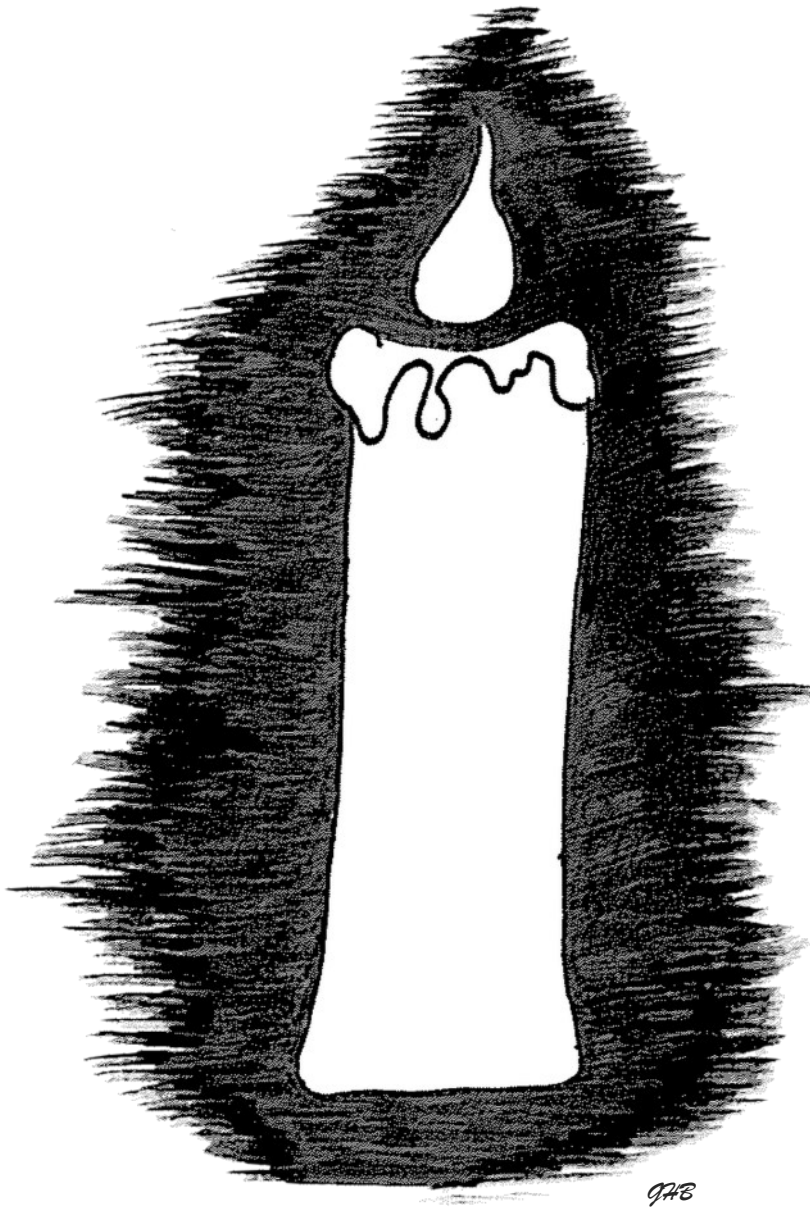


SUNDAY

1

# Light One Candle



**FOR TODAY:** Today we begin Advent by lighting just one candle. It might seem small against December's early darkness, but that's exactly the point. Hope often starts small - a tiny light, a single step, one moment of believing things might get better. You don't need to light up the whole room today. Just one candle, one small flame of hope, is enough to begin. Let its gentle light remind you that even the smallest hope matters, and there is always at least one—the blessing of another new day.

