Advent through Epiphany  
Charlotte Mason Morning Time™

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Originally created and written by Lara Molettiere as *The Homeschool Garden*

Edited and updated by Alisha Gratehouse and Olivia Gratehouse

Cover image: *The Star of Bethlehem*, by Sir Edward Burne-Jones (1885–1890) Public Domain

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# What is Morning Time?

Morning time is a modern interpretation of Charlotte Mason's philosophy of providing a generous variety of short lessons with an emphasis on excellence of execution and focused attention.

It is a lovely daily ritual in which you gather your whole family together to partake of the richness of God's Word, as well as the beautiful subjects that you don't want to get pushed aside by traditional school subjects.

And it is a perfect choice for helping you avoid the overwhelm of trying to fit it all in by looping through all the delightful extras you want to enjoy!

## About this Curriculum:

Homeschooling mother, Lara Molettiere, originally created this curriculum as *The Homeschool Garden* in 2018. Her love of music, literature, fine arts, and Charlotte Mason's method led her to create a delightful and simple-to-follow morning time curriculum for her family.

Each volume is rich with the truth, beauty and goodness that Miss Mason encouraged, and provides a generous and varied education all planned out for your family — from elementary to high school.

In over 19 years of homeschooling utilizing the Charlotte Mason method, I can attest to the beauty of this lifestyle of learning. In fact, it completely shaped and formed who my children are today — artists, writers, musicians, and lovers of literature, poetry, and nature.

That's why I am thrilled to be taking Lara's beautiful curriculum, rebranding it as **Charlotte Mason Morning Time™**, and building a delight-filled community around it so that other families can experience the joy it brings!

*Aligha*

# How to Use These Plans

If you love the Charlotte Mason style of learning, then you'll absolutely *adore* these morning time sessions! Not only are they rich with all the beauty you want your family to enjoy — scriptures, poetry, Shakespeare, picture study, art lessons, music, nature study, and more — they are all planned out and gathered together for you!

There is no need to hunt down the various elements you want to include or go digging around the internet in search of art, music, or poetry to complement your studies. You don't even have to purchase additional resources because we include them all here: art pieces for your picture study, sheet music and links to hymns and folk songs to sing along with, links to classical pieces to listen to, copywork printables for manuscript and cursive practice, and much, much more!

We offer a generous feast, but please remember that you don't have to partake of everything that's on the table, nor do you even have to clean your plate!

Adapt these plans to suit your family's unique needs and schedule. If you only school four days a week, either skip the fifth day, or add one item from the scheduled fifth day to each of your four school days.

Don't stress if you can't fit something in, you can always circle back around to it later. Pick and choose what you want to do depending on which season of life you're in.

Simply print out the schedule (and any parts of the curriculum you need), bring all your kids and teens together each morning, and enjoy that day's scheduled lessons and recommended read-alouds.

Don't forget we've included an art lesson, a handicraft lesson, nature studies, and tea time recipes with each session. These would be delightful "afternoon occupations" if you can't fit them into your morning time.

Each day's scheduled activities should only take around an hour or so to complete (excluding the art and handicraft lessons).

# Features

Essential features of *Charlotte Mason Morning Time*™ curriculum are:

- Prayer & scripture memorization
- Poetry memorization & recitation
- Copywork pages for elementary through high school
- Artist biography & picture study
- Composer biography & classical selections
- Hymn study & singing
- Folk song
- Literature recommendations
- Handicraft lesson
- Art lesson
- Nature study
- Teatime recipes
- Teatime selections to read aloud including:
  - Poetry
  - Short stories or
  - Fairy tales or tall tales
  - Mythological tales
  - Fables
- Shakespeare selections
- Plutarch (in some volumes)
- History (in some volumes)
- Geography (in some volumes)

Each of these subjects are planned out on a 4-week or 6-week (depending on the session) calendar, and looped throughout the days and weeks.

Now, you will never feel overwhelmed trying to fit "everything" in because it's already simply and beautifully planned out for you on the calendar on the following pages.

**Please Note:** The "Recommended Reading List" is not required. Pick and choose the books you want your family to enjoy, or continue with the family read-aloud you're already immersed in.

# Week 1 Schedule



Subject	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5
<i>Prayer</i>	Pray Elizabeth's Song.				
<i>Bible</i>	Isaiah 40:1-5	Haggai 2:6-7 Malachi 3:1-3	Isaiah 7:14, 40:9, & 60:1	Isaiah 60:2-3, 9:2, & 9:6	Luke 2:8-14
<i>Memory Work</i>	Scripture	Poetry	Scripture	Poetry	Review previous memory work
<i>Beauty &amp; Nature Loop</i>	Hymn Study: Angels We Have Heard on High	Art Selection 1: The Star of Bethlehem, Read: Edward Burne-Jones bio	Folk Song: Here We Come A-Wassailing	Listen to: Messiah, Read: George Frideric Handel bio	Nature Study 1
<i>History/ Geography</i>	Read: St. Nicholas bio				
<i>Language Arts/ Citizenship</i>	Read: Charles Dickens bio	Advent Copywork	Poetry: Advent	Advent Copywork	
<i>Read Aloud</i>	A Christmas Carol Chapter 1		A Christmas Carol Chapter 2		A Christmas Carol Chapter 3
<i>Afternoon Occupations</i>	Bake: Christmas Pudding, Read: A Christmas Carol				*Nature journal *Nature walk

\* Indicates suggested, but optional activities

# Week 2 Schedule



Subject	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5
<i>Prayer</i>	Pray The Magnificat.				
<i>Bible</i>	Zechariah 9:9-10	Isaiah 35:5-6, 40:11,	John 1:29	Isaiah 53:3 & 6	Isaiah 53:4-6
<i>Memory Work</i>	Scripture	Poetry	Scripture	Poetry	Review previous memory work
<i>Beauty &amp; Nature Loop</i>	Hymn Study: Angels We Have Heard on High	Art Selection 2: Review: The Annunciation, Edward Burne- Jones bio	Folk Song: Here We Come A-Wassailing	Listen to: Messiah, Review: George Frideric Handel bio	Nature Study 2
<i>History/ Geography</i>	Review: St. Nicholas bio				
<i>Language Arts/ Citizenship</i>	Review: Charles Dickens bio	Santa Lucia Copywork	Poetry: Santa Lucia	Santa Lucia Copywork	
<i>Read Aloud</i>	A Christmas Carol Chapter 4		A Christmas Carol Chapter 5		*The Best Christmas Pageant Ever Chapter 1
<i>Afternoon Occupations</i>	Bake: St. Nicholas Honey Cakes, Read: A Christmas Carol			Art Lesson: Abstract Star of Bethlehem in acrylics	*Nature journal *Nature walk

\* Indicates suggested, but optional activities

# Week 3 Schedule



Subject	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5
<i>Prayer</i>	Pray Elizabeth's Song.				
<i>Bible</i>	Psalm 22:7-8	Psalm 69:20, Lamentations 1:12	Isaiah 53:8, Psalm 16:10, & 24:7-10	Hebrew 1:5-6	Psalm 68:11 & 18
<i>Memory Work</i>	Scripture	Poetry	Scripture	Poetry	Review previous memory work
<i>Beauty &amp; Nature Loop</i>	Hymn Study: Angels We Have Heard on High	Art Selection 3: Saint Nicholas, Narrate: Edward Burne-Jones bio	Folk Song: Here We Come A-Wassailing	Listen to: Messiah, Narrate: George Frideric Handel bio	Nature Study 3
<i>History/ Geography</i>	Narrate: St. Nicholas bio				
<i>Language Arts/ Citizenship</i>	Narrate: Charles Dickens bio	A Visit from St. Nicholas Copywork	Poetry: A Visit from St. Nicholas	A Visit from St. Nicholas Copywork	
<i>Read Aloud</i>	*The Best Christmas Pageant Ever Chapter 2		*The Best Christmas Pageant Ever Chapter 3		*The Best Christmas Pageant Ever Chapter 4
<i>Afternoon Occupations</i>	Bake: St. Lucia Buns, Read: The Noel Candle				*Nature journal *Nature walk

\* Indicates suggested, but optional activities

# Week 4 Schedule



Subject	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5
<i>Prayer</i>	Pray The Magnificat.				
<i>Bible</i>	Romans 10:15	Romans 10:18	Psalm 2:1-3	Psalm 2:4 & 9	Job 19:25-26
<i>Memory Work</i>	Scripture	Poetry	Scripture	Poetry	Review previous memory work
<i>Beauty &amp; Nature Loop</i>	Hymn Study: Angels We Have Heard on High	Review Art Selection 1: The Star of Bethlehem, Review/Narrate: Edward Burne-Jones bio	Folk Song: Here We Come A-Wassailing	Listen to: Messiah, Review/Narrate: George Frideric Handel bio	Nature Study 4
<i>History/ Geography</i>	Review/Narrate St. Nicholas bio				
<i>Language Arts/ Citizenship</i>	Discuss: Charles Dickens bio	Luke 2:6-20 Copywork	Read: Luke 2:6-20	Luke 2:6-20 Copywork	
<i>Read Aloud</i>	*The Best Christmas Pageant Ever Chapter 5		*The Best Christmas Pageant Ever Chapter 6		*The Best Christmas Pageant Ever Chapter 7
<i>Afternoon Occupations</i>	Bake: Sugar Plums, Read: Little Women Chapter 2			Handicraft: Simple Advent Wreath	*Nature journal *Nature walk

\* Indicates suggested, but optional activities

# Week 5 Schedule



Subject	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5
<i>Prayer</i>	Pray Elizabeth's Song.				
<i>Bible</i>	1 Corinthians 15:21-22	1 Corinthians 15:51-53	1 Corinthians 15:54-57	Romans 8:31-34	Revelation 5:12-13
<i>Memory Work</i>	Scripture	Poetry	Scripture	Poetry	Review previous memory work
<i>Beauty &amp; Nature Loop</i>	Hymn Study: Angels We Have Heard on High	Review Art Selection 2: The Annunciation, Review/Narrate: Edward Burne- Jones bio	Folk Song: Here We Come A-Wassailing	Listen to: Messiah, Review/Narrate: George Frideric Handel bio	Nature Study 5
<i>History/ Geography</i>	Review/Narrate St. Nicholas bio				
<i>Language Arts/ Citizenship</i>	Review/Narrate: Charles Dickens bio	Elizabeth's Song Copywork	Read: Elizabeth's Song	Elizabeth's Song Copywork	
<i>Read Aloud</i>					
<i>Afternoon Occupations</i>	Bake: Wassail, Read: The Tailor of Gloucester				*Nature journal *Nature walk

\* Indicates suggested, but optional activities

# Week 6 Schedule



Subject	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5
<i>Prayer</i>	For this session, you can pray The Magnificat.				
<i>Bible</i>	Isaiah 52:7	Psalms 19:4	Matthew 11:28-30	Rev. 11:15 19:6 & 16	1 Cor. 15:20
<i>Memory Work</i>	Scripture	Poetry	Scripture	Poetry	Review previous memory work
<i>Beauty &amp; Nature Loop</i>	Hymn Study: Angels We Have Heard on High	Review Art Selection 3: Saint Nicholas, Discuss: Edward Burne-Jones	Folk Song: Here We Come A-Wassailing	Listen to: Messiah, Discuss: George Frideric Handel	Nature Study 6
<i>History/ Geography</i>	Discuss: St. Nicholas				
<i>Language Arts/ Citizenship</i>	Discuss: Charles Dickens	The Magnificat Copywork	Read: The Magnificat	The Magnificat Copywork	
<i>Read Aloud</i>					
<i>Afternoon Occupations</i>	Bake: Twelfth Night Cakes				*Nature journal *Nature walk

\* Indicates suggested, but optional activities

# Recommended Reading List

## Picture Books:

*The Christmas Day Kitten*, by James Herriot  
*The Tailor of Gloucester*, by Beatrix Potter  
*The Nutcracker*, by E.T.A. Hoffman & Jane Schulman  
*Christmas Tapestry*, by Patricia Polacco  
*An Orange for Frankie*, by Patricia Polacco  
*A Little House Christmas*, by Laura Ingalls Wilder  
*Christmas in the Big Woods*, by Laura Ingalls Wilder  
*Christmas with Little Women*, by Louisa May Alcott  
*The Gingerbread Man*, by Karen Schmidt  
*Christmas Day in the Morning*, by Pearl S. Buck  
*Christmas Farm*, by Mary Lyn Ray  
*Great Joy*, by Katie DiCamillo  
*The Crippled Lamb*, by Max Lucado  
*The Legend of the Candy Cane*, by Lori Walburg  
*Christmas in a Noisy Village*, by Astrid Lidgrin  
*Apple Tree Christmas*, by Trinka Hakes Noble  
*Night Tree*, by Eve Bunting  
*Papa Panov's Special Day*, by Ruben Saillens & Leo Tolstoy  
*Stephen's Feast*, by Jean Richardson  
*Jolly Old Santa Claus*, by Alice Leedy Mason  
*The Church Mice at Christmas*, by Graham Oakley  
*The Year of the Perfect Christmas Tree*, by Gloria Houston  
*Take Joy: Tasha Tudor's Christmas Book*, by Tasha Tudor

## Elementary, Middle & Upper Grades

*A Christmas Carol*, by Charles Dickens  
*The Cricket on the Hearth*, by Charles Dickens  
*The Chimes*, by Charles Dickens  
*The Best Christmas Pageant Ever*, by Barbara Robinson  
*The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe*, by C.S. Lewis  
*The Birds' Christmas Carol*, by Kate Douglas Wiggin  
*The Adventure of the Blue Carbuncle*, by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle  
*The Christmas Miracle of Jonathan Toomey Hardcover*, by Susan Wojciechowski  
*The Christmas Stories of George MacDonald*, by Linda Hill Griffith  
*Turkey for Christmas*, by Marguerite De Angeli  
*Hercule Poirot's Christmas*, by Agatha Christie

\**The Man Who Invented Christmas* (2017 movie)

# Prayer & Scripture Memorization

For Bible reading, we will make suggestions for your morning time reading. However, if you'd prefer a more in-depth schedule, we recommend checking out various plans that will help you read the Bible through.

