

## 2017 ADVENT DEVOTIONAL

*Each December, we observe the season of Advent, which literally means “a coming or an arrival.” It is a time of contrasts: an honest reflection on the barrenness of our lives apart from Jesus Christ and a joyful celebration of His first coming as a baby born in Bethlehem. Each Sunday during Advent, we emphasize themes in our worship that trace a path through history from the first days of creation to the end of time. The great apex of this history is also one of the greatest contrasts: the King of the Universe comes as a poor little baby, and the Kingdom of God is ushered in and celebrated by the lowly and the forgotten. In this, we have much to ponder and to celebrate.*

TRINITY PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

In Preparation for December 3  
Week One: November 27 - December 3

**Advent Theme: Creation**

*By the finger of God.* Who alone can come against the forces of spiritual darkness in this world and beyond? Only One more powerful than, higher than and above all created things. Only One who holds the very creative force of the universe in His hands. Amazingly, this One became a little baby, with dirty, fragile and soft fingers reaching out for the warmth and protection of His mother – showing us just how powerful He is and also showing us the way we too can have this King and His Kingdom. We light the first candle to reflect on the greatness of God in His creation. In remembering the creation, we also reflect on God's awesome power to save and His ability to use whatever means He chooses to reveal His Holy Love to humanity.



**Lesson 1**

**Scripture Reading**

Read Luke 11:14-23

1. What is marvelous about Jesus' work in these verses? Why do some dismiss Jesus' work and others test Him (vv. 15-16)?
2. What do verses 20-22 tell you about Jesus' mission?
3. How does it help you trust Jesus to know that He came into the world to deliver you from the dominion of sin and Satan?

## It Came Upon the Midnight Clear

*Text by Edmund H. Sears, music by Richard S. Willis, PD*

It came upon the midnight clear,  
That glorious song of old,  
From angels bending near the earth,  
To touch their harps of gold;  
“Peace on the earth, good will to men,  
From heaven’s all gracious King.”  
The world in solemn stillness lay  
To hear the angels sing.

Still thru the cloven skies they come  
With peaceful wings unfurled,  
And still their heav’nly music floats  
O’er all the weary world:  
Above its sad and lowly plains  
They bend on hov’ring wing,  
And ever o’er its Babel sounds  
The blessed angels sing.

And ye, beneath life’s crushing load,  
Whose forms are bending low,  
Who toil along the climbing way  
With painful steps and slow.  
Look now! for glad and golden hours  
Come swiftly on the wing.  
O rest beside the weary road,  
And hear the angels sing!

For lo! the days are hastening on,  
By prophet, seen of old,  
When with the ever circling years  
Shall come the time foretold;  
When the new heav’n and earth shall own  
The Prince of Peace their King,  
And the whole world give back the song  
Which now the angels sing.

## Prayer

Praise God for creating you and all things for His own glory.

Adore God for His faithfulness in sending Christ to extend His gracious rule.

Who do you know that needs the powerful deliverance of Christ (it may be you)? Ask God to give them hope and save them through Christ's work.

## Lesson 2

### Scripture Reading

Read Luke 1:1-25

1. What had Zechariah and Elizabeth been waiting for? How does it feel to wait for something?
2. What do verses 12-17 tell us about John the Baptist's mission? Why was his mission important to God's plan of redemption?
3. How does Gabriel's response to Zechariah (vv. 19-20) help encourage your faith in God?

## Song

*It Came Upon the Midnight Clear*

## Catechism

Q. What do we pray for in the second petition?

A. In the second petition, (which is, *Your kingdom come*,) we pray, that Satan's kingdom may be destroyed; and that the kingdom of grace may be advanced, ourselves and others brought into it, and kept in it; and that the kingdom of glory may be hastened.

## Prayer

Adore God for His constant care and faithfulness to His covenant.

Who do you know that is living in a hopeless situation (it may be you)? Ask God to give them hope.

## **Lesson 3**

### **Scripture Reading**

Read Read Isaiah 42:5-9

1. What do these verses say makes God great? What makes Him good?
2. Why is it important for God to be *both* great and good?
3. How do these verses remind you of Jesus?

### **Song**

*It Came Upon the Midnight Clear*

### **Prayer**

Praise God that He is great and good.

How do you love and trust other things more than God? Confess this to God, asking Him to forgive you in Christ.

Give thanks to Jesus for “making all things new” through His birth, life, death, and resurrection.

