



MANY STORIES ONE LIGHT



This resource has been produced by the St Vincent de Paul Society. The St Vincent de Paul Society (SVP) is a Catholic international volunteer organisation whose members work with anyone in need in their local community – the homeless, the elderly, prisoners, struggling families, people who are sick and lonely. Young people are an important part of the Vincentian family. We are all called to be like Jesus by helping people, becoming their friend and working with others to make a difference. Find out more and view our school resources by visiting svp.org.uk/mini-vinnies

Leader's Guide

Mini Vinnies Advent Wreath Activity

During Advent, Mini Vinnies will create a paper Advent wreath that grows each week as they prepare for the birth of Jesus. They will add candles, reflect on Scripture, make kindness pledges, and record daily acts of kindness on leaves to show how they are sharing God's love with others. A beautiful resource to display at school, in your parish or at home.

What you will need:

- Example of an Advent wreath
- Advent wreath template
- Leaf templates (printed on green card, (multiple per child))
- Candle templates (printed on white card, 5 per child)
- Colouring materials
- Glue/scissors
- PowerPoint slides for each week

Steps to take:

Week 1: Creating the Wreath – The Candle of Hope

Welcome and Introduction (5 minutes)

Start your Mini Vinnies meeting with the Opening Prayer.
Explain to the children the following:

Advent is a time when Christians prepare their hearts for the birth of Jesus. Just as we prepare our homes for Christmas, we prepare ourselves by showing love, kindness and hope to others.

Show the children the example Advent wreath and explain the following:

The wreath is a circle because God's love has no beginning and no end and the candles remind us that Jesus is the Light of the World. Each week we will add a new candle and think about how we can bring light to others.

Activity: Make Your Advent Wreath (25 minutes)

Invite the children to decorate their wreath template with your green leaves. Give each child the first Advent candle template.

Reflection: The First Candle – The Prophecy Candle, representing Hope, purple in colour

Share our scripture focus for this week:

"The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who dwelt in a land of deep darkness, on them has light shined." – Isaiah 9:2

Discussion questions:

- What does hope mean?
- How can we offer hope to someone who is having a difficult day?
- How does Jesus show hope to the world?

Hope Pledge:

Invite the children to write their pledge on their candle of Hope and place on their wreath. During the week record some actions you take of offering hope on a few of your leaves on the wreath.

Close in prayer.



MANY STORIES ONE LIGHT



Week 2: The Candle of Peace

Opening Prayer- Invite a child to read the opening prayer to start your meeting.

Reflection

Invite the children to share some of the leaves of hope they have collected over the week, which they will have added to their wreaths.

Reflection: The Second Candle – The Bethlehem Candle, representing Peace, purple in colour

Share the Scripture focus for this week:

“Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.”

Matthew 5:9

Discussion questions:

- What does it mean to have peace in your heart?
- How can our words and actions help bring peace to others?
- Who could you show kindness and peace to this week?

Activity

- Decorate the second candle, remembering its colour.
- Add it to the wreath.
- Make a new kindness pledge for the week ahead.

Peace Pledge

Invite the children to write their pledge on their second candle for the week ahead. Close your meeting in prayer.

Week 3: The Candle of Joy

Opening Prayer- Invite a child to read the opening prayer to start your meeting.

Reflection: The Third Candle- The Shepherd’s Candle, representing Joy, pink (rose) in colour
Invite the children to share some of the leaves of peace they have collected over the week, which they will have added to their wreaths.

Share the Scripture focus for the week:

“And the angel said to them, “Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people.” – Luke 2:10

Discussion questions:

- How do you think the shepherds felt when they saw the angel?
- What good news does the birth of Jesus bring to us?
- How can we share the joy of Jesus with others this week?

Activity

- Decorate the candle, remembering its colour.
- Add it to the wreath.
- Make a joy pledge for the week ahead.

Joy pledge:

This week I will bring joy to others by...



MANY STORIES ONE LIGHT



Week 4: The Candle of Love

Opening Prayer- Invite a child to read the opening prayer to start your meeting.

Reflection:

Invite the children to share some of the leaves of joy they have collected over the week, which they will have added to their wreaths.

The Fourth Candle – The Angels' Candle, representing Love, purple in colour.