For a one-year plan, we recommend YouVersion's One Year Bible: <https://www.bible.com/reading-plans/60>. You can also listen to it being read aloud on the app.

Download a two-year reading plan from the Gospel Coalition here: <https://media.thegospelcoalition.org/static-blogs/tgc/files/2010/12/TGC-Two-Year-Bible-Reading-Plan1.pdf>

If you prefer to go even slower, Ambleside Online offers three, four, and five-year Bible reading plans: <https://www.amblesideonline.org/L/Lbiblesch.html>

For the Christmastide session you will read through various scriptures that speak of or prophecy about Jesus' coming.

Your students will memorize Elizabeth's Song (Luke 1:39-45) and The Magnificat (Luke 1:46-56) and Luke 2:6-20.

### **Elizabeth's Song**

*"Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb! But why is this granted to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me? For indeed, as soon as the voice of your greeting sounded in my ears, the babe leaped in my womb for joy. Blessed is she who believed, for there will be a fulfillment of those things which were told her from the Lord."*

### **The Magnificat**

*"My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord; my spirit rejoices in God my savior. For he has looked with mercy on my lowliness; behold, from now on will all ages call me blessed. The Mighty One has done great things for me, and holy is his name. His mercy is from age to age to those who fear him. He has shown might with his arm, dispersed the arrogant of mind and heart. He has thrown down the rulers from their thrones but lifted up the lowly. The hungry he has filled with good things; the rich he has sent away empty. He has helped Israel his servant, remembering his mercy, according to his promise to our fathers, to Abraham and to his descendants forever."*

## **Luke 2:6-20**

*6 So it was, that while they were there, the days were completed for her to be delivered.*

*7 And she brought forth her firstborn Son, and wrapped Him in swaddling cloths, and laid Him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn.*

*8 Now there were in the same country shepherds living out in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night.*

*9 And behold, an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were greatly afraid.*

*10 Then the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid, for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy which will be to all people.*

*11 For there is born to you this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord.*

*12 And this will be the sign to you: You will find a Babe wrapped in swaddling cloths, lying in a manger."*

*13 And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying:*

*14 "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, goodwill toward men!"*

*15 So it was, when the angels had gone away from them into heaven, that the shepherds said to one another, "Let us now go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has come to pass, which the Lord has made known to us."*

*16 And they came with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the Babe lying in a manger.*

*17 Now when they had seen Him, they made widely known the saying which was told them concerning this Child.*

*18 And all those who heard it marveled at those things which were told them by the shepherds.*

*19 But Mary kept all these things and pondered them in her heart.*

*20 Then the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen, as it was told them.*

6 So it was, that while

they were there, the days

were completed for her to

be delivered.

7 And she brought forth

her firstborn Son, and

wrapped Him in swaddling

cloths, and laid Him in a

manger, because there was

no room for them in the

inn.

8 Now there were in the

same country shepherds

living out in the fields,

keeping watch over their

flock by night.

9 And behold, an angel of

the Lord stood before

them, and the glory of the

Lord shone around them,

and they were greatly

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10 Then the angel said to

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behold, I bring you good

tidings of great joy which

will be to all people.

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you this day in the city of

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multitude of the heavenly

host praising God and

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16 And they came with

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was told them concerning

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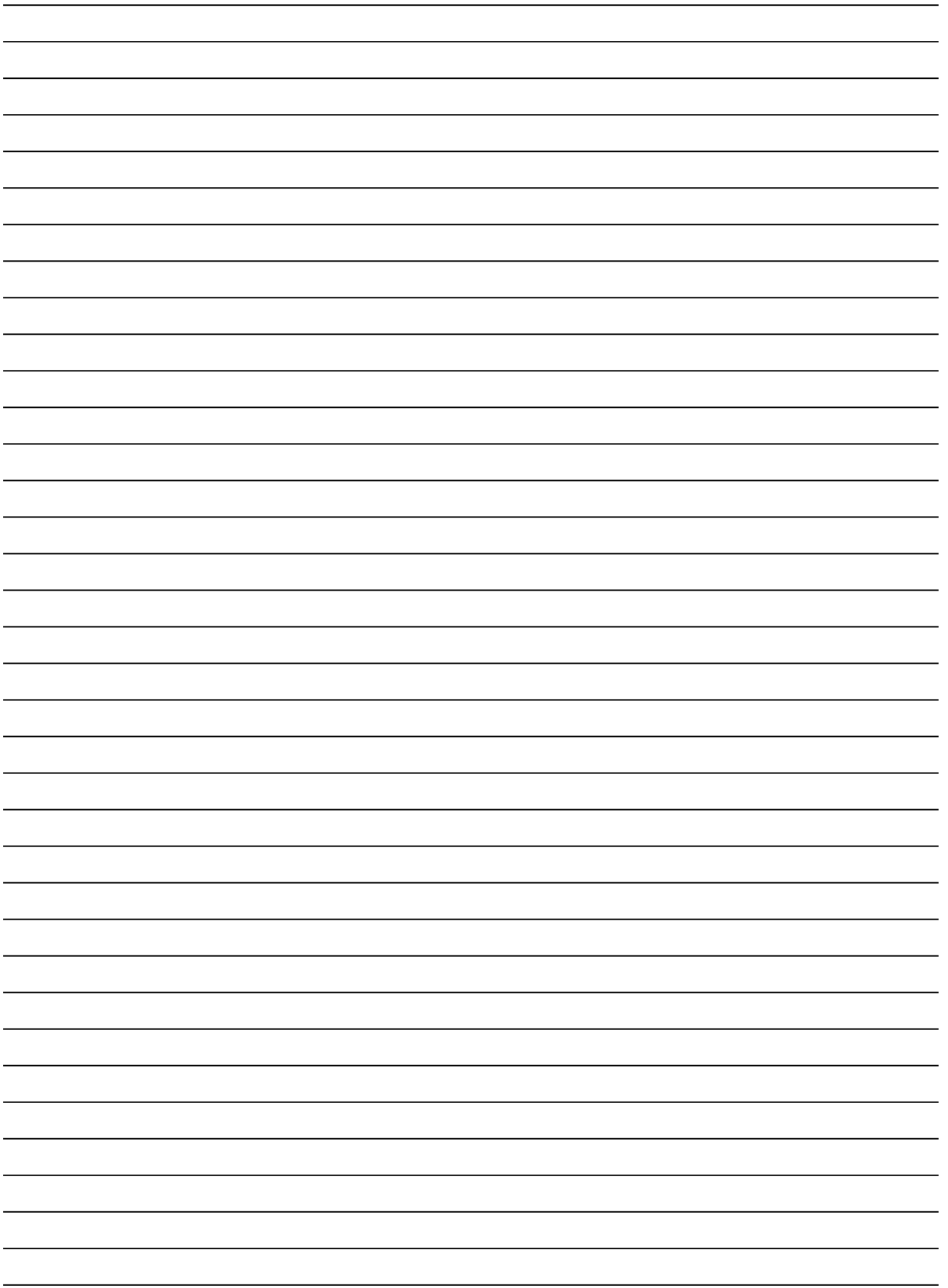
20 Then the shepherds returned,  
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all the things that they had

heard and seen, as it was told

them.





My soul proclaims the

greatness of the Lord; my

spirit rejoices in God my

savior. For he has looked

with mercy on my lowliness;

behold, from now on will

all ages call me blessed.

The Mighty One has done

great things for me, and

holy is his name. His mercy

is from age to age to those

who fear him. He has shown

might with his arm, dispersed

the arrogant of mind and

heart. He has thrown down

the rulers from their

thrones but lifted up the

lowly. The hungry he has

filled with good things; the

rich he has sent away

empty. He has helped Israel

his servant, remembering his

mercy, according to his

promise to our fathers, to

Abraham and to his

descendants forever.

“My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord;

---

my spirit rejoices in God my savior. For he has

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looked with mercy on my lowliness; behold,

---

from now on will all ages call me blessed. The

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his promise to our fathers, to Abraham and to

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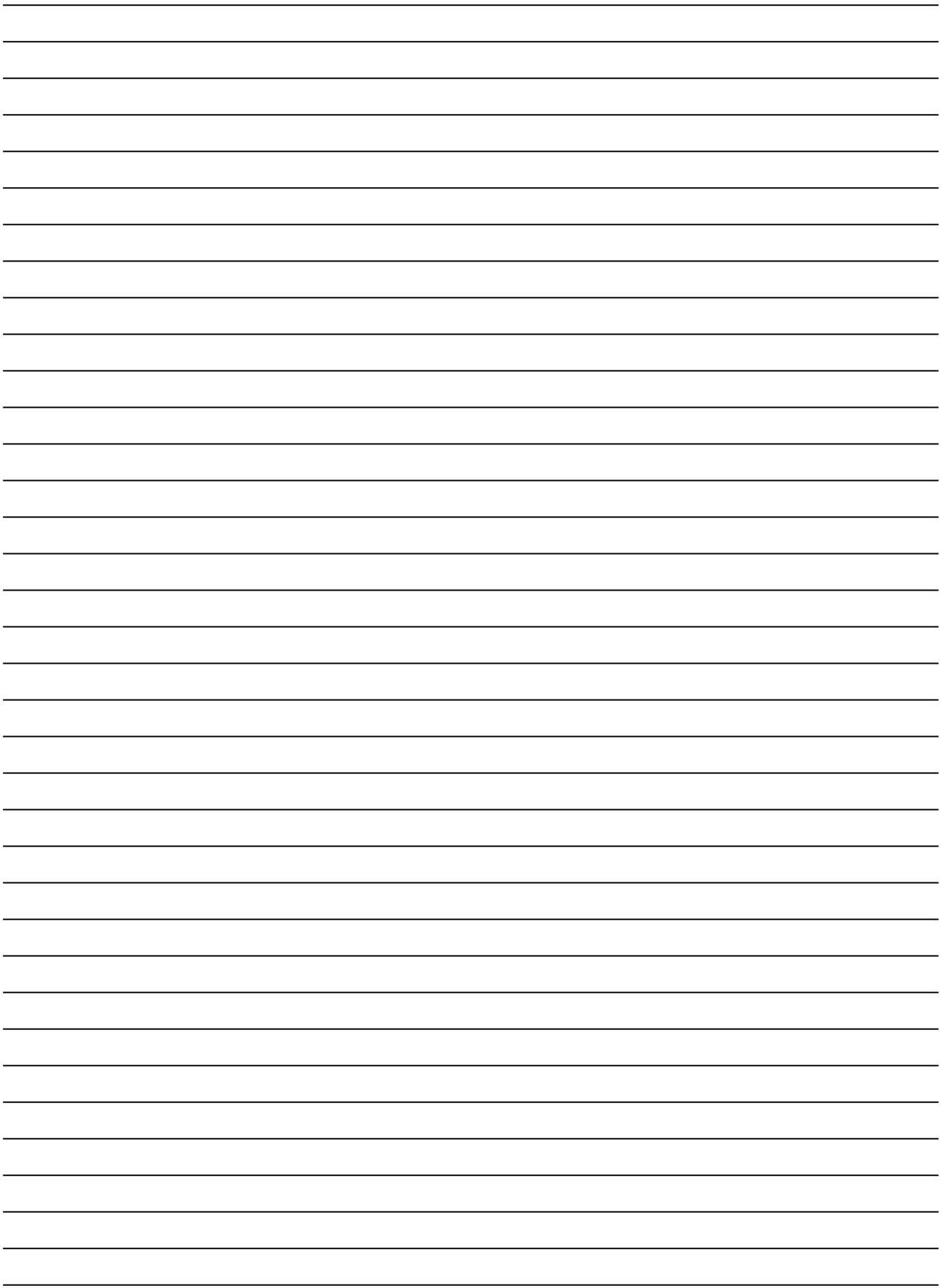
servant, remembering his mercy,

according to his promise to our

fathers, to Abraham and to his

descendants forever.”