## **Lesson 4**

### **Scripture Reading**

Read Colossians 1:11-20

1. What two amazing things does God do by/through Jesus?
2. What does it mean that God has “delivered you from the domain of darkness and transferred you to the kingdom of His beloved Son”?
3. What do you think it means that “all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell” in Jesus?

### **Song**

*It Came Upon the Midnight Clear*

### **Prayer**

Give thanks to God—Father, Son and Holy Spirit—for creating and reconciling all things.

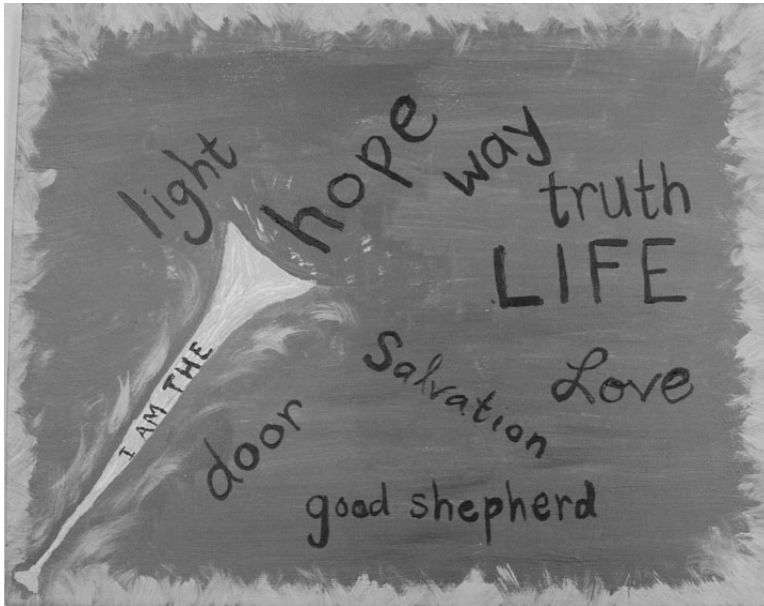
Ask God to help you display (show by your actions) and declare (talk about) the glory of God in Christ. Pray that you would live as one who has been given citizenship in His kingdom.

## In Preparation for December 10

### Week Two: December 4 - 10

#### **Advent Theme: Promise**

*For yours is the kingdom of God.* Poverty is everywhere; hunger, loss, fear and childlessness are not just the stuff of a few unfortunate people. The story of Christmas, really the story of the whole Bible, invites us to embrace our own hopeless poverty, like Abraham and Sarah – too old for a promised son – and to believe that the Kingdom belongs to those who know they don't belong. On the second Sunday of Advent, we light a candle to remember the promise of God to make a people for himself through a special Son. Barren old women, murderers, thieves and outcasts, the lost and the lonely, the gluttons and the greedy, these are invited to bow before the baby King and rejoice.



#### **Lesson 1**

##### **Scripture Reading**

Read Luke 6:20-23; 13:18-30

1. How is the Kingdom of God different from the kingdoms of this world?
2. How do Jesus' illustrations of the kingdom of God encourage you (13:18-21)?
3. How does Jesus say we are to enter the kingdom of God?

## Song

### God With Us

*By Jason Ingram and Leslie Jordan*

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Oh You've come to bring peace to be Love

To be nearer to us

You've come to bring life to be Light

To shine brighter in us

Oh Emmanuel God with us

*Our Deliverer You are Savior*

*In Your presence we find our strength*

*Over everything our Redemption*

*God with us*

*You are God with us*

Oh You've come to be Hope to this world

For Your honor and name

And You've come to take sin to bear shame

And to conquer the grave

Oh Emmanuel God with us

*Our Deliverer You are Savior...*

You are here You are holy

We are standing in Your glory (Lord) (repeat 3x)

*Our Deliverer You are Savior...*

## Craft

Cut out and decorate the trumpet ornament. (Found at the end of the devotional.)

## Prayer

Adore God for making and keeping promises to us.

Ask God to help you trust Him since He is faithful in His grace.

## Lesson 2

### Scripture Reading

Read Genesis 15:1, 4b-5

1. What does God promise to Abram?
2. How does Abram respond to God's promises?
3. The Bible says that we are children of Abraham by faith in Christ. How do these promises encourage you?