Share the Scripture focus for the week:

"For God loved the world so much that he gave his only Son. God gave his Son so that whoever believes in him may not be lost, but have eternal life."

– John 3:16

Discussion questions:

- How does God show us His love?
- How can we show others the same love God shows us?
- What is one thing you can do this week to share God's love with someone this season?

Activity

- Decorate the fourth candle, remembering its colour.
- Add it to the wreath.
- Make a pledge of love.

Love pledge:

This week I will spread God's love by...

Christmas Day: The Christ Candle (to be done before breaking up for Christmas or given to the children to do at home.)

Reflection:

Invite the children to share some of the leaves of love they have collected over the week, which they will have added to their wreaths.

The Fifth Candle- The Christ Candle, white in colour, to be placed in the centre.

Share the following with the children:

The white candle represents Jesus. He is the centre of our Advent celebration and the light that guides us.

Scripture:

"I am the light of the world."

– John 8:12

Reflection:

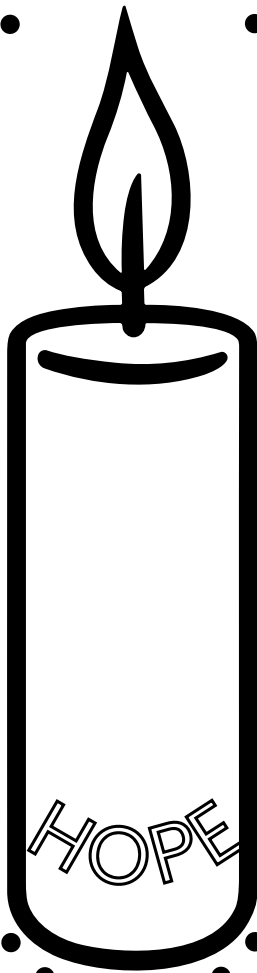
- Which of the four themes-hope, peace, joy and love- has meant the most to you, and why?
- How can you continue to share hope, peace, joy and love after Advent has finished?
- How can you keep Jesus at the centre of your Christmas and let His light shine through you?

Activity

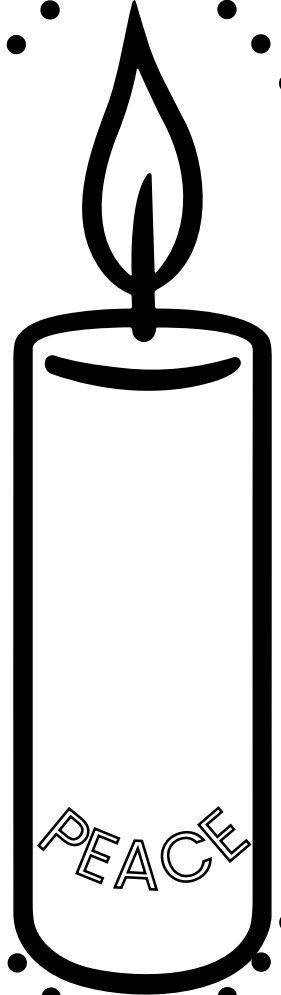
- Decorate and place the white candle in the centre.
- Write a prayer of thanksgiving and pledge to spread the light of Christ.

Close in prayer.