39 Now Mary arose in

those days and went into

the hill country with haste,

to a city of Judah,

40 and entered the house

of Zacharias and greeted

Elizabeth.

41 And it happened, when

Elizabeth heard the greeting

of Mary, that the babe

leaped in her womb; and

Elizabeth was filled with

the Holy Spirit.

42 Then she spoke out

with a loud voice and said,

"Blessed are you among

women, and blessed is the

fruit of your womb!

43 But why is this granted

to me, that the mother of

my Lord should come to me?

44 For indeed, as soon as  
the voice of your greeting  
sounded in my ears, the  
babe leaped in my womb for  
joy.

45 Blessed is she who  
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---

44 For indeed, as soon as the voice of your

---

greeting sounded in my ears, the babe leaped

---

in my womb for joy.

---

45 Blessed is she who believed, for there will

---

be a fulfillment of those things which were

---

told her from the Lord.”

---

39 Now Mary arose in those days

and went into the hill country

with haste, to a city of Judah,

40 and entered the house of

Zacharias and greeted Elizabeth.

41 And it happened, when

Elizabeth heard the greeting of

Mary, that the babe leaped in her

womb; and Elizabeth was filled

with the Holy Spirit.

42 Then she spoke out with a

loud voice and said, "Blessed are

you among women, and blessed is

the fruit of your womb!

43 But why is this granted to

me, that the mother of my Lord

should come to me?

44 For indeed, as soon as the

voice of your greeting sounded in

my ears, the babe leaped in my

womb for joy.

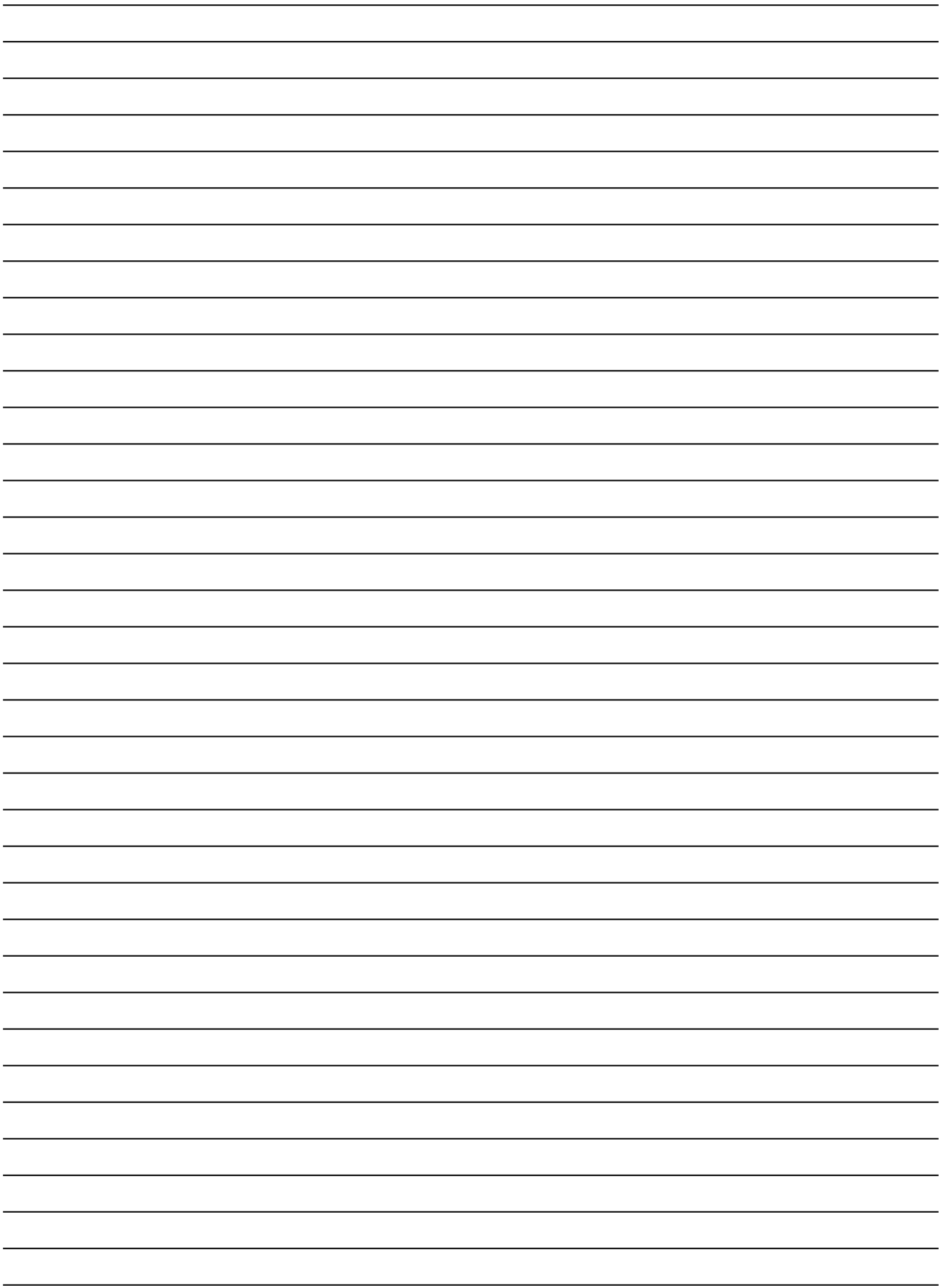
45 Blessed is she who believed, for

there will be a fulfillment of those

things which were told her from

*the Lord."*







## Artist & Composer Study

This session's featured artist is Edward Burne-Jones. We've included three art selections for your kids and teens to use for picture study. They are:

- *The Star of Bethlehem*
- *The Annunciation*
- *Saint Nicholas*

Our featured composer is George Frideric Handel. We've included his oratorio *Messiah* (with links) to listen to.

Artist & Composer Study



## Edward Burne-Jones

August 28, 1833 – June 17, 1898

Edward Burne-Jones was an influential English painter and designer in the pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood. He is best known for his paintings of religious subjects, including "The Annunciation" and "The Star of Bethlehem."

During his childhood, Edward Burne-Jones showed a great deal of artistic talent. He often drew and painted scenes from nature, and his teachers encouraged him to pursue a career in art. At age 20, Burne-Jones attended Oxford University and became part of the pre-Raphaelite brotherhood with John Ruskin, William Morris and Dante Gabriel Rossetti. His artistic style focused on Medievalism and included intricate patterns and designs. During this time, he also worked as a book illustrator with his partner William Morris.

In 1877, Burne-Jones began focusing more on painting rather than design work. His most famous works include six panels depicting the story of Cupid and Psyche, as well as works like *The Beguiling of Merlin* and *The Mirror of Venus*. He also worked on commissions for churches and cathedrals across England.

Burne-Jones had a long career and his work influenced the Arts & Crafts movement in the late 19th century. At the end of his life, he was praised by many critics who hailed him as one of the preeminent artists of his time. He died in 1898 at age 64 after suffering from an illness. His funeral was attended by over 400 people, a testament to how beloved he was during his lifetime.

Today, Burne-Jones' works can be found in many major British galleries such as the Tate Britain, Victoria & Albert Museum, and the National Portrait Gallery. He left a lasting legacy on pre-Raphaelite art and is remembered as one of England's greatest painters.

# Artist Study

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date of Birth:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Place of Birth:** \_\_\_\_\_

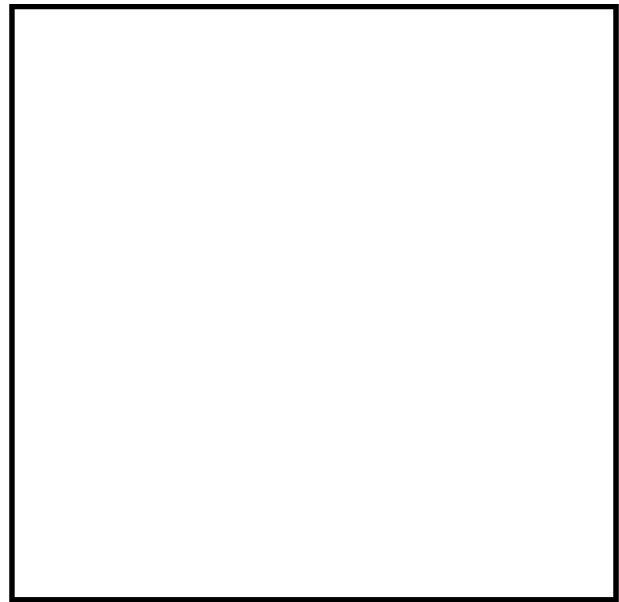
**Artist Fun Facts:** \_\_\_\_\_

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**Art Mediums Used:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Famous Artworks:** \_\_\_\_\_

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**Further Study:**

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*The Star of Bethlehem, 1890*



*The Annunciation, 1879*



*Saint Nicholas, 1870-98*

# Picture Study

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Date Created: \_\_\_\_\_

Art Mediums Used: \_\_\_\_\_

Further Study: \_\_\_\_\_

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**Use the box to draw a picture inspired by this artwork.**





## George Frideric Handel

March 5, 1685 – April 14, 1759

George Frideric Handel is one of the greatest composers of the Baroque period. He was born on March 5, 1685 in Halle, Germany and began his musical training at a young age. By the time he was 20 years old, he had already composed several operas and orchestral works.

For several years Handel traveled around Germany and Italy, where he composed various operas and choir music and even worked briefly as a choir director for the German prince George. However in 1710, Handel moved to London where he ended up settling for the rest of his life.

Handel enjoyed a successful career as both a composer and performer. His most famous work is the oratorio *Messiah*. It was first composed in 1741

and completed in just 24 days! It later premiered in Dublin in 1742 and quickly became one of his most popular pieces. In addition to *Messiah*, Handel composed numerous other world-renowned works including *Water Music*, *Royal Fireworks Music* and *Acis and Galatea*.

Later in life he suffered from various health issues which slowed his productivity but Handel remained active in composing until the time of his death on April 14, 1759. He died a wealthy man, having earned nationwide recognition after creating well over 200 musical compositions, including operas, oratorios, hymns, cantatas, and more, and even composing for royalty all across Europe.