## **Song**

*God With Us*

## **Catechism**

Q. What do we pray for in the third petition?

A. In the third petition, (which is, *Your will be done on earth, as it is in heaven,*) we pray, that God, by His grace, would make us able and willing to know, obey and submit to His will in all things, as the angels do in heaven.

## **Prayer**

Praise God for making us heirs of His blessings by faith in Christ.

What makes you afraid? Ask God to give you courage and peace by knowing that He is your heavenly Father.

## **Lesson 3**

### **Scripture Reading**

Read Galatians 4:4-7

1. Why did God send His Son into the world?
2. What does it mean for you to be adopted into God's family?

## **Song**

*God With Us*

## **Prayer**

Give thanks to God for working to save you through Christ.

Ask the Holy Spirit to help you love and trust God more than anyone or anything else.

## **Lesson 4**

### **Scripture Reading**

Read Luke 2:25-32

1. What did Simeon recognize about Jesus?
2. How does Jesus bring us "light" and "glory" (v. 32)?

## **Song**

*God With Us*

## **Prayer**

Praise God for the grace and truth that He brought us in Christ.

Give thanks to Jesus for bringing us full salvation from sin, death and hell.



In Preparation for December 17  
Week Three: December 11 - 17

**Advent Theme: Law**

*The kingdom of God is in the midst of you.* Those in Bethlehem and beyond failed to note the significance of His arrival – His advent, of the star in the east or the strange clamor of the shepherds that night – wandering and rejoicing through the streets. One who did take note wanted to kill Him. Even so, God has given us clear instruction on how we ought to live and wait for His great day. On the third Sunday of Advent, we light a candle to honor the law of God. In the law, the Father shows us the beauty of His Kingdom in our midst – His heart of righteousness and His holy authority to rule. The Word made flesh, God’s law wrapped in swaddling clothes and lying in a manger, comes that we too might live and pray “Thy Kingdom come; thy will be done.”



**Lesson 1**

**Scripture Reading**

Read Luke 17:20-37

1. In what sense has God’s kingdom already arrived? In what sense has it not yet fully arrived?
2. How will we know when the kingdom of God has fully arrived?
3. How are we to get prepared for its full arrival?

**Craft**

Cut out and decorate the lamb ornament. (Found at the end of the devotional.)

## Song

### Prepare Him Room

By Rebecca Elliott and Dave Fournier | ©2014 Sovereign Grace Praise (BMI). Sovereign Grace Music, a division of Sovereign Grace Ministries.  
Admin by Integrity Music, used by permission, CCLI# 1693489

O behold, the mystery now unfolds  
See the star shine on the virgin foretold  
Angels sing and light up the sky  
Hope rings out in a newborn's cry  
Swing wide, you ancient gates for Christ is born today

*Prepare Him room*

*Prepare Him room*

*Let the King of Glory enter in*

God with us, the promise has come to be  
This, the one the prophets were longing to see  
In the darkness a blazing light  
to the hungry the words of life  
His kingdom now is near for those with ears to hear

*Prepare Him room (2x)*

Oh, our hearts, as busy as Bethlehem  
Hear Him knock, don't say there's no room in the inn  
Through the cradle, cross and grave  
See the love of God displayed  
Now He's risen and He reigns  
Praise the Name above all names

*Prepare him room (2x)*

*Let the King of Glory enter in*

## Catechism

Q. What do we pray for in the fourth petition?

A. In the fourth petition, which is, (*Give us this day our daily bread.*) we pray, that of God's free gift we may receive a competent portion of the good things of this life, and enjoy His blessings with them.

## Prayer

Adore God—Father, Son and Holy Spirit—as the only living and true God.

How have you failed to trust God? Ask Him to forgive you and remind you that “nothing will be impossible with God” (v. 37).

## **Lesson 2**

### **Scripture Reading**

Read Deuteronomy 5:1-7

1. What does God command His people not to do? What does this mean?
2. How can we today have other gods before Him?

### **Song**

*Prepare Him Room*

### **Prayer**

Praise God for calling us to have a special relationship with Him.

Ask God to help you understand and obey His Word.

## **Lesson 3**

### **Scripture Reading**

Read John 1:12-14, 16-17

1. How do we become children of God?
2. Who does this passage say Jesus is? What is glorious to you about the “Word made flesh”?

### **Song**

*Prepare Him Room*

### **Prayer**

Give thanks to Jesus for coming to bring us hope and peace through His life, death and resurrection.

