

# VINTAGE ADVENTURE

④ HOME

**Our Helper God**



**Caraway**

Spiritually Resourcing the Older Person

*Dear Vintage Adventure @ Home friends*

*Happy New Year! As we begin to contemplate 2025 I wonder how you are feeling? I always have rather mixed feelings at the start of yet another year – time seems to fly by so exceedingly quickly, and even quicker as we get older, doesn't it? Some of us may be quite glad that we have 2024 behind us, if it has been a tough year. But perhaps even if life has been difficult, we can still look back and ponder those moments when we've experienced God's love in action, perhaps through the kindness of a neighbour, or even someone unknown to us.*



*Do **you** have a story of God's provision which you could share with us? If so, do let us know: email or if you prefer, ring the number on the back cover – it would be wonderful to be able to encourage each other as the New Year gets underway! And somehow just expressing thankfulness for the small things of life can be a means of lifting our spirits on darker days.*

*This year we are looking at some of our favourite hymns: so, once again, if you have a hymn which is special to you, contact us and we will try and feature it in one of our issues.*

*As you know, our charity Caraway, is based in Southampton and so for our first hymn we are featuring Isaac Watts' 'O God, our Help in Ages past, our Hope for years to come ....' Isaac was born in Southampton, and you can read more about the hymn and his life. This well known hymn reminds us that God is faithful throughout the generations, and although we are living in difficult times, with unrest and conflict all around, we still have the hope and reassurance of Jesus, Whose birth we have been celebrating at Christmas.*

*We do pray that you enjoy spending time with the contents of this pack, so, make yourself a cuppa, and have a good read. God might speak to you through part of the worship, or the reflections and poems, but equally He is glad when you are enjoying doing the puzzles or colouring!*

*And don't forget to let us have your stories and hymns – this is your magazine and contributions from our readers are always welcome!*

*A blessed 2025!*

*Cynthia and your Vintage Adventure at Home friends.*

# WORSHIP



## Opening thoughts

A new year. 2025

How does that make you feel? Let's start with the words of a hymn.



## Hymn

*(By Isaac Watts, the great Southampton hymn writer)*

O God, our help in ages past,  
Our hope for years to come,  
Our shelter from the stormy blast  
And our eternal home.

Under the shadow of Thy throne  
Thy saints have dwelt secure,  
Sufficient is Thine arm alone  
And our defence is sure.

Before the hills in order stood  
Or earth received her frame,  
From everlasting Thou art God  
To endless years the same.

A thousand ages in Thy sight  
Are like an evening gone,  
Short as the watch that ends the night  
Before the rising sun.

Time, like an ever rolling stream,  
Bears all its sons away.  
They fly forgotten, as a dream  
Dies at the opening day.

O God, our help in ages past,  
Our hope for years to come,  
Be Thou our guard while life shall last  
And our eternal home.

## Prayer



Heavenly Father, we thank You for bringing us to the beginning of a new year. We look back across the year just gone. It has both sad and happy events in it. We know that You care about both.

Sometimes we have done the right thing and sometimes we have not.

Help us to be positive in our words and actions, to affirm the good in others and to stand up against things that are wrong. As we face this new year we bring ourselves to You, knowing that You love us. We pray for the people we love.... Members of our families....., our friends....., people we see everyday (perhaps helping us or maybe passing our windows). We know that this year will bring its own challenges. Help us to face them with courage and fortitude. And help us to rejoice in the happy moments... A kind word spoken, a smile, the sight of a flower or a cloud, a tasty meal. We pray that 2025 may indeed be a blessed year.

You God have been our help in the past, we trust You to be our help in the future. Amen.



## Some Bible verses

*The eternal God is your refuge  
and underneath are the everlasting arms. (Deuteronomy 33:27)*

*Truly the Lord has borne our sufferings and carried our sorrows.  
(Isaiah 53:4)*

*Peace I leave with you, My own peace I give you, do not let your heart be  
troubled or afraid. (John 14:27)*

*My grace is sufficient for you, for My power is made perfect in weakness.  
(2 Corinthians 12:9)*



## Reflection



I wonder if you, like many people, struggle with your memory? Perhaps, like me, you use a diary so that you know what day it is or if you have an important appointment. A diary is a helpful aid.

