



4 Proclaim Hope

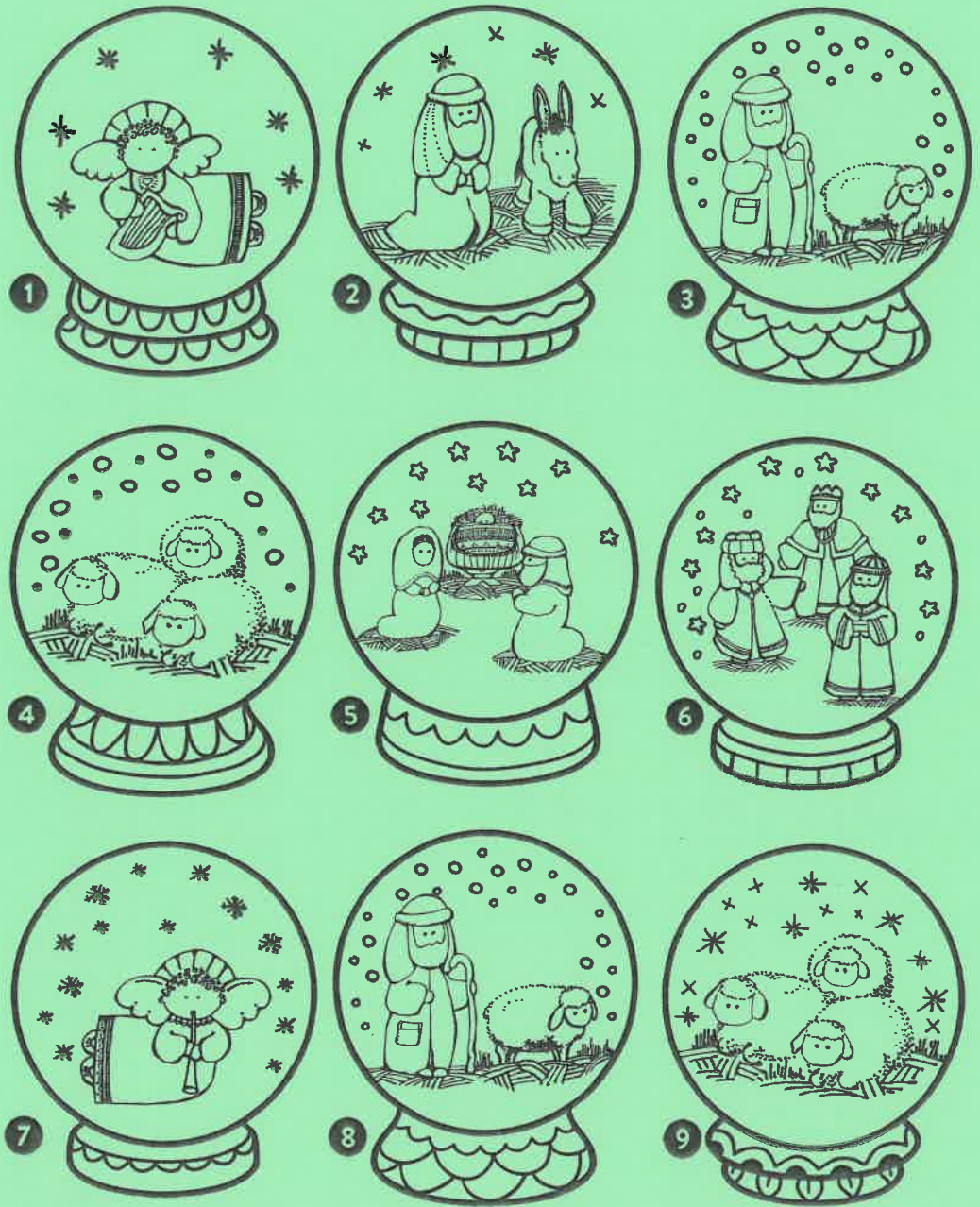
WAYS TO PRACTICE PROCLAIMING HOPE AT HOME