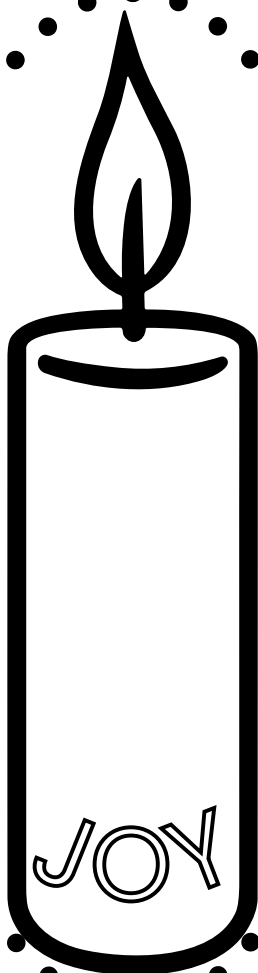
Week 1



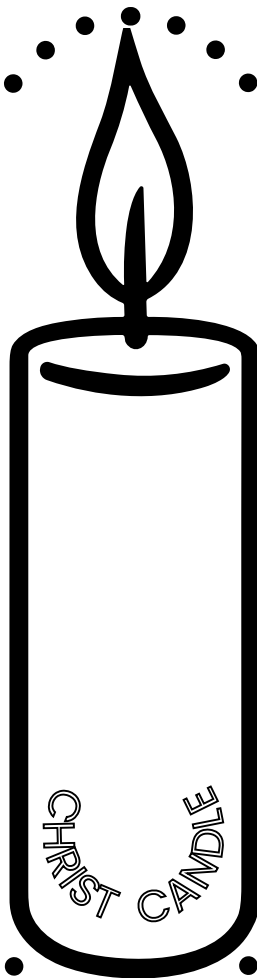
Week 2



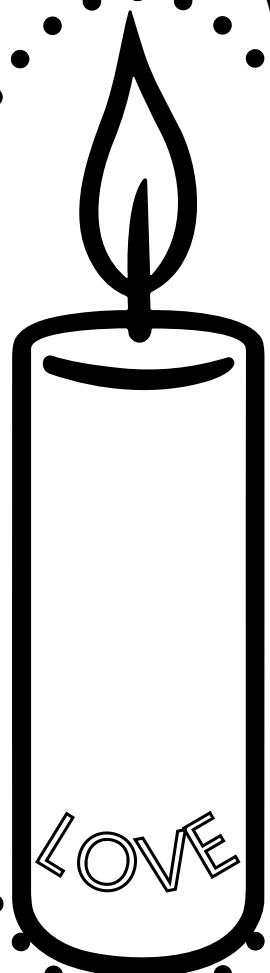
Week 3

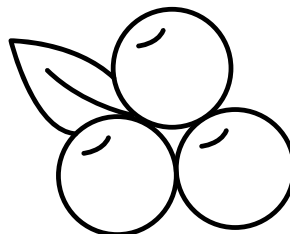
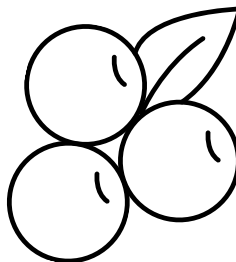
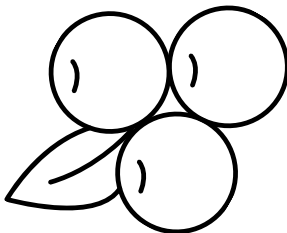
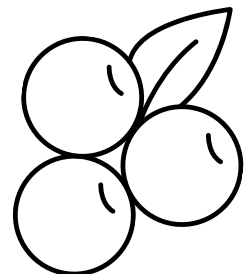