## **Lesson 4**

### **Scripture Reading**

Read Luke 2:1-7

1. Caesar Augustus, like Pharaoh many years before him, ruled over God’s people when Jesus was born. How would Jesus’ birth during this time have brought hope to God’s people?
2. What does it say about Jesus that He was laid in a manger (feeding trough)?

### **Song**

*Prepare Him Room*

### **Prayer**

Praise God that He is able to work in the darkest of situations.

Give thanks to Jesus for humbling Himself for us.

## In Preparation for December 24

### Week Four: December 18 - 24

#### **Advent Theme: Kingdom**

*Your redemption is drawing near.* The King is coming! Be ready; forsake all other loyalties; lay down every other plan and desire and wait with great expectation. How can we, 21<sup>st</sup> century people, live in anticipation of the day that will come with delight for all who belong to the King and with utter dread for those who fail to look for His coming? Except for the shepherds, the streets of Bethlehem were empty that night. On the last Sunday of Advent, we hail the King and pledge allegiance to His Kingdom. The King's invasion started with the cry of a baby in a manger. He musters an army of those who know they cannot fight without Him, whose banner of loyalty is the white flag of surrender and repentance. With this light, we burn with one desire: come Lord Jesus!



#### **Lesson 1**

##### **Scripture Reading**

Read Luke 21:20-36

1. How is it good news that “vengeance belongs to the Lord”?
2. What does it look like to “stay awake at all times” (17:36)?

##### **Craft**

Cut out and decorate the crown ornament. (Found at the end of the devotional.)

## Song

### A Baby Will Come

*by Bill Wolf 2010 Broadman Press, used by permission, CCLI# 1693489*

The kings of this world have torn it apart  
But we can take heart a baby will come  
To the hungry and meek to those who grieve  
To the broken, in need, a baby will come  
We have known pain we've felt death's sting  
God, help us believe this baby will come  
The angel appeared, said do not fear  
For peace is here, a baby has come  
The advent of life, let hope arise  
We've our Savior and Christ, the baby has come  
We've waited so long, God for your mighty arm  
May our doubts ever calm, for the baby has come  
The proud will be low, the humble will know  
They're valued and loved, for the baby has come  
Cause the kings of this world won't have the last word  
That, God, is yours, for the baby has come

## Prayer

Praise God for being all-powerful. There is nothing that He can't do—He can do all His holy will!  
Give thanks to Jesus, the Lamb of God, for giving His life for us. Praise Him for all His benefits  
(see Luke 1:77-79).

## Lesson 2

### Scripture Reading

Read Psalm 89:1-5

1. Whose throne will God establish for all generations?
2. How does this Psalm help you understand who Jesus is?

## Song

*A Baby Will Come*

## **Catechism**

Q. What do we pray for in the fifth petition?

A. In the fifth petition, (which is, *And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors*,) we pray, that God, for Christ's sake, would freely pardon all our sins; which we are the rather encouraged to ask, because by His grace we are enabled from the heart to forgive others.

## **Prayer**

Honor Jesus as the one true and eternal King. Give thanks to Him for ruling over everything and calling you to belong to Him.

## **Lesson 3**

### **Scripture Reading**

Read 2 Thessalonians 1:5-12

1. How does Paul describe the Second Coming of Christ in these verses?
2. Why do you look forward to Christ's return?

## **Song**

*A Baby Will Come*

## **Prayer**

Praise God for His rule over all things.

Give thanks to Jesus for His power to conquer all His and our enemies.

Ask God to prepare you for Christ's return.

## **Lesson 4**

### **Scripture Reading**

Read Luke 2:8-20

1. What is the "good news" that the angel brought to the shepherds?
2. What was to be the sign that the angel was telling the truth?

## **Song**

*A Baby Will Come*

## **Prayer**

Give thanks to God for giving us the gift of His Word. Praise Him for making Himself known to us. Ask the Holy Spirit to help you share the "good news" with others.

## Christmas Day: December 25

### **Advent Theme: Consummation**

*For my eyes have seen your salvation.* As those who have been called to Jesus, we rejoice in the privilege and blessing of life in Him and in His Kingdom. Like those who rejoiced to see the day of His first coming, let us stand waiting and watching, praying and living as those whose one true hope is the return of our Savior. Another Advent season comes to a close, and the Christ Candle remains lit to remind us that Jesus is the Light of the World and the One to whom we owe our allegiance and praise for His work to save. He is Lord of Creation, the Son of the Promise who fulfills the Law and reigns on his Father's throne and will one day return to gather His people to Himself and to take them to His blessed kingdom forever.