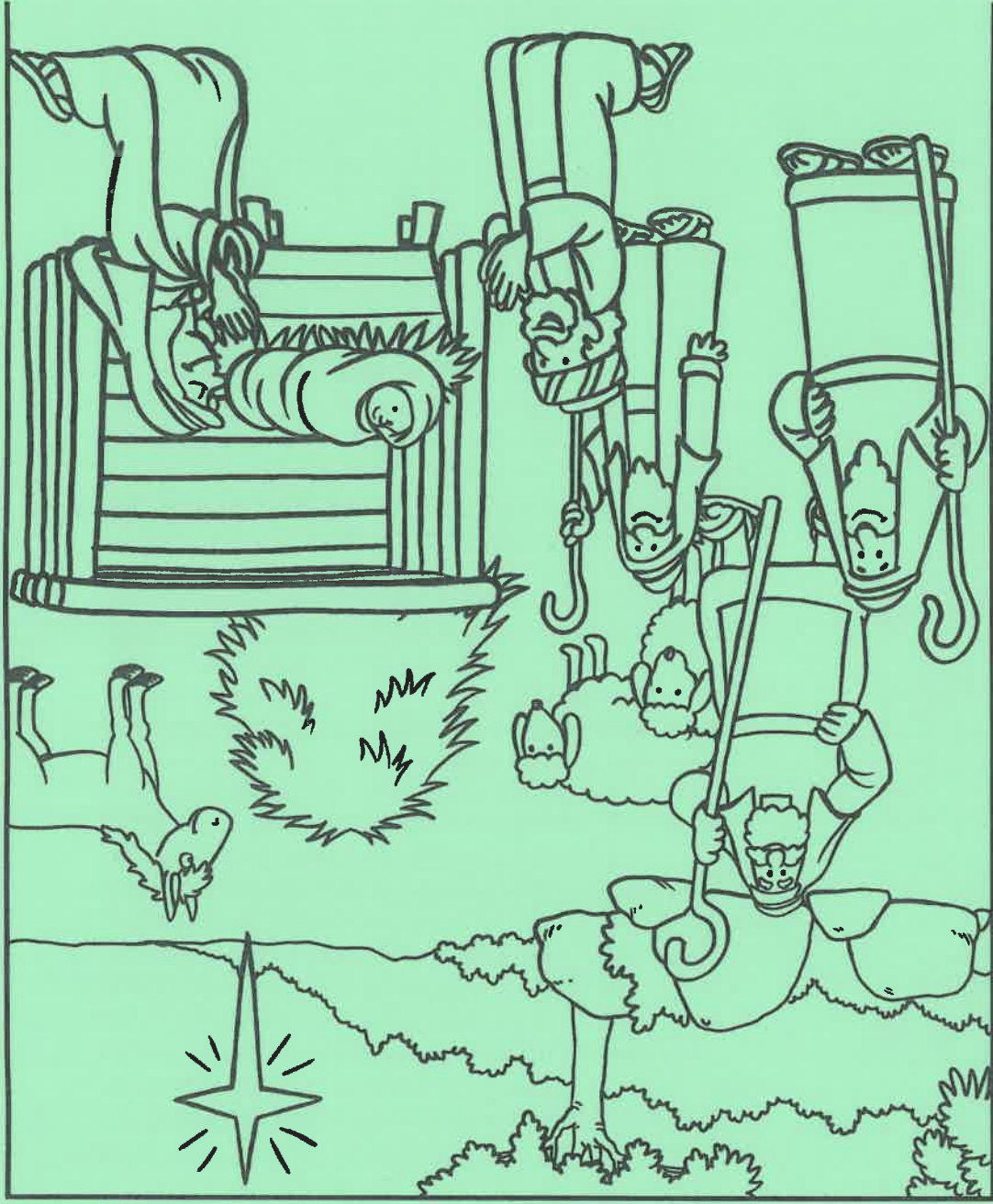
Hope is waiting faithfully as God fulfills God's promises to us through Jesus Christ. Instead of just keeping this hope to ourselves, it is one of our most important callings as people of God to proclaim this hope to the world, sharing the good news of Jesus Christ as the angels and shepherds did long ago.

- Sing Christmas carols together that proclaim the good news of Jesus' birth. Some possibilities are: "Hark! The Herald Angels Sing," "Away in a Manger," "The First Noel," "Angels We Have Heard on High," and "Go Tell It On the Mountain."
- Watch the video *A Charlie Brown Christmas* (Warner Bros., 1965) or the clip from the movie about the true meaning of Christmas on YouTube at "A Charlie Brown Christmas—True Meaning" (bit.ly/FMTrueMeaning, 1:50). Then watch "Charlie Brown Christmas Dance" (bit.ly/FMChristmasDance, 3:02) and dance with Charlie Brown's friends.
- Gather family and/or friends in a circle and tell the story of Jesus' birth, taking turns one or two sentences at a time. Allow for creative details to be added. Prompt with questions such as "What happened next?" or "What did they do then?"
- The star was a symbol of hope for the magi who followed it to find Jesus and worship him. Make stars and write a word that would give hope to you or others. Give your "star words" to others proclaiming hope. Some words might be: *believe, wonder, trust, promises, faith*, and so forth.

God of hope, thank you for the gift of Jesus, hope for the world. May we proclaim that good news far and wide. Amen.

Find the two matching snowglobes.





BIBLE STORY



Based on Luke 2:8-20

In a field within a night's walk from the stable where Jesus was born, some shepherds were taking care of their sheep. They had worked hard all day keeping the flock together. They had made sure the sheep had good grass to eat and water to drink. Now it was their turn to build a fire and cook their supper and share the stories of their day. As they talked, the fire seemed to burn brighter, but then it grew so bright they couldn't ignore that this was not just the fire but a heavenly glow that was lighting up the sky.

A figure appeared in this glowing sky, and the shepherds were so scared they started shaking. They had never seen anything like this before.

It was an angel, a messenger from God. The angel spoke and said, "Do not be afraid for I am bringing you good news of great joy to all people. A baby has been born in the city of Bethlehem who has been sent by God to lead the people. You will know it is the right baby, because this child is wrapped in bands of cloth and will be lying in a manger in a stable."

Then the angel was joined by many others. They all said together, "Glory to God in the highest heaven and on earth peace among those who are favored by God."

After the angels had left, the shepherds talked to one another, wondering what to do. They decided to go to Bethlehem and see if they could find the baby that the angels had described to them.

They found the stable where Mary, Joseph, the baby Jesus, and the donkey were staying. They were amazed that it was all true. The shepherds wanted to give Mary and Joseph something for the baby, so they gave the baby some wool from their sheep to keep him warm on a cold night.

Then the shepherds left, praising God for everything they had seen and heard and shared together. The angels had given them hope with the good news. This little baby gave them hope for a new world. Mary, too, received the hope the shepherds shared, and she kept all of this hope in her heart.