*Messiah* is especially beloved for its beautiful melodies and uplifting spirit. It has become a staple of classical culture and has been performed all around the world in a variety of venues, from large concert halls to small churches. The *Messiah* is always a popular choice for Christmas concerts, and its beautiful melodies continue to delight audiences all around the world

# Composer Study

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date of Birth:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Place of Birth:** \_\_\_\_\_

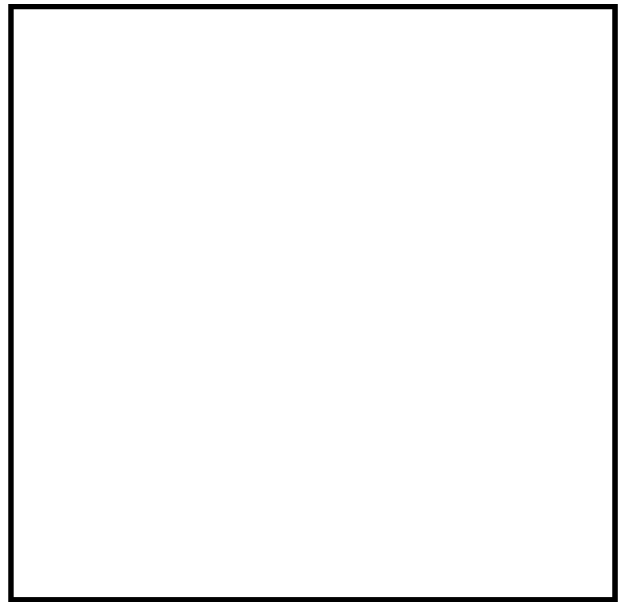
**Composer Fun Facts:**

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**Instruments Used:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Famous Compositions:** \_\_\_\_\_

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**Further Study:**

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# Hymn: Angels We Have Heard on High

"Angels We Have Heard on High" is a traditional Christmas carol that dates back several centuries. It is believed to have originated in Provence, France and was originally written in medieval Latin. It wasn't until the mid-1800s that the song was translated into English by James Chadwick, an English hymnist who later became Bishop of Hexham and Newcastle. After his translation was published, it started appearing in many hymnals.

The lyrics tell the story of angels singing "glory to God" as they descend from heaven to announce Christ's birth. The text also refers to various attributes of God, such as His wisdom, power, mercy, and grace.

One legend claims that "Angels We Have Heard On High" was written by a 16th century blind shepherd named Melchoir Nusser. According to this story, the shepherd heard the song being sung by angels and wrote down what he heard in a journal. However, most historians believe that this legend is actually based on an Italian Christmas carol called "La Stella."

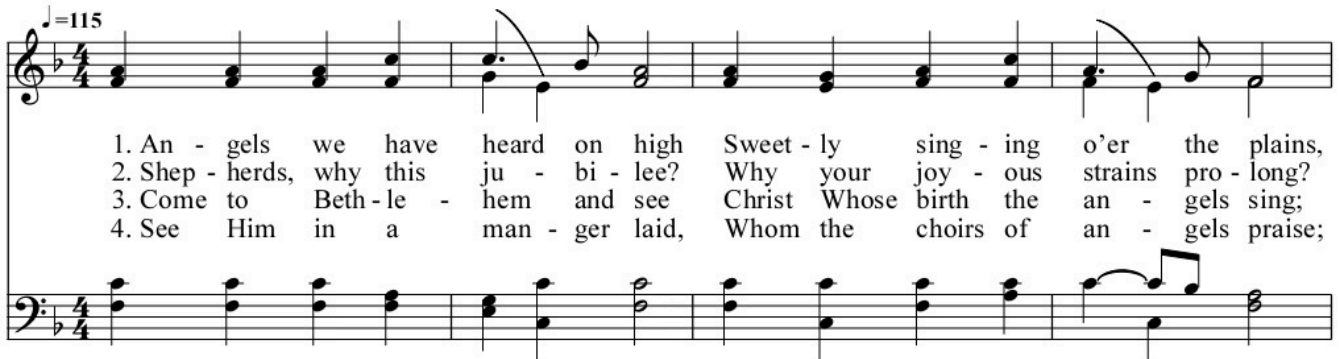
Today, this hymn remains one of the best loved carols in the world. Its simple message of joy and hope continues to captivate audiences across cultures, languages, and time periods.

# Angels We Have Heard on High

Traditional French Carol

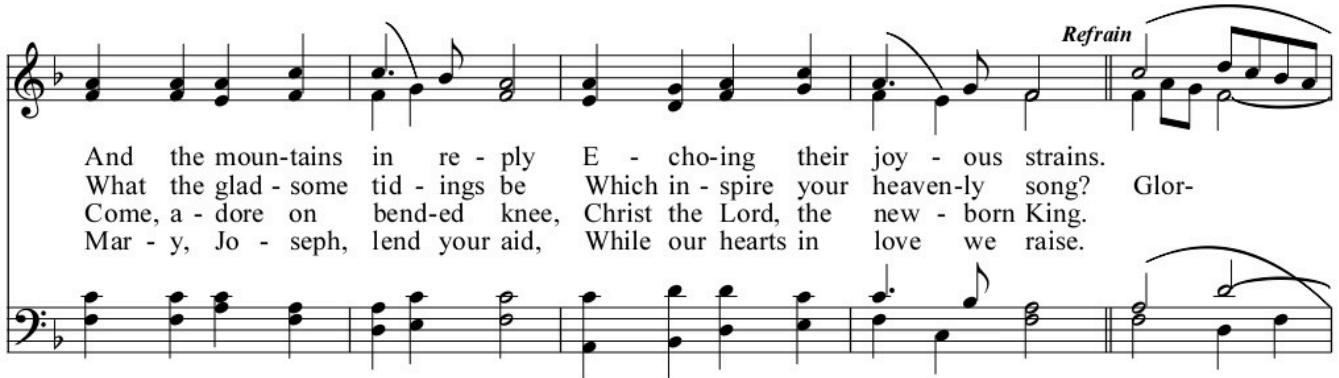
Edward Shippen Barnes (1887-1958)

$\text{♩} = 115$



1. An - gels we have heard on high Sweet - ly sing - ing o'er the plains,  
2. Shep - herds, why this ju - bi - lee? Why your joy - ous strains pro - long?  
3. Come to Beth - le - hem and see Christ Whose birth the an - gels sing;  
4. See Him in a man - ger laid, Whom the choirs of an - gels praise;

*Refrain*



And the moun-tains in re - ply E - cho-ing their joy - ous strains.  
What the glad - some tid - ings be Which in - spire your heaven-ly song? Glor-  
Come, a - dore on bend-ed knee, Christ the Lord, the new - born King.  
Mar - y, Jo - seph, lend your aid, While our hearts in love we raise.



i - a, in ex-cel-sis De-o! Glor-



i - a, in ex-cel-sis De - o!

# Folk Song: Here We Come A-Wassailing

The origin of "Here We Come A-Wassailing" can be traced back to 17th century England, where it was a traditional song sung during the Christmas and New Year season. Neighbors would go from house to house "wassailing" or singing carols and wishing the inhabitants goodwill and good health. After the visitors finished their song, they were given a drink, usually wassail (a beverage made from hot mulled cider, ale, or wine with spices) or small gifts by their friends at the house.

One of the earliest versions of this carol appeared in print around 1650, with lyrics that were much shorter than those we use today. The first full version recorded appeared in 1760 under the title "A New Christmas Carol," and its popularity quickly spread across Britain.

When 18th century settlers brought this carol to America, they adapted it slightly. Some of the original lines were changed to reflect American culture, while others were added or removed entirely. You might know the version called, "Here We Come A-Caroling."

Today, "Here We Come A-Wassailing" remains a beloved holiday carol that continues to be sung by families and communities all over the world. Whether you're singing it around the Christmas tree, or visiting friends and neighbors on New Year's Eve, this song will always bring joy and cheer to those who hear it!

# Here We Come A-Wassailing

from Hark! A Christmas Sampler

Traditional Yorkshire carol

$\text{♩} = 120$  With great joy

Here we come a - was - sail - ing A - mong the leaves so green. [ ]  
are not dai - ly beg - gars Who beg from door to door, But  
bless the mas - ter of this house Like wise the mis - tress, too, And

5  $\text{♩} = 120$

Here we come a - wand - 'ring So fair to be seen.  
we are neigh - bors' chil - dren Whom you have seen be - fore. Love and joy come to  
all the lit - tle chil - dren That 'round the ta - ble go.

10

you, And to you your was - sail, too, And God bless you and send you a hap - py New

16

Year, And God send you a hap - py New Year. We God Year.



# Poetry Recitation & Copywork

## Poetry Selections

This session features various Christmas poetry. We've included four poetry selections for your kids and teens to read, listen to, memorize, and recite. They are:

- A Christmas Carol (poem) by Charles Dickens
- Advent by Christina Rossetti
- Santa Lucia
- A Visit from St. Nicholas by Clement Clarke Moore

For copywork, we have included Zaner-Bloser style handwriting sheets for primary, elementary, and cursive, as well as college ruled for older students. The poems we have chosen are:

- Advent
- Santa Lucia
- A Visit from St. Nicholas

*“I will honour Christmas in my heart, and try to keep it all the year. I will live in the Past, the Present, and the Future. The Spirits of all Three shall strive within me. I will not shut out the lessons that they teach.”*

~ Charles Dickens



# Charles Dickens

February 7, 1812 – June 9, 1870

Charles Dickens is arguably one of the most iconic writers in literary history. He is best known for works such as *A Christmas Carol*, *David Copperfield*, *Oliver Twist*, *Great Expectations*, and more.

Born on February 7, 1812 in Portsmouth, England, Charles was the second of eight children born to John and Elizabeth Dickens. His father worked as a clerk for the Navy Pay Office, but struggled to make ends meet and was eventually put in prison for debt. When he was only 12 years old, Charles was forced to leave school and work in a boot-blackening factory to support his family.

This traumatic event left a lasting impression on the young Dickens and shaped his outlook on life. He became an advocate for social change and

began to write about poor people, hoping to stop the exploitation of children and speaking out against poverty. *Oliver Twist* and *David Copperfield* both show the struggles of orphans and how hard it is to live in such a world.

Despite a difficult upbringing, Dickens was an avid reader and continued to pursue his passion for books by becoming a journalist at the age of twenty-one. It wasn't until he published *The Pickwick Papers* in 1836 that Dickens gained both fame and financial stability.

Christmas was very important to Dickens, as he believed the spirit of Christmas went along with the spirit of generosity. And so throughout his career, he wrote some of the most beloved Christmas stories, such as *A Christmas Carol*, *The Christmas Song*, *The Chimes*, and *The Cricket on the Hearth*.

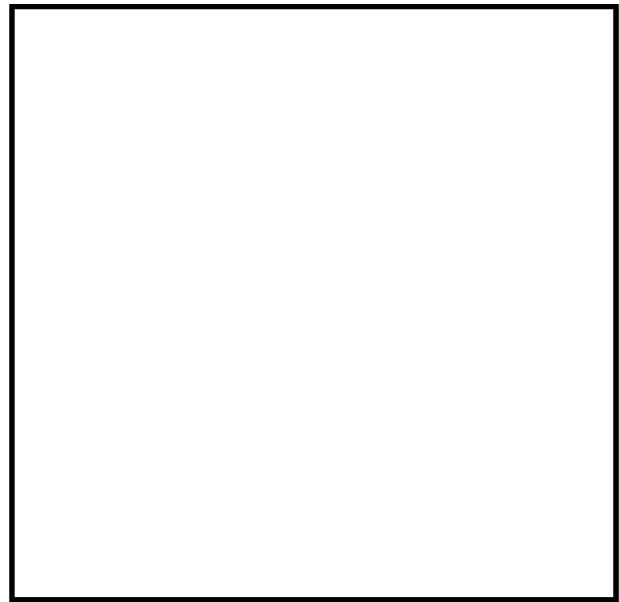
He died June 9, 1870 at the age of 58, but Charles Dickens remains an icon for generations to come as one of the greatest influences of modern literature and an advocate for social change and reform. His works have been adapted into countless movies, television shows, audio books, and more over the years, and they continue to touch the hearts of readers around the world.

# Author Study

**Author:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date of Birth:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Place of Birth:** \_\_\_\_\_



**3 Facts About the Author:**

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**Best Known Stories by the Author**

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# A Christmas Carol

by Charles Dickens

I care not for Spring; on his fickle wing  
Let the blossoms and buds be borne:  
He woos them amain with his treacherous rain,  
And he scatters them ere the morn.  
An inconstant elf, he knows not himself,  
Or his own changing mind an hour,  
He'll smile in your face, and, with wry grimace,  
He'll wither your youngest flower.

Let the summer sun to his bright home run,  
He shall never be sought by me;  
When he's dimmed by a cloud I can laugh aloud,  
And care not how sulky he be;  
For his darling child is the madness wild  
That sports in fierce fever's train;  
And when love is too strong, it don't last long,  
As many have found to their pain.

A mild harvest night, by the tranquil light  
Of the modest and gentle moon,  
Has a far sweeter sheen for me, I ween,  
Than the broad and unblushing noon,  
But every leaf awakens my grief,  
As it lieth beneath the tree;  
So let Autumn air be never so fair,  
It by no means agrees with me.

