

# The Journey Journal



January 2024 Edition



## A Few Heartwarming Stories to Warm the Winter Heart

**The Laundromat.** All throughout my childhood there was a homeless man who slept in our local laundromat. Every holiday my mom would cook a big spread and we would take him a heaping plate and I insisted on hugging him. It is one of my favorite memories, and probably one of the reasons I ended up in school for social work.

-From Buzzfeed.com.

**The Forgotten Present.** I was about 8 years old and it was a couple days after Christmas. My mother had found a present she had bought for me in her closet. Instead of just giving it to me and have that be that, she snuck out on our back deck and threw it on the roof. My parents called me out and showed me this gift, and my dad got a ladder and spotted me while I got it down. I still remember the butterflies thinking, "Wow he really came! Santa was up on this roof and this fell out of the sleigh!" The gift was a pink Barbie camera. I'll never forget that feeling.

-From Buzzfeed.com.

**Elephant Introduces Newborn to Keeper Who Raised Her.** They say an elephant never forgets.



Head Keeper Benjamin at Kenya's Sheldrick Wildlife Trust agrees. Benjamin raised an orphaned elephant for many years who was later successfully reintroduced back to the wild and they parted ways. However, on the day orphaned Sunyei gave birth she knew exactly where to head: the human who had raised her. Sunyei went back to the Wildlife Trust and introduced her new daughter Siku to Keeper Benjamin.

-From Newsweek.com.

## Some Special Dates in January

**January 6: Feast of Epiphany:** Today is the Feast of the Epiphany, also called Three Kings Day. Caspar, Melchior, and Balthasar were the three kings, also called the Three Wise Men, from the Orient. The three wise men were merchants who followed the star over Bethlehem when Christ was born. And they brought the Christ child gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh.

**January 16: Martin Luther King Day:** The day commemorates the life and work of Dr. King, who was a Baptist minister and prominent leader in the American civil rights movement. People are encouraged to use the day to reflect on the principles of racial equality and nonviolent social change espoused by Dr. King.

**January 22: Chinese New Year:** The observance, designed to honor ancestors and foster family reunions, allows for reflection on the past year, and ushers in good fortune for the upcoming year. The traditional festivities include cleaning the house to drive out old energies, exchange of gifts, feasting on special meals, the use of red decorations and attire for luck, and the display of colorful fireworks and parades showcasing the well-known dragon and lion dances.

# Pray With Us



## 2024 – The Year of Unexpected Opportunities!

In **2Kings 5:1-15**, It tells of a life changing event in the life of an army commander named Naaman. He was a spectacular commander who directed amazing victories for the king of Aram. However, Naaman had leprosy. Through **God** directed events, Naaman was given an opportunity to be healed. Little did he know that physical healing would not be his greatest gift. This opportunity involved traveling to another kingdom and meeting the prophet Elisha whom his lowly slave girl had told him could heal him.

Naaman, prepared to undertake this journey of hope and carried with him great treasures to reward Elisha for his help. When he arrived at the home of the prophet, he expected Elisha to come out and say great words, raise his hands, and call out to his god. None of this happened! First, Elisha sent a lowly servant to speak to him. Second, there was no great ceremony, raising of hands or speaking of great words. Third, and most humiliating, the servant told him to go wash seven times in the dirtiest river in the country, the Jordan river.

Naaman was appalled because the prophet's actions did not meet *his* expectations. Elisha did not come out to meet him, he said no great words over his great disease. Naaman went away in anger and disappointment. Finally, one of his officers convinced him to do as he told, and he humbly washed in the Jordan seven times and *was healed*! You see, God does not need big words, big movements or big anything. God was not so much about healing Naaman's body as He was healing his soul. Our Father uses the most unexpected tools and unlikely people to bring healing to our heart and soul.

As we come to the end of 2023 and journey into 2024, are there unanswered expectations in your life? Are you looking for a big, complicated response? The answer is there, but overlooked because it does not meet *your* requirements. In 2024 we may be called to **bring** the answer for someone else, like the little slave girl brought to Naaman. We may also be called to redirect someone's broken perspective like Naaman's officer did for him. Will we answer the call? Will we make ourselves available for those with unseen leprosy of the heart and soul?