### **Lesson for Christmas Day**

#### **Scripture Reading**

Read Luke 2:39-52

1. Why do you think Scripture tells us about Jesus in Jerusalem at twelve years old?
2. What does it mean that “Jesus increased in wisdom and stature and in favor with God and man” (v. 52)?

#### **Catechism**

Q. What do we pray for in the sixth petition?

A. In the sixth petition, (which is, *And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil,*) we pray, that God would either keep us from being tempted to sin, or support and deliver us when we are tempted.

Q. What does the conclusion of the Lord's Prayer teach us?

A. The conclusion of the Lord's Prayer, (which is, *For yours is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.*) teaches us to take our encouragement in prayer from God only, and in our prayers to praise Him, ascribing kingdom, power and glory to Him. And, in testimony of our desire, and assurance to be heard, we say, Amen.

## Song

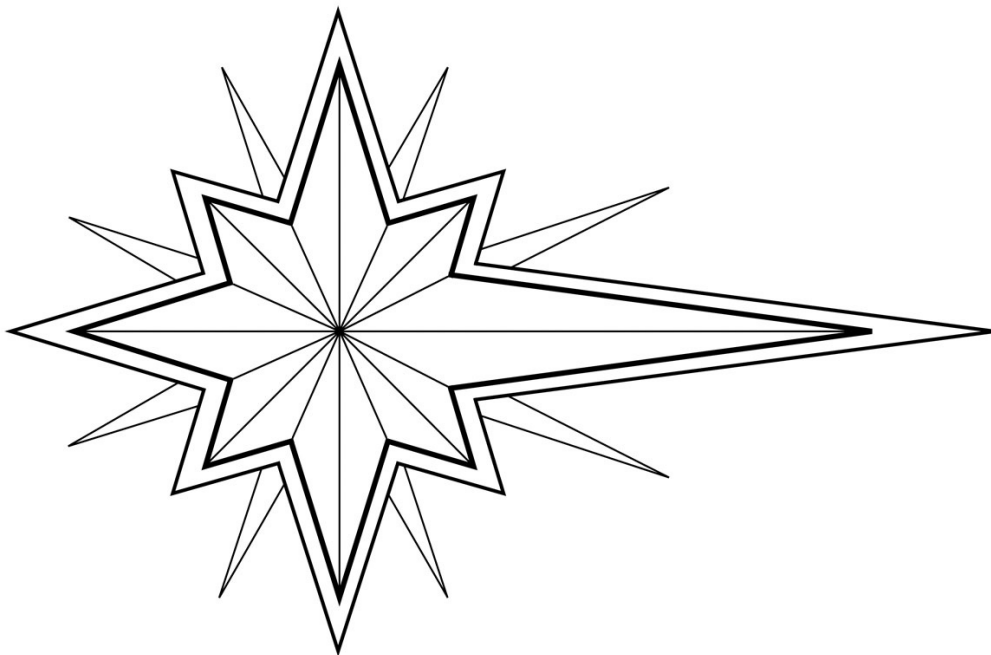
### O Come All Ye Faithful

*By C. Frederick Oakeley and John Francis Wade | © Words: Public Domain, Music: Public Domain | Used by permission, CCLI License # 1693489*