But my song I troll out, for Christmas stout,  
The hearty, the true, and the bold;  
A bumper I drain, and with might and main  
Give three cheers for this Christmas old.  
We'll usher him in with a merry din  
That shall gladden his joyous heart,  
And we'll keep him up while there's bite or sup,  
And in fellowship good, we'll part.

In his fine honest pride, he scorns to hide  
One jot of his hard-weather scars;  
They're no disgrace, for there's much the same trace  
On the cheeks of our bravest tars.  
Then again I sing 'till the roof doth ring,  
And it echoes from wall to wall—  
To the stout old wight, fair welcome to-night,  
As the King of the Seasons all!

# Advent

by Christina Rossetti

This Advent moon shines cold and clear,  
These Advent nights are long;  
Our lamps have burned year after year,  
And still their flame is strong.  
"Watchman, what of the night?" we cry,  
Heart-sick with hope deferred:  
"No speaking signs are in the sky,"  
Is still the watchman's word.

The Porter watches at the gate,  
The servants watch within;  
The watch is long betimes and late,  
The prize is slow to win.  
"Watchman, what of the night?" but still  
His answer sounds the same:  
"No daybreak tops the utmost hill,  
Nor pale our lamps of flame."

One to another hear them speak,  
The patient virgins wise:  
"Surely He is not far to seek," -  
"All night we watch and rise."  
"The days are evil looking back,  
The coming days are dim;  
Yet count we not His promise slack,  
But watch and wait for Him."

One with another, soul with soul,  
They kindle fire from fire:  
"Friends watch us who have touched the goal."  
"They urge us, come up higher."  
"With them shall rest our waysore feet,  
With them is built our home,  
With Christ." "They sweet, but He most sweet,  
Sweeter than honeycomb."

There no more parting, no more pain,  
The distant ones brought near,  
The lost so long are found again,  
Long lost but longer dear:  
Eye hath not seen, ear hath not heard,  
Nor heart conceived that rest,  
With them our good things long deferred,  
With Jesus Christ our Best.

We weep because the night is long,  
We laugh, for day shall rise,  
We sing a slow contented song  
And knock at Paradise.  
Weeping we hold Him fast Who wept  
For us, -we hold Him fast;  
And will not let Him go except  
He bless us first or last.

Weeping we hold Him fast to-night;  
We will not let Him go  
Till daybreak smite our wearied sight,  
And summer smite the snow:  
Then figs shall bud, and dove with dove  
Shall soothe the livelong day;  
Then He shall say, "Arise, My love,  
My fair one, come away."

# Santa Lucia

(Old Swedish Song)

Night walks with a heavy step round yard and hearth,  
As the sun departs from earth, shadows are brooding.  
There in our dark house, walking with lit candles,  
Santa Lucia, Santa Lucia!

Night walks grand, yet silent, now hear its gentle wings,  
In every room so hushed, whispering like wings.  
Look, at our threshold stands, white-clad with light in her hair,  
Santa Lucia, Santa Lucia!

Darkness shall take flight soon, from earth's valleys.  
So she speaks wonderful words to us:  
A new day will rise again from the rosy sky  
Santa Lucia, Santa Lucia!

# A Visit from St. Nicholas

by Clement Clarke Moore

'Twas the night before Christmas, when all through the house  
Not a creature was stirring, not even a mouse;  
The stockings were hung by the chimney with care,  
In hopes that St. Nicholas soon would be there;  
The children were nestled all snug in their beds;  
While visions of sugar-plums danced in their heads;  
And mamma in her 'kerchief, and I in my cap,  
Had just settled our brains for a long winter's nap,  
When out on the lawn there arose such a clatter,  
I sprang from my bed to see what was the matter.  
Away to the window I flew like a flash,  
Tore open the shutters and threw up the sash.  
The moon on the breast of the new-fallen snow,  
Gave a lustre of midday to objects below,  
When what to my wondering eyes did appear,  
But a miniature sleigh and eight tiny rein-deer,  
With a little old driver so lively and quick,  
I knew in a moment he must be St. Nick.  
More rapid than eagles his coursers they came,  
And he whistled, and shouted, and called them by name:  
"Now, Dasher! now, Dancer! now Prancer and Vixen!  
On, Comet! on, Cupid! on, Donner and Blitzen!  
To the top of the porch! to the top of the wall!  
Now dash away! dash away! dash away all!"  
As leaves that before the wild hurricane fly,  
When they meet with an obstacle, mount to the sky;  
So up to the housetop the coursers they flew  
With the sleigh full of toys, and St. Nicholas too—

And then, in a twinkling, I heard on the roof  
The prancing and pawing of each little hoof.  
As I drew in my head, and was turning around,  
Down the chimney St. Nicholas came with a bound.  
He was dressed all in fur, from his head to his foot,  
And his clothes were all tarnished with ashes and soot;  
A bundle of toys he had flung on his back,  
And he looked like a pedler just opening his pack.  
His eyes—how they twinkled! his dimples, how merry!  
His cheeks were like roses, his nose like a cherry!  
His droll little mouth was drawn up like a bow,  
And the beard on his chin was as white as the snow;  
The stump of a pipe he held tight in his teeth,  
And the smoke, it encircled his head like a wreath;  
He had a broad face and a little round belly  
That shook when he laughed, like a bowl full of jelly.  
He was chubby and plump, a right jolly old elf,  
And I laughed when I saw him, in spite of myself;  
A wink of his eye and a twist of his head  
Soon gave me to know I had nothing to dread;  
He spoke not a word, but went straight to his work,  
And filled all the stockings; then turned with a jerk,  
And laying his finger aside of his nose,  
And giving a nod, up the chimney he rose;  
He sprang to his sleigh, to his team gave a whistle,  
And away they all flew like the down of a thistle.  
But I heard him exclaim, ere he drove out of sight—  
"Happy Christmas to all, and to all a good night!"

# Poetry Study

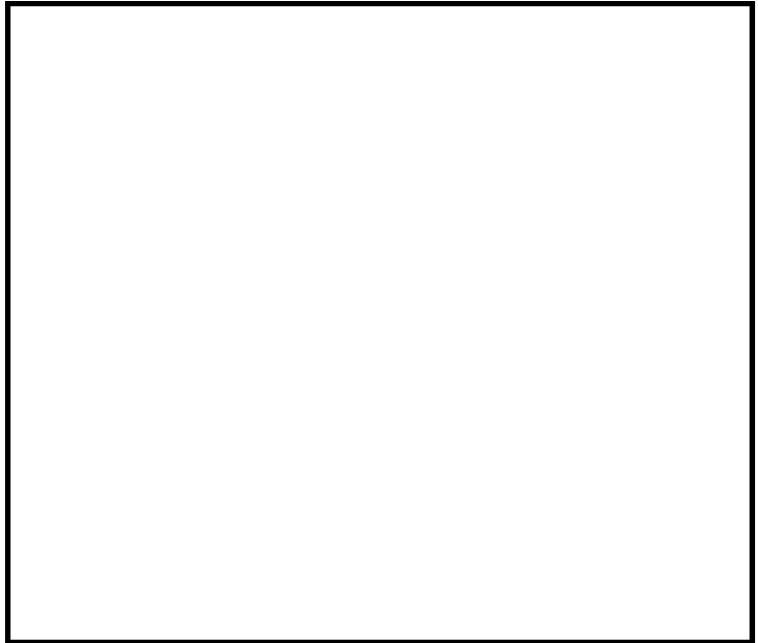
**Title:**

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**Type of Poem:**

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**Use the box to at right to draw a picture of what the poem brings to mind.**



**Write one thing you liked and did not like about the poem:**

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**Write three adjectives about the poem.**

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**Compose a few lines of your own poem inspired by this work**

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This Advent moon shines

cold and clear,

These Advent nights are

long;

Our lamps have burned year

after year,

And still their flame is

strong.

"Watchman, what of the

night?" we cry,

Heart-sick with hope

deferred:

"No speaking signs are in

the sky,"

Is still the watchman's

word.

The Porter watches at the

gate,

The servants watch within;

The watch is long betimes

and late,

The prize is slow to win.

"Watchman, what of the  
night?" but still

His answer sounds the same:

"No daybreak tops the  
utmost hill,

Nor pale our lamps of

flame."

One to another hear them

Speak,

The patient virgins wise:

"Surely He is not far to

seek,"

"All night we watch and

rise."

"The days are evil looking

back,

The coming days are dim;

Yet count we not His

promise slack,

But watch and wait for

Him."

One with another, soul

with soul,

They kindle fire from fire:

"Friends watch us who

have touched the goal."

"They urge us, come up

higher."

"With them shall rest our

waysore feet,

With them is built our

home,

With Christ." "They sweet,

but He most sweet,

Sweeter than honeycomb."

There no more parting, no

more pain,

The distant ones brought

near,

The lost so long are found

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rise,

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And knock at Paradise.

Weeping we hold Him fast

Who wept

For us, - we hold Him fast;

And will not let Him go

except

He bless us first or last.

Weeping we hold Him

fast to-night;

We will not let Him go

Till daybreak smite our

wearied sight,

And summer smite the snow:

Then figs shall bud, and

dove with dove

Shall coo the livelong day;

Then He shall say, "Arise,

My love,

My fair one, come away."

This Advent moon shines cold and clear,

---

These Advent nights are long;

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Our lamps have burned year after year,

---

And still their flame is strong.

---

"Watchman, what of the night?" we cry,

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Heart-sick with hope deferred:

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"No speaking signs are in the sky,"

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His answer sounds the same:

---

"No daybreak tops the utmost hill,

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Nor pale our lamps of flame."

---

One to another hear them speak,

---

The patient virgins wise:

---

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---

"All night we watch and rise."

---

"The days are evil looking back,

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Yet count we not His promise slack,

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But watch and wait for Him."

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They kindle fire from fire:

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The distant ones brought near,

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touched the goal."

"They urge us, come up higher."

"With them shall rest our waysore  
feet,

With them is built our home,

With Christ." "They sweet, but He  
most sweet,

Sweeter than honeycomb."

There are no more parting, no

more pain,

The distant ones brought near,

The lost so long are found again,

Long lost but longer dear:

Eye hath not seen, ear hath not

heard,

Nor heart conceived that rest,

With them our good things long

deferred,

With Jesus Christ our Best.

We weep because the night is long,

We laugh, for day shall rise,

We sing a slow contented song

And knock at Paradise.

Weeping we hold Him fast Who

wept

For us, - we hold Him fast;

And will not let Him go except

He bless us first or last.

Weeping we hold Him fast

to-night;

We will not let Him go

Till daybreak smite our wearied

sight,

And summer smite the snow:

