Love in Action:

This week, practice love that protects your or someone elses well-being - whether that's reaching out for support, offering help within your capacity, or recognizing when a situation needs more resources than you can provide alone.

Learning Love Each Day

Sunday: Consider	Monday: Ask Yourself	Tuesday: Notice Something
What does loving yourself mean to you?	When I show love for others, do I respect their boundaries and need for safety?	Notice love that includes healthy boundaries.

Wednesday: Practice this Thought
"Strive to show love with wisdom."

A Tiny Journal For The Week:

Find more Advent resources at www.HopeForNiagara.org

One Week at a Time: A Coloring & Reflection Guide For Advent

Community Missions of Niagara Frontier, Inc.

Advent Week 4
(Dec 21 – Dec 24)

This weekly Advent resource from Community Missions is a companion for your journey toward Christmas. Each week includes a short Bible passage, a reflection, simple daily practices, and a coloring page—all free to use and share. Visit HopeForNiagara.org to download the 11x17 single-page or 8.5x11 three-page version, plus other helpful Advent resources. ***Share your finished coloring page at Facebook.com/cminiagara !***

Advent Week 4: Love

Text for the Week: Matthew 1:18-25

Now the birth of Jesus the Messiah took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been engaged to Joseph, but before they lived together, she was found to be pregnant from the Holy Spirit. Her husband Joseph, being a righteous man and unwilling to expose her to public disgrace, planned to divorce her quietly. But just when he had resolved to do this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, "Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife, for the child conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. She will bear a son, and you are to name him Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins." All this took place to fulfill what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet:

"Look, the virgin shall become pregnant and give birth to a son, and they shall name him Emmanuel,"

which means, "God is with us." When Joseph awoke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him; he took her as his wife but had no marital relations with her until she had given birth to a son, and he named him Jesus.

A Summary of the Text:
Joseph discovers Mary is pregnant and finds himself in an impossible situation. He could have acted in anger, publicly humiliating and even physically harming Mary - society back then would have allowed it. But that wasn't his first thought! Instead, he chose to end the relationship quietly, protecting Mary from shame and harm. Most people would have thought this was too timid, but Joseph chose safety over vengeance. Then an angel urged him toward an even harder path - providing protection for Mary and her child while accepting a difficult role himself. Joseph shows us that love seeks the safest, most life-giving path for everyone involved, even when it's hard.

Reflection:
Love isn't about sacrificing your safety or ignoring your needs. Joseph's love was thoughtful - he didn't react in anger but found a path protecting everyone involved. Real love includes boundaries. It means knowing when to step back, when to step forward, and especially when to ask for help. Love might look like calling a crisis line for someone in danger. It might mean taking care of yourself so you can show up tomorrow. It might mean leaving a situation that harms you - that's love for yourself, and it matters. Joseph reminds us: love requires wisdom, not just sacrifice. The strongest love knows when to stay, when to go, and when to get help.

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Advent Week 4 (Dec 20 – Dec 24)

Share your finished coloring page at Facebook.com/cminiagara !

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