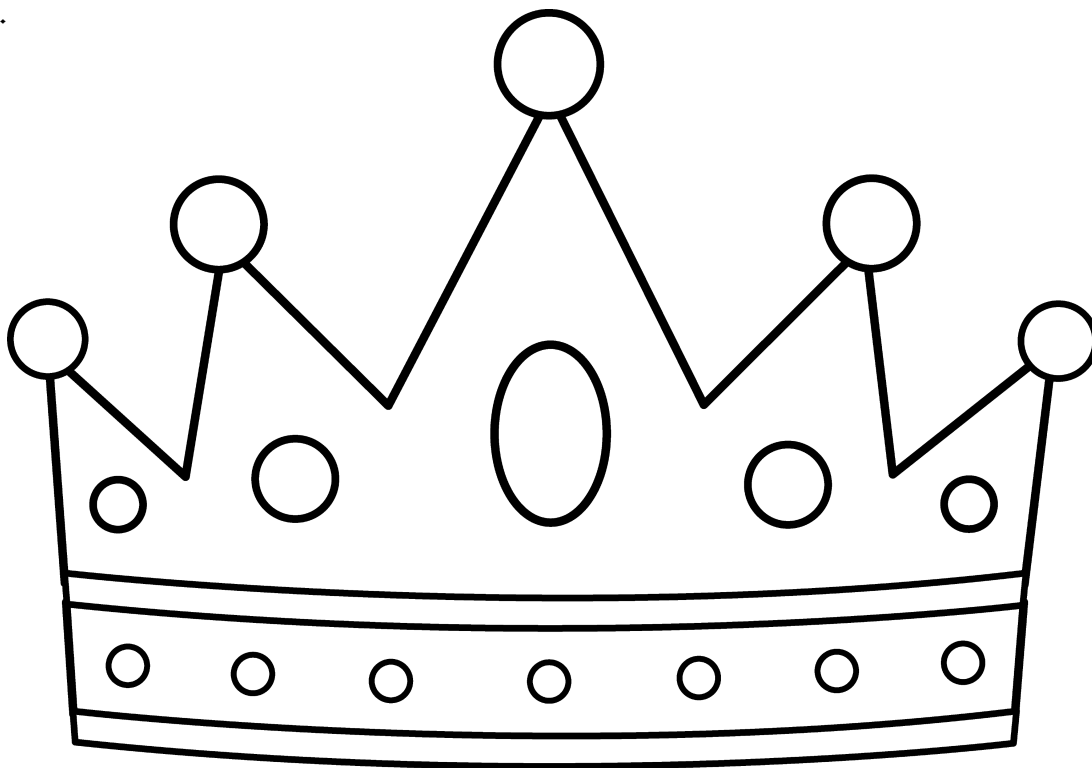
O come all ye faithful  
Joyful and triumphant  
O come ye O come ye to Bethlehem  
Come and behold Him  
Born the King of angels  
  
O come let us adore Him  
O come let us adore Him  
O come let us adore Him  
Christ the Lord  
  
Sing choirs of angels  
Sing in exultation  
O sing all ye bright  
Hosts of heav'n above  
Glory to God  
All glory in the highest  
O come let us adore Him...  
  
Yea Lord we greet Thee  
Born this happy morning  
Jesus to Thee be all glory giv'n  
Word of the Father  
Now in flesh appearing  
O come let us adore Him...



1.

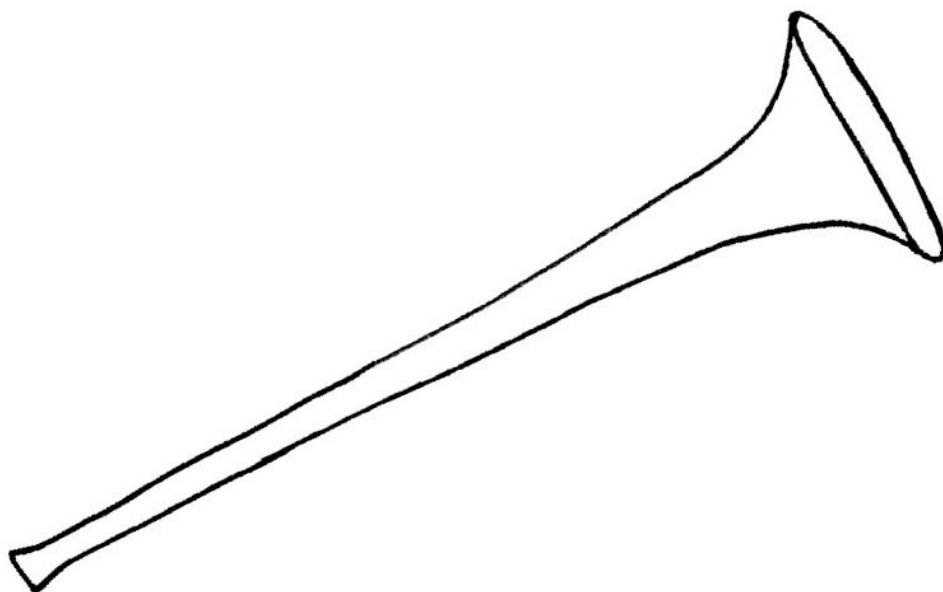


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