In the end Naaman acknowledged "There is no other God in all the world except in Israel!" Not only was healing physical, but **more importantly**, he received spiritual healing for his heart and soul.

We are called at "**God appointed**" times to be an "Elisha" **and** to also be Elisha's servant, the unlikely one sent with the answer. Let us thank God for opportunities to learn lessons from both needing hope and being a part of the answer of hope for those in our lives and sphere of influence in 2024!

*Pastor Marcia Stanford*

# Hats Off to Our Helper!



Hats off to **Cheri Hall**, our *December Employee of the Month*. We continue to be blessed to have caring, hardworking nurses, massage therapist, and aides that care for our patients on a regular basis. Thank you, **Cheri** for all that you do!



## Have You Tried Aroma Therapy to Relax?

*Use lavender essential oil to help you relax; it is a natural sedative and nervine.*

- Author Stephanie Tourles in *50 Ways to Pamper Yourself* says:



"When I'm about to give a speech and herbal demonstration to a group of people, I still, to this day, get quite nervous. To regain my confident and calm demeanor, I place a few drops of pure lavender essential oil onto a soft issue or small handkerchief and inhale deeply of the flora aroma about five times just prior to my presentation. I'm serene withing minutes."



### Word Scramble Answers

- |               |              |
|---------------|--------------|
| 1. Snow       | 5. Shovel    |
| 2. Ice        | 6. Gloves    |
| 3. Snowflakes | 7. Hat       |
| 4. Boots      | 8. Cocoa     |
|               | 9. Cold      |
|               | 10. Freezing |

# Some Winter Weather Safety Tips

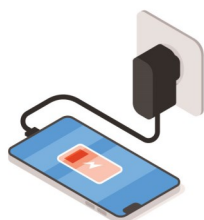
**As the cold weather continues and we face the possibility of snowy times ahead, here are a few things to remember to stay safe and be prepared.**



- ♦ **Stay up to date on weather reports.** It's always good to know if snow, cold or freezing weather is ahead.
- ♦ **Dress in layers when going outdoors.** Don't forget about your extremities. Wear a hat, gloves, warm socks and boots.
- ♦ **Get someone to keep sidewalks and walkways clear and bring in paper or mail.** Ask a neighbor, friend or relative to help out or hire someone to assist you. Don't try to shovel yourself.

That can be dangerous to your heart.

- ♦ **Be mindful of space heaters and where to place them.** Never use an extension cord or power strip since they can overheat and cause a fire. Always plug a space heater directly into the wall. Never go to sleep with a space heater left on.



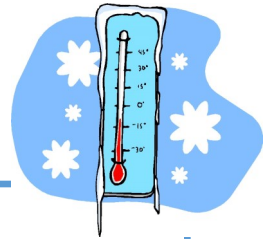
- ♦ **Stay in touch.** Call just to chat for a few minutes. Winter storms can be very isolating. It's always good to hear from family, friends or neighbors when housebound because of inclement weather.

- ♦ **Ensure that you have enough medications to get you through at least 7 days.** Plan ahead and keep your prescriptions filled, even if the weather is fine.

- ♦ **Charge your cell phone, if you have one.** A fully-charged cell phone is advisable as land-lines may be down interrupting service.
- ♦ **Make sure you have plenty of food and water on hand.** It's also a good idea to keep food on hand that doesn't require cooking in case the electricity goes out. Stay cozy with a warm blanket, TV, a book or music and wait out the weather or storm.



# Unscramble These Winter Weather Words



1. SNWO \_\_\_\_\_

6. EOLSGV \_\_\_\_\_

2. EIC \_\_\_\_\_

7. THA \_\_\_\_\_

3. NKSOFWESAL \_\_\_\_\_

8. ACOCO \_\_\_\_\_

4. SOOTB \_\_\_\_\_

9. OLCD \_\_\_\_\_

5. LHVEOS \_\_\_\_\_

10. ZFGEIERN \_\_\_\_\_



Spot the 9  
differences between  
these two pictures.



# January Coloring Page

