



## We Speak to God

Heavenly Father, you gave us the gift of hope - your Son. Help us prepare to remember his birth with great joy. May Christmas be filled with the real reason for the season - Jesus! Hanoon Hor, yev Vortvo, yev Hokvooyn Srpo.

## Let's Talk

Advent means "coming." It is a period of 50 days before Christmas when we prepare ourselves for the coming of the Son of God, Jesus. We fast, pray, read the Bible and attend church.

God promised us he would send his son, Jesus, and we prepare for him.





## Listen to This

Armenians celebrate Christmas and Jesus' baptism on one day — January 6. Most Christian churches celebrate Christmas on December 25. *Why?*

A pagan feast, called the Birth of the Sun, was celebrated on December 25. The church fathers in Rome wanted the people to forget this feast and to remember the birth of Christ. So the date for Christmas was changed from January 6 to December 25.

The Armenian Church continues to celebrate Christmas and the Baptism of Jesus on January 6. But all Christians celebrate the season together!

## God Speaks to Us

There was a law that everyone had to return to his or her own hometown to be listed in the record books of that town. Mary went with Joseph to Bethlehem, his hometown. She was going to have a baby; and while they were there, she gave birth to her first-born son. He was born in a stable because there was no room at the inn.

The shepherds on the hills heard angels say, "I have good news for you which will make everyone happy. This very day in Bethlehem a Savior was born. He is Christ the Lord."

*Luke 2*

# We Learn About God

We give gifts to those we love. Name some things that you treasure. Would you ever give one of your treasures as a gift?

David was six years old. It was his father's birthday. He did not have any money to buy a gift. He thought and thought. What could he give his father?

He went to his box of treasures that he kept under his bed.

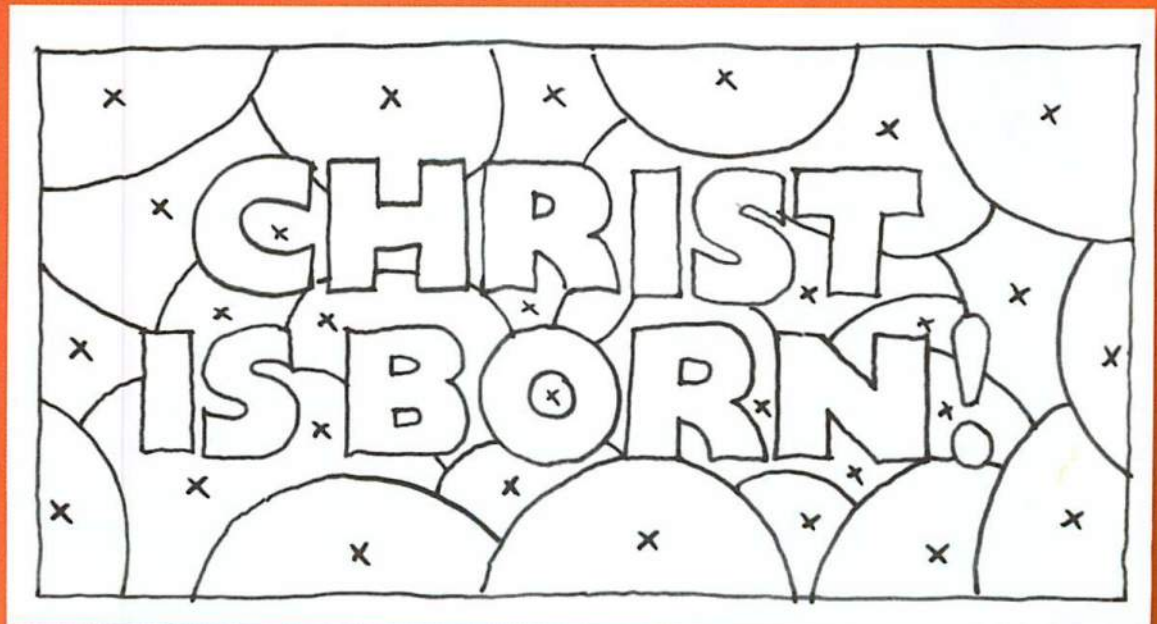


He opened the box. There he saw the blue feather he found in the backyard, the sparkling red ribbon from a Christmas box, the stickers his aunt had sent to him, the white rock with the shiny speckles he found at the beach, his tennis ball. He decided what it would be. The special gift would be the white rock with its glistening specks.

David brought it and put it in his father's hand. What do you think his father said to him?

- God loves us. He gives us gifts. What are some of the gifts God has given to you?
- God's greatest gift to us is Jesus Christ, his Son. What can we say to God? How can we thank him?

## Hearts and Hands



# Our Armenian Way

The baptism of Jesus Christ is celebrated on the same day as Armenian Christmas, January 6. At the end of the Christmas Badarak, a special service is held to remember the baptism of Jesus Christ in the River Jordan. It is called Churorhnek (the Blessing of Water).



Water is poured into a bowl. A cross is placed in the water to remind us of the baptism of Jesus. Holy Oil (Muron) is poured into the water from a dove-shaped vessel to remind us that the Holy Spirit was sent by God and was present at the baptism. At the end of the service, the priest removes the cross from the water and gives it to a member of the congregation chosen as the godfather of the cross.



The congregation comes forward to kiss the cross and to receive some of the Holy Water. They can drink the water or take it home.

## For My Family



### Sharing Our Faith

Our lesson for the day was Armenian Christmas and the special service called Churorhnek (the Blessing of Water). Both are celebrated on the same day - January 6.

### Living Our Faith

God loved us so much that he gave us his Son. What can we do to show him our love?

1. Work on a family project. Collect used greeting cards. Cut out the pictures and make a collage for a local nursing home, hospital or senior family member.
2. With the cards that depict birds, make a Holy Spirit mobile. Tie the cut-outs individually with string or ribbon and hang it on a clothes hanger or branch.
3. Think of the parents and children who have very little in the way of clothing or toys. Every six months, organize a clothing and toy drive.

Let it be a time of joyous giving.