Then figs shall bud, and dove

with dove

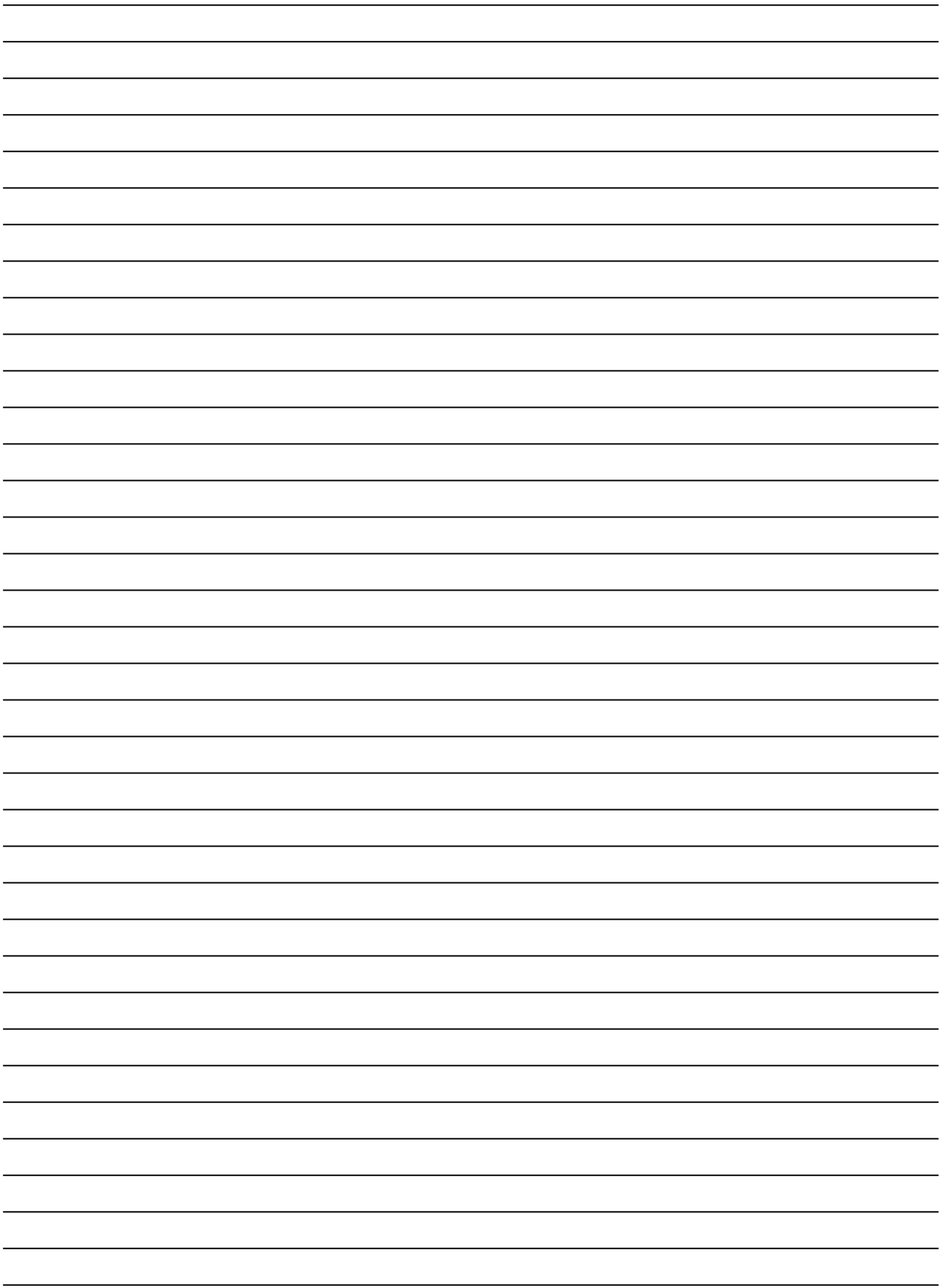
Shall coo the livelong day;

Then He shall say, "Arise, My love,

My fair one, come away."







Night walks with a heavy

step round yard and hearth,

As the sun departs from

earth, shadows are brooding.

There in our dark house,

walking with lit candles,

Santa Lucia, Santa Lucia!

Night walks grand, yet

silent, now hear its gentle

wings,

In every room so hushed,

whispering like wings.

Look, at our threshold

stands, white-clad with

light in her hair,

Santa Lucia, Santa Lucia!

Darkness shall take flight

soon, from earth's valleys.

So she speaks wonderful

words to us:

A new day will rise again

from the rosy sky

Santa Lucia, Santa Lucia!

Night walks with a heavy step round yard and

---

hearth,

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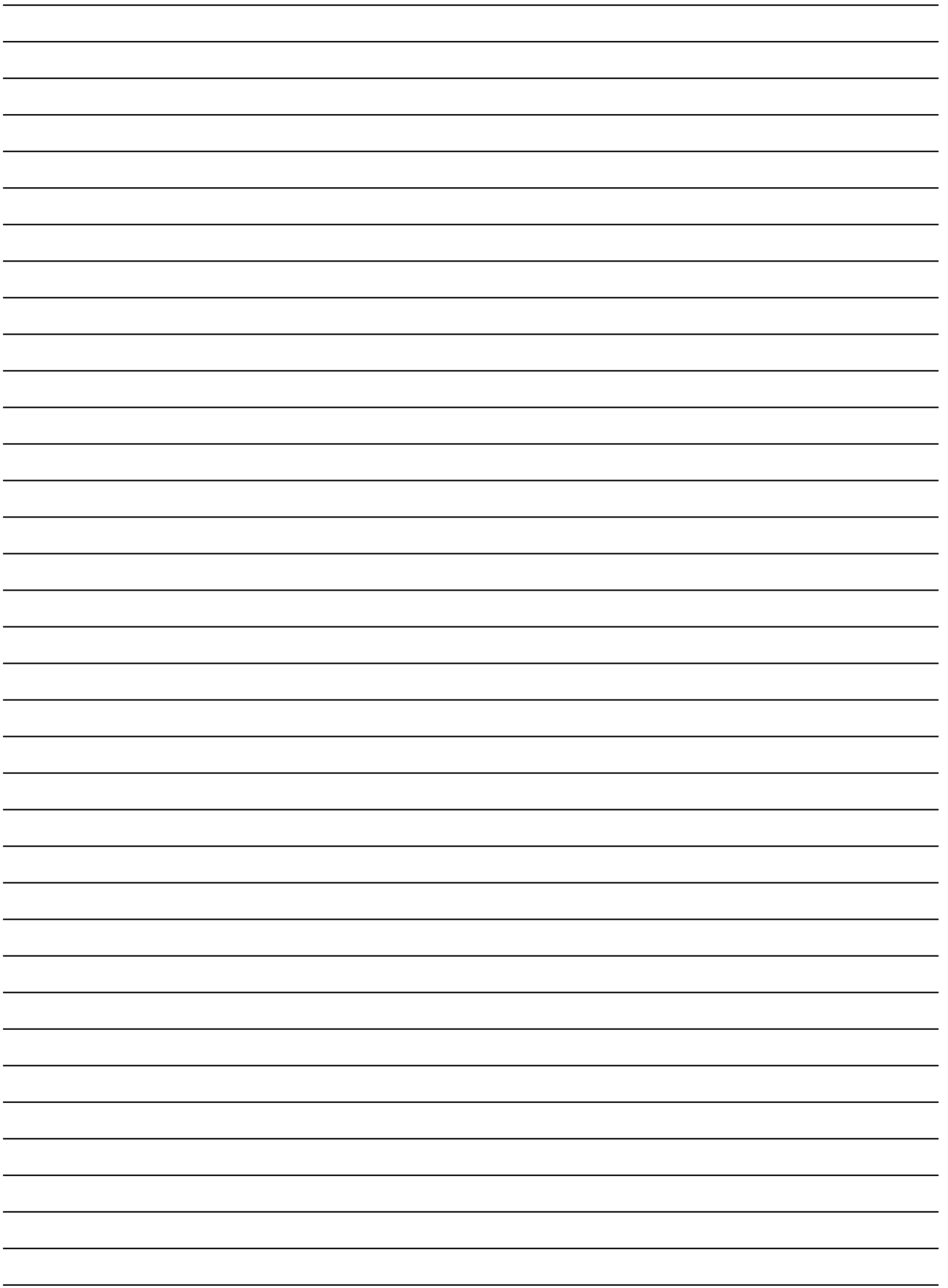
us:

A new day will rise again from

the rosy sky

Santa Lucia, Santa Lucia!





It was the night before

Christmas, when all through

the house

Not a creature was stirring,

not even a mouse;

The stockings were hung by

the chimney with care,

In hopes that St. Nicholas

soon would be there;

The children were nestled

all snug in their beds;

While visions of

sugar-plums danced in their

heads;

And mamma in her 'kerchief,

and I in my cap,

Had just settled our brains

for a long winter's nap,

When out on the lawn

there arose such a clatter,

I sprang from my bed to

see what was the matter.

Away to the window I

flew like a flash,

Tore open the shutters and

threw up the sash.

The moon on the breast of

the new-fallen snow,

Gave a lustre of midday to

objects below,

When what to my

wondering eyes did appear,

But a miniature sleigh and

eight tiny rein-deer,

With a little old driver so

lively and quick,

I knew in a moment he

must be St. Nick.

More rapid than eagles his

courses they came,

And he whistled, and

shouted, and called them

by name:

"Now, Dasher! now, Dancer!

now Prancer and Vixen!

On, Comet! on, Cupid! on,

Donner and Blitzen!

To the top of the porch!

to the top of the wall!

Now dash away! dash away!

dash away all!"

As leaves that before the

wild hurricane fly,

When they meet with an

obstacle, mount to the sky;

So up to the housetop the

couriers they flew

With the sleigh full of

toys, and St. Nicholas too-

And then, in a twinkling, I

heard on the roof

The prancing and pawing

of each little hoof.

As I drew in my head,

and was turning around,

Down the chimney

St. Nicholas came with a

bound.

He was dressed all in fur,

from his head to his foot,

And his clothes were all

tarnished with ashes and

soot;

A bundle of toys he had

flung on his back,

And he looked like a pedler

just opening his pack.

His eyes—how they twinkled!

his dimples, how merry!

His cheeks were like roses,

his nose like a cherry!

His droll little mouth was

drawn up like a bow,

And the beard on his chin

was as white as the snow;

The stump of a pipe he

held tight in his teeth,

And the smoke, it encircled

his head like a wreath;

He had a broad face and a

little round belly

That shook when he

laughed, like a bowl full

of jelly.

He was chubby and plump,

a right jolly old elf,

And I laughed when I

saw him, in spite of myself;

A wink of his eye and a

twist of his head

Soon gave me to know I

had nothing to dread;

He spoke not a word, but

went straight to his work,

And filled all the stockings;

then turned with a jerk,

And laying his finger aside

of his nose,

And giving a nod, up the

chimney he rose;

He sprang to his sleigh, to

his team gave a whistle,

And away they all flew

like the down of a thistle.

But I heard him exclaim,

ere he drove out of sight—

“Happy Christmas to all,

and to all a good night!”

'Twas the night before Christmas, when all

---

through the house

---

Not a creature was stirring, not even a mouse;

---

The stockings were hung by the chimney

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In hopes that St. Nicholas soon would be there;

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The children were nestled all snug in their beds;

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When what to my wondering eyes did appear,

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But a miniature sleigh and eight tiny rein-deer,

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With a little old driver so lively and quick,

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I knew in a moment he must be St. Nick.

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More rapid than eagles his coursers they came,

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And he whistled, and shouted, and called them

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"Now, Dasher! now, Dancer! now Prancer and

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On, Comet! on, Cupid! on, Donner and Blitzen!

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Now dash away! dash away! dash away all!"

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His cheeks were like roses, his nose like a cherry!

His droll little mouth was drawn up like a bow,

And the beard on his chin was as white as the

snow;

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The stump of a pipe he held tight in his teeth,

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And the smoke, it encircled his head like a

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A wink of his eye and a twist of his head

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And laying his finger aside of his nose,

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And giving a nod, up the chimney he rose;

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And the beard on his chin was

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The stump of a pipe he held tight

in his teeth,

And the smoke, it encircled his

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He had a broad face and a little

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That shook when he laughed, like

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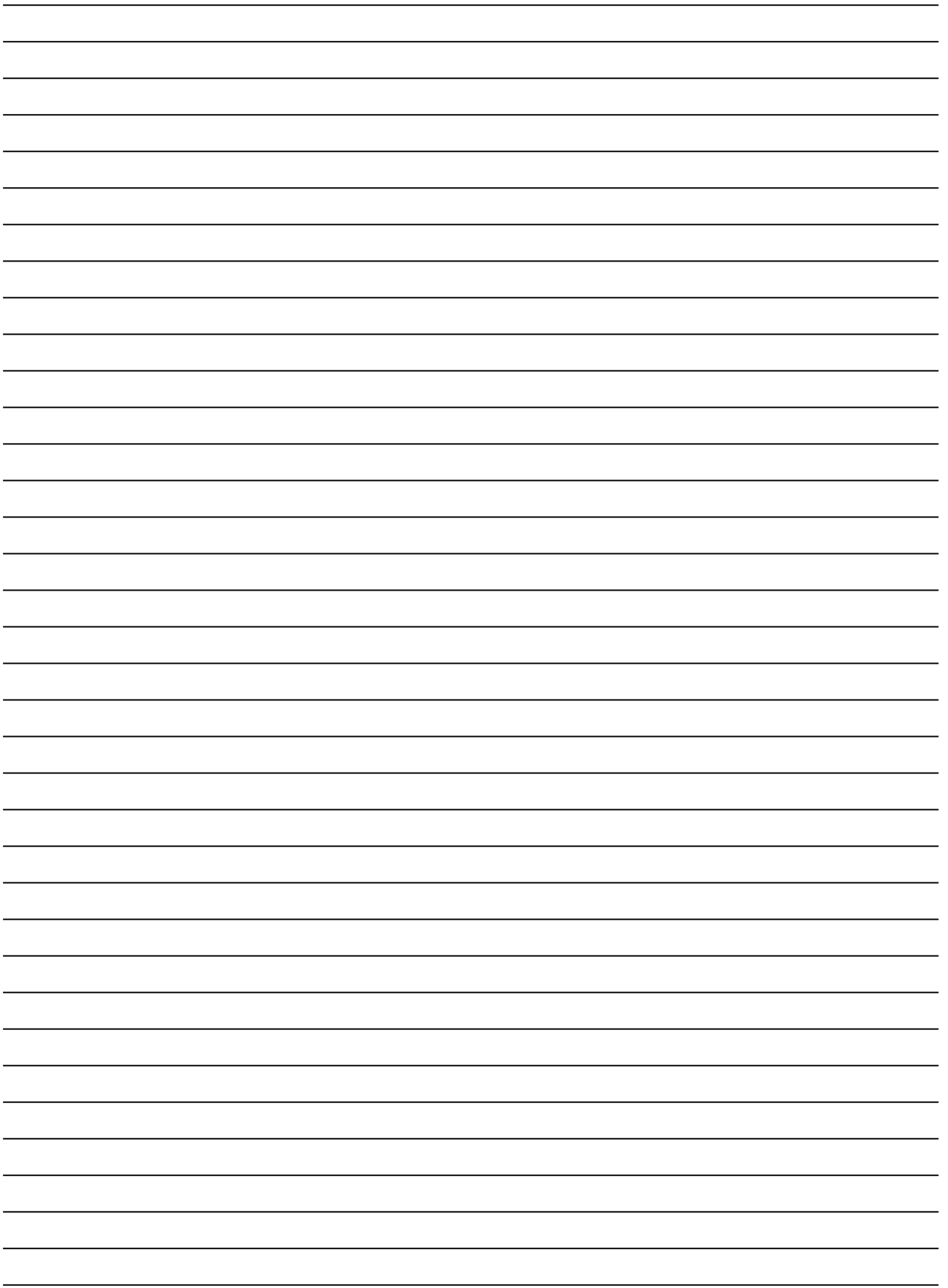
drove out of sight—