**Question to ponder:** What one small hope can you hold onto today?

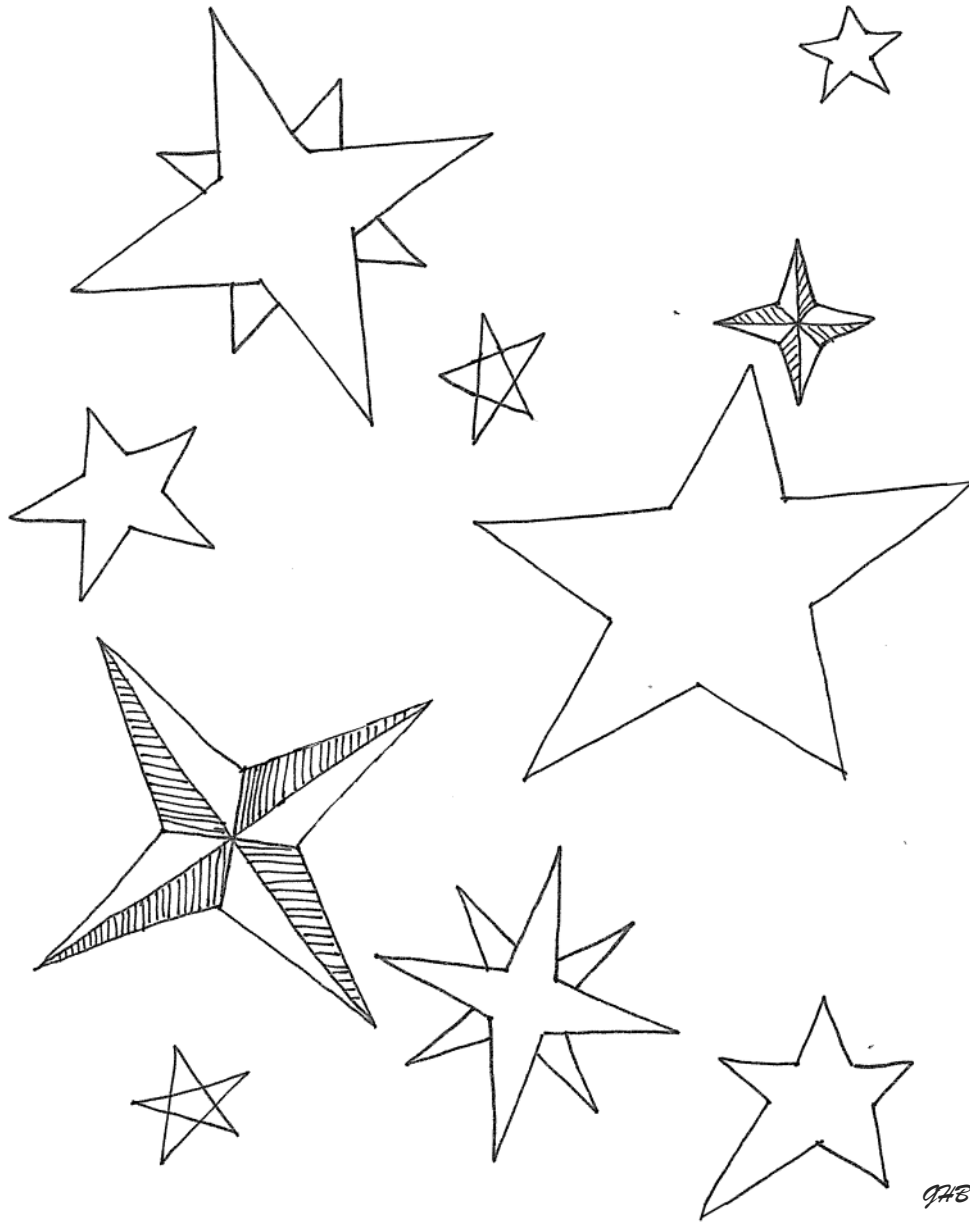
"The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light"

(Isaiah 9:2)

**SACRED MOMENTS:** The prophet Isaiah spoke of people walking in darkness seeing a great light. But that light didn't appear all at once — it dawned gradually, like a sunrise. As we light this first Advent candle, we remember that hope often begins with just a spark, the tiniest flicker in inside us. Even when shadows feel deep, Sacred Light is beginning to dawn. This single flame reminds us that we're not alone in the darkness — the Divine Spirit is with us, lighting the way one step at a time.

**Practice:** When you see any light today - a lamp, the sun, a candle — pause and remember: hope is dawning.

# COLOR YOUR ADVENT 2024



A Seasonal Reflection  
Guide and Coloring Book



Community Missions of Niagara Frontier, Inc.,  
1570 Buffalo Ave., Niagara Falls, NY 14303  
716-285-3403 — [www.communitymissions.org](http://www.communitymissions.org)

# Welcome to *Color Your Advent - 2024*

The winter season invites us to pause and reflect as days grow shorter until the solstice, when light begins its gradual return. Many cultures and spiritual traditions recognize this as a meaningful time of contemplation and renewal. In the Christian tradition, Advent marks a season of hopeful waiting and preparation, leading us through the weeks leading up to Christmas. This guide offers daily opportunities for reflection and creative expression through both coloring and meditation. Each day provides a simple image to color along with two reflections:

**FOR TODAY** reflections focus on wellness, recovery, and finding hope in daily life.

These entries support mental health, addiction recovery, and general wellbeing through practical wisdom and gentle encouragement.

**SACRED MOMENTS** reflections explore Christian themes and scripture, offering spiritual insights while remaining accessible to all seekers.

You're invited to use this book in whatever way serves you best - color the images, read one or both reflections, try the suggested practices, or simply sit quietly with the themes. There is no "right way" to engage with these materials.

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## **IMPORTANT SAFETY NOTICE**

**For CMI Residential Program Participants: Open flames and candles are NOT PERMITTED in rooms or apartments!! Please use only the battery-operated tea lights provided. Contact CMI Staff with any questions.**

**For Others: *If you use candles with this guide, you do so at your own risk!*** If using real candles, always do so safely. Never leave them unattended and supervise children. Safety first! *To use without candles, simply substitute the coloring of the candles for the lighting of candles.*

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## ***Acknowledgements***

Special thanks to those who helped by providing artwork including, Eileen Kineke of 'Brave Spirit Arts' (Facebook@EJWrobelart) & Gemma Hicks-Breese.

This Color Your Advent - 2024 resource grew from my years of creating devotional materials specifically for Community Missions' unique communities, especially those in recovery, dealing with mental health challenges, or experiencing homelessness. The project was inspired by the advent calendars created by Rev. Thomas N. Mousin, Rev. Merry Watters, and illustrator Susan Shepherd Kochinkas over their remarkable 35-year journey. While adapting themes and texts to better serve our community's needs, I drew from themes and texts found in their work and many other advent resources.

This version became a coloring book to serve our mental health program clients who find peace in adult coloring activities. I am deeply grateful to Revs. Mousin and Watters for their pioneering work. Their current calendar and daily email reflections are available at [thomasmousin.com](http://thomasmousin.com).

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If you have any questions or comments about *Color Your Advent –2024*, please contact Rev. Mark Breese at Community Missions. You can contact us through our website [www.communitymissions.org](http://www.communitymissions.org) or by calling 716-285-3403. Our mailing address is:

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Free downloads of *Color Your Advent-2024* can be found at: [www.HopeForNiagara.org](http://www.HopeForNiagara.org).