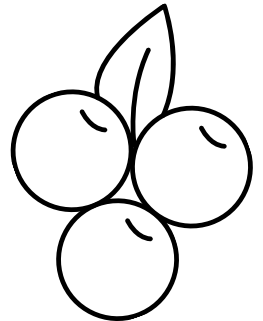
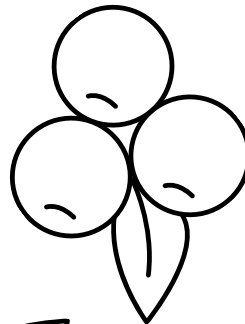
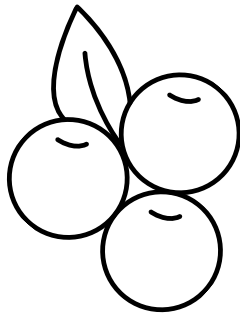
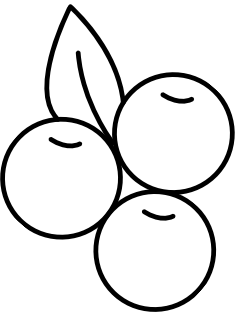
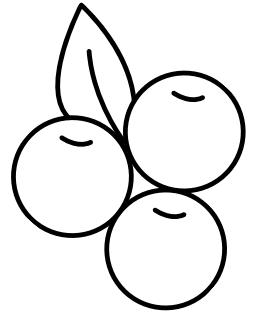
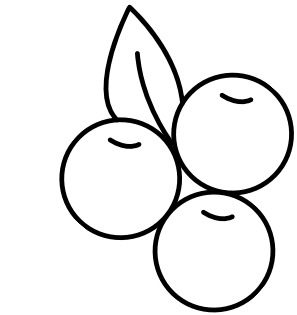
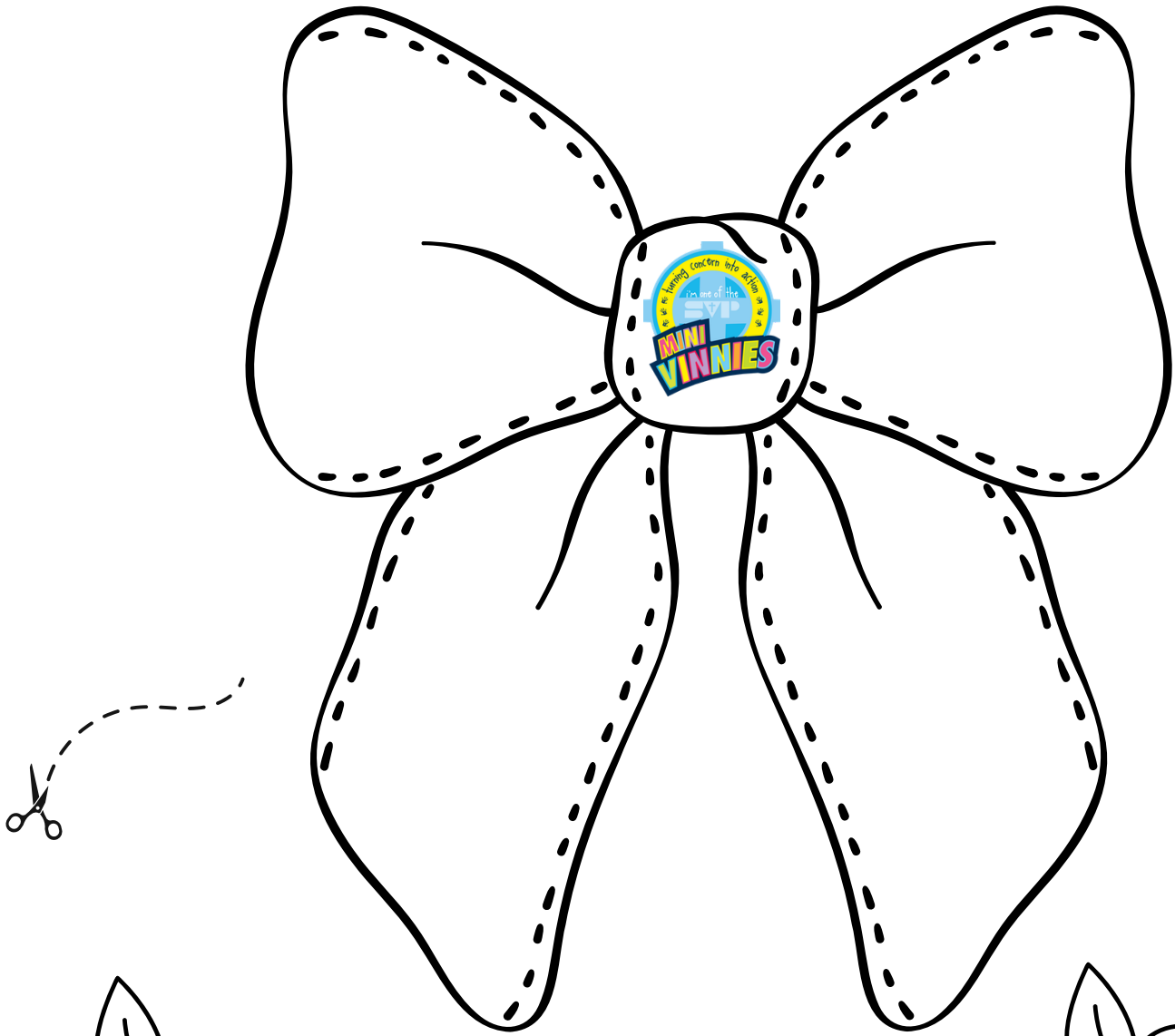