“Happy Christmas to all, and to

all a good night!”









## Tea Times

In this session we have six recipes for each week of Advent: Christmas Pudding, St. Nicholas Honey Cakes, St. Lucia Saffron Buns, Sugarplums, Wassail, and Twelfth Night Cake.

We have a link for you to download Christmas teatime packet with four Christmas stories:

Storytime Tea 1: *A Christmas Carol*, by Charles Dickens

Storytime Tea 2: *Little Women*, Chapter II: "A Merry Christmas" by Louisa May Alcott

Storytime Tea 3: *The Tailor of Gloucester*, by Beatrix Potter

Storytime Tea 4: *The Noel Candle*, by Clement C. Moore

Tea Times

# Christmas Pudding

Christmas pudding is a traditional dessert that has been enjoyed for centuries as part of the Christmas holiday. Originating in the Middle Ages as a special kind of porridge, it was later adapted during the Victorian era to be a pudding.

Per tradition, the Sunday after Thanksgiving and before Advent was referred to as "Stir Up Sunday," as churchgoers were encouraged to "stir up and bring forth the fruit of good works." On this day, the entire family would gather and make the pudding together, with each family member taking a turn to stir the pudding.



## Ingredients

- ⅓ cup citrus or lemon peel
- 1 cup raisins
- 1 cup dried cranberries
- ½ cup ground almonds
- ½ cup flour
- 1 ½ cup breadcrumbs
- ½ cup brown sugar
- 1 cup vegetable shortening
- ½ cup apple cider vinegar
- 4 beaten eggs
- ½ tsp salt
- ½ tsp nutmeg
- ½ tsp cinnamon
- ½ tsp allspice
- ¼ cup milk (or enough to soften mixture)

## Directions

Chop the almonds, dried fruits, candied peels, and mix together with the spices. In a large bowl, blend together the fruit mixture with the flour and salt, and then with your hands work in the shortening, breadcrumbs, and sugar until everything is thoroughly mixed together. Add the eggs, vinegar, and milk until it makes a soft paste. Let the mixture sit overnight in the refrigerator.

Traditionally, the pudding is cooked in a steaming basin for 2 hours. Alternatively, it can be cooked in an egg poacher by filling the cups and covering them with aluminum foil. If no steaming basin is available, the pudding can be baked for 1 ½ - 2 hours at 350F, although it will be more dense and less spongy than when steamed.

# St. Nicholas Honey Cakes

St. Nicholas honey cakes are a popular Christmas treat in many parts of the world. These sweet, fragrant cakes are made from a simple dough that is filled with honey and topped with dried fruits or nuts. They are typically enjoyed as a dessert or snack during the Christmas season, and are often associated with St. Nicholas, the famous Christmas figure who was known for his generosity and kindness. Honey cakes are symbolic of abundance, fertility, and happiness, making them a popular holiday treat for Christmas celebrations.

## Ingredients

½ cup honey  
½ cup sugar  
1 egg  
2 egg yolks  
2 ½ - 3 cups flour  
1 tsp baking soda  
½ tsp cinnamon  
½ tsp nutmeg  
¼ tsp ground cloves  
¼ tsp ginger



## Directions:

Warm the honey slightly and combine with the sugar. Add eggs and beat well. Sift the flour with the soda and spices and stir into the honey batter thoroughly.

Let the dough rest overnight in the refrigerator. Roll dough to ¼-inch thickness; cut out with a round cookie cutter. Brush with the slightly beaten white of an egg, and place on cookie sheet.

Bake for 10-15 minutes at 375F or until cakes are golden brown.

# St. Lucia Saffron Buns

Saint Lucia Day is a holiday celebrated on December 13th in countries all over the world, but especially in Scandinavia. This festival commemorates Saint Lucia, an early Christian martyr who died for her faith and was known for her charity and generosity.

As tradition has it, St. Lucia visited Christians who were hiding from persecution, carrying a platter of food and wearing a crown of leaves and candles to light the way. As such, St. Lucia Day is celebrated as a festival of light. On this day, young women (often the eldest daughter in the family) dress up as Saint Lucia, which typically includes a crown of candles and a white robe, and she serves breakfast of coffee and saffron buns.



## Ingredients

- ½ tsp finely crumbled saffron threads OR 1 tsp turmeric
- 1 cup unsalted butter, melted
- 1 cup milk
- ¾ cup sugar
- 1 tsp salt
- 2 packages (4 ½ teaspoons) active dry yeast
- 5-6 cups all-purpose flour, divided
- 2 large eggs, beaten
- Raisins (optional)
- 1 large egg white

Mix saffron threads (or turmeric) into the melted butter and let stand for 30 minutes to 1 hour to infuse the butter with the spice.

In a saucepan over medium heat, warm the milk until small bubbles form all over the surface. Stir in the melted butter, sugar, and salt. Pour the mixture into a large mixing bowl and cool until it's just a little warm. Stir in the yeast and let stand for 10 minutes.

Mix 3 ½ cups flour into the liquid to blend and then stir in the 2 beaten eggs. Add enough of the remaining flour to form a soft dough (the dough should pull away from the sides of the bowl), without adding too much flour and drying out the dough.

Transfer the dough to a large greased bowl and turn to evenly coat the surface of the dough. Cover with a clean towel and let rise in a warm, draft-free place until doubled in volume, about 1 hour.

Punch down the risen dough and lightly knead 2 or 3 times on a floured surface. Pinch off small handfuls of dough, about 2 ¼ inches in diameter, and roll into ropes about ¾ inch in diameter. Shape the ropes into "S"-shaped buns or other desired shapes. Place on a lightly greased baking sheet, cover with the towel and let rise again until doubled in volume, about 1 hour.

Preheat the oven to 375 F. Brush the buns with the remaining egg white and then decorate the buns with the raisins if so desired. Bake in oven for 15 minutes or until golden brown.

## Sugarplums

Sugarplums are a Christmas tradition that has been an important part of holiday celebrations for generations. These sweet, chewy candies are typically made from sugar, dried fruit, and nuts, and they come in a variety of shapes and flavors. They were considered a delicacy during the Victorian era.

### Ingredients

- 8 oz chopped dried figs
- 8 oz chopped dates
- 8 oz chopped raisins
- 8 oz chopped dried cranberries
- 8 oz chopped almonds
- 8 oz chopped walnuts
- 8 oz chopped pecans
- 4 oz shredded coconut
- 4 oz crystalized ginger candy
- 1 orange (grated rind and juice)
- 1 lemon (grated rind and juice)
- Granulated sugar



Chop everything in a food processor. Combine it all in a large bowl and use your hand to mix until it makes a paste. Form into small balls and roll in granulated sugar. Store in a tin lined with wax paper and keep refrigerated. (They will keep a long time and the flavors blend together as the days go by.)

# Wassail

Wassail originated in medieval England and is a traditional Christmas beverage that has been enjoyed for centuries. Made from a mixture of cider, spices, and other ingredients, wassail is thought to symbolize good health and prosperity for the coming year.

The tradition of "wassailing" was brought over to America by English settlers. It was the practice of going door to door and sharing wassail with others, making toasts and dancing and singing. Over time it became popular to make wassail during the Christmas season.



## Ingredients

- 8 cups apple cider
- 2 cups orange juice
- ½ cup lemon juice
- 4 whole cinnamon sticks
- 12 whole cloves or 1 teaspoon ground cloves
- ¼ tsp ground ginger
- ¼ tsp ground nutmeg

## Directions

Combine all ingredients in a large pan. Bring to simmer over medium-low heat. Reduce heat and continue simmering for 45 minutes. Alternatively, mix all into a crockpot and let cook overnight.

# Twelfth Night Cake

Twelfth Night, or Epiphany Eve, is a festival on the last night of the Twelve Days of Christmas, marking the beginning of Epiphany, which celebrates when the three wise men visited Jesus and gave gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. It is custom on this day to eat cake, chalk the front door, bless your house, and sing carols.

## Ingredients

1 cup finely ground almonds  
2 ½ cups sifted flour  
½ tsp salt  
½ cup sugar  
4 egg yolks  
8 tbsp (½ cup) of melted butter  
6 tbsp ice-cold water  
1 egg yolk, lightly beaten with a little water



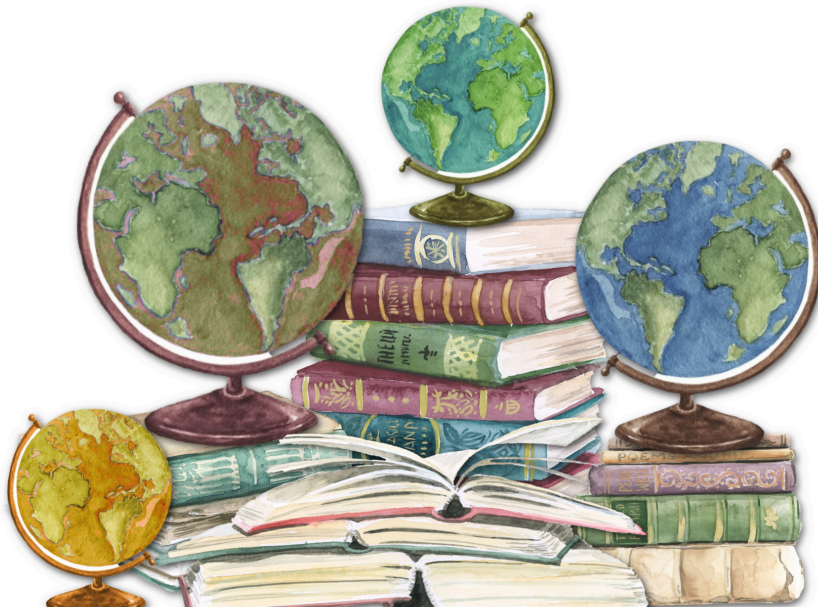
## Directions

Mix the almonds, flour, salt, and sugar. Add egg yolks, butter, and water, and work together with fingers to make a firm dough. Form into a ball and let sit in the refrigerator for 1 hour.

Preheat the oven to 425F. Grease a baking sheet.

On a lightly floured surface, roll the dough until it's about ¾ inch thick, then use a plate to cut the dough in a circle shape. Put a dried bean underneath the dough.

With a sharp knife, cut small decorative shapes into the dough. Brush with egg yolk and bake for 20-30 minutes or until golden brown. Whoever gets the slice with the dried bean gets to be king or queen for the day!



## History & Geography

For this session's History & Geography, we have included a biography of Saint Nicholas for you and your family to study and learn more about the background and traditions behind the figure that has become such a beloved part of the Christmas season.

*"The giver of every good and perfect gift has called upon us to mimic Gods giving, by grace, through faith, and this is not of ourselves."*

~ St. Nicholas of Myra

History & Geography

# Saint Nicholas



Saint Nicholas, often associated with Santa Claus, was a real person who lived a long time ago. Born around 270 AD in a place called Patara, which is in modern-day Turkey, Nicholas grew up in a wealthy Christian family.

Through his actions, Nicholas became known for his compassion and willingness to help others. After his parents passed away, he inherited their fortune but decided to use it to help the needy. He gave away his wealth to those in need, often doing so in secret.

One famous story tells of how he helped three poor sisters. They didn't have enough money to get married, so Nicholas secretly threw bags of gold into their house at night. This helped them to get good marriages, which saved them from a life of poverty.

Nicholas became a priest and then a bishop, a leader in the church, of a city called Myra, also in modern-day Turkey. As a bishop, he continued his acts of kindness. He was known for protecting children, sailors, and the poor. People began to tell stories of his miracles and generosity, and he became widely loved and respected.

Saint Nicholas lived in the Roman Empire during a time when Christians were often persecuted for their beliefs. Despite this, he stood firm in his faith and is even believed to have possibly been in attendance at the famous Council of Nicaea in 325 AD, which helped shape Christian doctrine and beliefs.

After his death around the year 343 AD, his legacy of generosity continued to grow. He was declared a saint and December 6 (which is believed to be the day he died) became known as Saint Nicholas Day, a day to celebrate his life and acts of kindness. Over time, his story spread across Europe, and different cultures adopted their own traditions to honor him.

In some countries, children would leave their shoes out on the night of December 5, hoping to find them filled with treats and small gifts by Saint Nicholas in the morning. This tradition eventually merged with other cultural customs and evolved into the modern-day figure of Santa Claus, who brings gifts to children around the world on Christmas Eve.

Saint Nicholas' life teaches us about the importance of generosity, kindness, and helping those in need. His story has inspired countless acts of charity and continues to remind us of the joy that comes from giving.



## Nature Study

Each Friday morning, you will go through two of our nature cards. They are labeled in the upper right corner with the corresponding week. These are short, factual cards with images to help your child become familiar with objects in the natural world.

As you progress through our sessions, you may find it handy to keep your past nature cards in a binder for easy reference when your children come across a familiar object. These seeds you are planting will grow into a wonderful garden of knowledge for your children in years to come.

As you explore nature outside your home, watch and listen for newly discovered delights. Most of all, remember...

*"Point to some lovely flower or gracious tree, not only as a beautiful work, but as a beautiful thought of God."*

~ Charlotte Mason

Nature Study

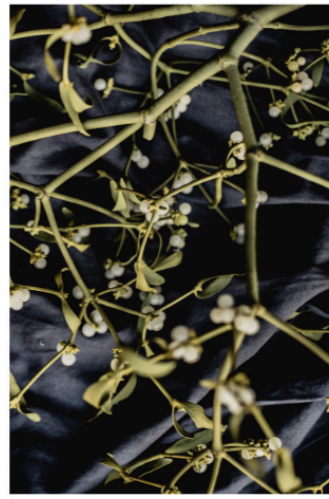


## Spruce 1

*Pinus glabra*

- Spruce is a member of the evergreen family. It is a straight-growing tree that grows between 65 and 130 feet tall
- It is found all over the northern hemisphere, especially in the southern United States and across Europe.

- The leaves are called "needles" and grow in bundles of two
- Spruces generally start to produce cones by age 10
- Spruces have a variety of uses, ranging from timber, to medicines, and of course, Christmas trees



## Mistletoe 1

*Viscum album*

- Mistletoe is a parasitic plant that grows all around the world. It has smooth, oval, leaves and waxy, white berries that grow in clusters of two to six.
- There are 1500 species of mistletoe, varying widely in toxicity to humans

- The Romans associated mistletoe with peace, love and understanding and hung it over doorways to protect the household.
- In the Western world, mistletoe became associated with Christmas as a decoration under which lovers are expected to kiss. It was also used as protection to ward away witches and demons.



## Poinsettia 2

*Euphorbia pulcherrima*

- Poinsettias are indigenous to Mexico and Central America and were first introduced to Europeans in 1834.
- The poinsettia is the world's most economically important potted plant.

- It was originally known as "Mexican flame flower" or "painted leaf." The name "poinsettia" was derived from Joel Roberts Poinsett, a botanist and the first US Minister to Mexico, who began sending poinsettias from Mexico back to his home in South Carolina.
- The star-shaped leaf pattern is said to symbolize the Star of Bethlehem, and the red color represents the blood sacrifice of Jesus's crucifixion. It was adopted by Franciscan friars in Mexico from the 17th century.



## Amaryllis 2

*Amaryllis belladonna*

- Amaryllis is a bulbous plant, with each bulb being 2-4 inches in diameter.
- The name "amaryllis" comes from the Greek word "amarysso," meaning "to sparkle."

- The plant has a symbiotic relationship with carpenter bees, which are its main source of pollination, as well as different types of moths.
- The usual color is white with crimson veins, but pink or purple also occur naturally.
- The leaves are produced in the autumn or early spring in warm climates depending on the onset of rain and eventually die down by late spring.



## Orange 3

*Citrus × sinensis*

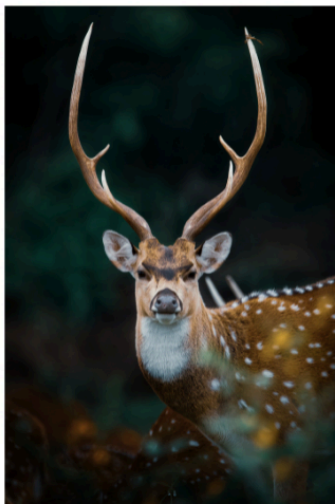
- Oranges are a hybrid between two different species: pomelo (*Citrus maxima*) and mandarin (*Citrus reticulata*).
- The orange originated in a region encompassing Southern China, Northeast India, and Myanmar, and the earliest mention of the sweet orange was in Chinese literature in 314 BC.
- Brazil is the largest producer of orange juice in the world, followed by the United States
- As oranges are rich in vitamin C and do not spoil easily, during the Age of Discovery, many sailors would plant citrus trees along trade routes to prevent scurvy.
- Spanish travelers introduced the sweet orange into the American continent.



## Fig 3

*Ficus carica*

- The fig is one of the first edible plants to be cultivated by humans.
- The common fig tree has been cultivated since ancient times and grows wild in dry and sunny locations with deep and fresh soil
- The plant tolerates seasonal drought, and the Middle Eastern and Mediterranean climates are especially suitable to it.
- People of the Italian diaspora who live in cold-winter climates have the practice of burying imported fig trees to overwinter them and protect the fruiting hard wood from cold.
- In the Biblical Book of Genesis, Adam and Eve clad themselves with fig leaves (Genesis 3:7) after eating the forbidden fruit from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Likewise, fig leaves, or depictions of fig leaves, have long been used to cover nude figures in painting and sculpture



## Reindeer 4

*Rangifer tarandus*

- Male ("bulls") and female ("cows") reindeer can grow antlers annually, although the female antlers grow much smaller.
- Antlers begin to grow on male reindeer in March or April and on female reindeer in May or June. This process is called antlerogenesis.
- The color of the fur varies between season and subspecies. In the north, they are small and whiter. In the south, they are larger and darker.
- Their coats have two layers of fur: a dense woolly undercoat and longer-haired overcoat consisting of hollow, air-filled hairs.
- Reindeer hooves adapt to the season: in the summer, when the tundra is soft, the footpads become sponge-like and provide extra traction. In the winter, the pads shrink and tighten, exposing the rim of the hoof, which cuts into the ice and crusted snow to keep it from slipping.



## Partridge 4

*Perdix perdix*

- The partridge is a rotund bird, brown-backed, with gray flanks and chest. The belly is white, usually marked with a large chestnut-brown horse-shoe mark in males, and also in many females.
- They have slightly fat, pear-shaped bellies that appear to give them great stability, so they are good little runners.
- They are a seed-eating species, but the young in particular take insects as an essential protein supply. During the first 10 days of life, the young can only digest insects. The parents lead their chicks to the edges of cereal fields, where they can forage for insects.
- In the Christmas carol, "The Twelve Days of Christmas," the first gift listed is "a partridge in a pear tree." Since partridges are unlikely to be seen in pear-trees (they are ground-nesting birds) it has been suggested that the text "a pear tree" is a corruption of the French "une perdrix" (a partridge).



## Turtledove 5

*Streptopelia turtur*

- The turtledove is smaller and slighter in build than many other doves
- The turtle dove is a migratory species with a wide range covering most of Europe and the Middle East and including Turkey and north Africa
- It is a bird that prefers the open, rather than dense woodlands, and frequently feeds on the ground. It will occasionally nest in large gardens, but is usually extremely timid.
- European turtle doves are an emblem of devoted love.



## European Robin 5

*Erithacus rubecula*

- Robins are relatively unafraid of people and are even drawn to human activities when it involves digging through soil, as they like to look for earthworms and other freshly turned up food.
- They are considered to be a gardener's friend, and since tradition associates the red breast with the blood of Christ, robins would never be harmed.
- A robin has an average life expectancy of 1.1 years; however, once past its first year, life expectancy increases. One robin has been recorded as reaching 19 years of age.
- According to an old British folk tale, when Jesus was dying on the cross, the robin flew to his side and sang to comfort him in his pain. The blood from his wounds stained the bird's breast and thereafter all robins carry the mark of Christ's blood upon them.



## Frankincense 6

*Boswellia*

- Ancient Egyptians used frankincense as part of the embalming process
- The name comes from a French phrase "Fran encens" which means "high quality incense"
- It can block inflammatory molecules that can cause asthma
- Frankincense trees are tapped for their resin, which produces usable frankincense
- It has been used throughout history as a wound healer



## Myrrh 6

*Commiphora myrrha*

- Myrrh is a gum-resin extracted from a number of small, thorny trees
- The resin is harvested by repeatedly wounding the trees to bleed the gum, which is waxy and coagulates quickly.
- The word "myrrh" corresponds with a common Semitic root "m-r-r" meaning "bitter."
- It is used as an antiseptic in mouthwashes, gargles, and toothpastes.
- In ancient times, myrrh had been used in Egypt for embalming the bodies of Pharaohs.
- Myrrh resin has been used throughout history as a perfume, incense, and medicine.



## Handicraft

For our handicraft lesson, we will be creating a simple Advent wreath that all ages can enjoy — from your younger children to teens who can add embellishments as they desire.

This would be a great decor piece to forage on a nature walk. Look for beautiful, natural evergreens — fir, spruce, cedar, pine needles, pinecones, ivy, holly leaves and berries, etc. Or simply purchase a few artificial evergreen sprigs from your local craft store.

Either way, this simple piece will bring beauty, hope, and anticipation to your Advent season!

*"I've filled him with the Spirit of God, giving him skill and know-how and expertise in every kind of craft to create designs ... he's an all-around craftsman."*

~ Exodus 31:3-5

Handicraft Lesson

# Simple Advent Wreath

Advent begins on the 4th Sunday before Christmas. Sometimes Advent season begins in November on the Sunday following Thanksgiving.

On each of the four Sundays leading up to Christmas, you will light an Advent candle.

Start with one candle on the first Sunday. Light two candles on the second Sunday. And so on.

Along with the candle lighting, you'll want to incorporate a simple devotional reading or a Scripture passage, or both. Many are provided within this morning time session

## Supplies

- Pie or tart dish (or shallow cookie tin)
- 4 candle holders
- 4 candles (I chose ivory, but feel free to use pink and purple or the colors of your choice)
- Evergreen sprigs (natural or artificial)
- Other foraged items such as pine cones, holly leaves, holly berries, ivy, etc.



## Directions

1. Gather some evergreen branches, leaves, berries, and pinecones from your backyard, neighborhood, or nearby woods (or purchase a few artificial sprigs to use each year).
2. For foraged greens, snip them into short segments that would lay nicely in a curved formation. Some greens are more pliable than others, so you may need to play around with the best way to use each type of greenery.
3. For artificial greens, simply fluff out each section and bend the wire so they will curve around the candle sticks.
4. Place the candle holders inside your dish.
5. Add the candlesticks to the holders.
6. Position your greens around the holders to form a wreath.
7. Add in pinecone, berries, leaves, etc. as accents.



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