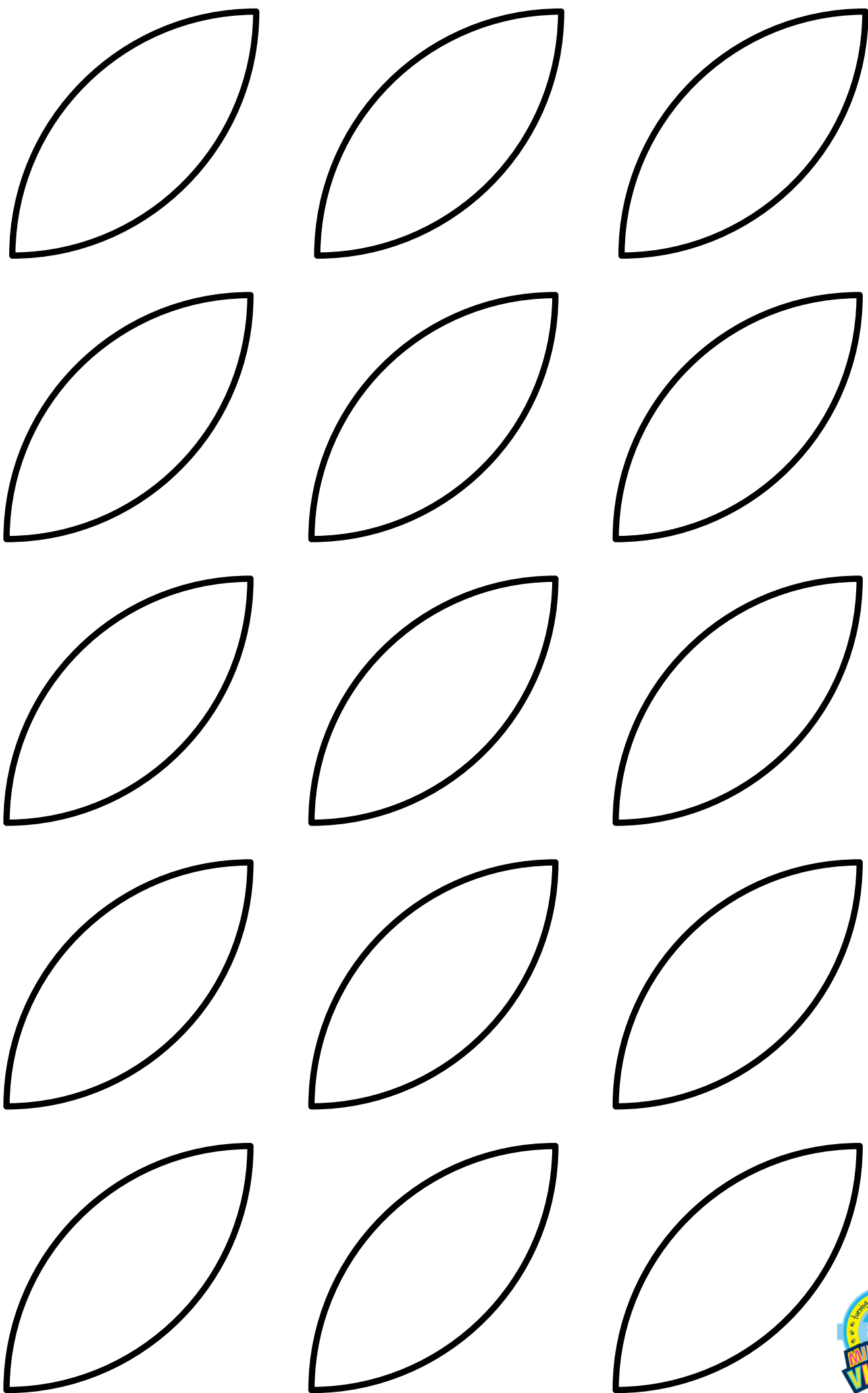
Week 4



Christmas







Wreath Making:



In the first session, the children will create their wreath base with green leaves (plain green card would be great for this). Each week the candles will be added along with their acts of kindness they do throughout the week. These can be written directly on to the leaves. In your final week, the children can add the bow and berries and the final Christmas candle.