Our Bible verses are a helpful aid to remind us of God's goodness. Perhaps you have other favourite ones. Can you think of one now? If you have a diary you may like to jot it down, or perhaps say it in your head, or out loud.

If you make New Year's resolutions, you may like to resolve to say thank you to God for something that has happened in the day as you go to bed. You may like to write it down so that you can remember what it was the next day.

It doesn't matter if the same thing gets repeated from day to day ... after all God's love goes on repeating day after day.

## Prayer



( Jesus taught us this one and you probably know it by heart)

Our Father, Who art in heaven,  
Hallowed be Thy name. Thy kingdom come.  
Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.  
Give us this day our daily bread.

Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive them that trespass against us.  
Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.  
For Thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory  
For ever and ever.  
Amen.

## Blessing

May our everlasting God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit,  
remind you of His goodness to you in the past,  
accompany you in the present  
and inspire you for the future. Amen.

# Reflection



Have you ever wondered about the background to some of our favourite hymns? *O God our Help in ages past* (mentioned in our Worship) is based on parts of Psalm 90. The Psalms are Hebrew poetry, using picture language and devices such as similes. Thought to be the first psalm written, this is not by David but Moses.

Significantly, both hymn and psalm **start with God**. The Hebrew used is **Adonai, Sovereign Lord**, which describes God's majesty. This is not any god but the One True God Who has been faithful over generations.

Moses begins with praise of God, reminding Him of the way in which He had been a refuge for the Israelites from their beginnings with Abraham to the present. *'You have been our dwelling place for generations'* – the Hebrew means refuge and shelter. As wandering nomads moving with huge flocks, the Israelites were in constant need of protection.



Isaac Watts too looks back to generations before and forward to whatever is to come. With the words, *'O God our Help in ages past, our Hope for years to come,'* he reminds us that our greatest help is always from God almighty, in Whom we can place complete trust for the unknown future of 2025.

Using imagery from Moses' psalm Watts describes God as somewhere to hide, a place of protection where we can rest secure. Ultimately, whatever it may feel like, God IS in complete control.

Why can we have such confidence?

*'Before the mountains were brought forth,*



*Or ever You had formed the earth and the world, Even from everlasting to everlasting, You are God.*’ The mountains Moses spotted on his journey reminded him of the eternal, unchangeable nature of God. So Watts writes, *‘From everlasting Thou art God, to endless years the same.’*

What a relief it is that our God is not fickle and unpredictable but totally dependable – as we saw in our 2024 reflections on Creation, before anything existed, God was. We can rely on Him for whatever the new year brings.

In contrast, we humans are transitory beings, as both psalm and hymn point out. Looking around we see that even the richest and most important in human terms, are not exempt from sickness and death. We have seen examples of our frailty even in our own Royal Family in 2024.

The psalm continues: *‘For a thousand years in Your sight are like yesterday when it is past, and like a watch in the night. You carry them away like a flood; they are like a sleep.’* Hebrew poetry often repeats the same idea using different words, so Moses goes on: *‘In the morning they are like grass which grows up: In the morning it flourishes and grows up; In the evening it is cut down and withers.’*

We live for a short time and then die, and all our achievements fade in the collective memory just as we forget the details of our dreams as we awake. *‘Time, like an ever-rolling stream, bears all its sons away; they fly, forgotten, as a dream dies at the opening day.’*



Indeed, God’s perception of time and its passing is quite unlike ours: *‘a thousand ages in Thy sight are like an evening gone.’* Using an illustration from the psalm, Watts refers to soldiers on guard on the city walls, longing for the

coming of the new day. The hours on duty drag and seem endless, but in fact are very few and soon pass. Our lives are similarly as fleeting.

Moses ends the psalm by asking God to grant us the wisdom to grasp the shortness of life: *'So teach us to number our days, that we may gain a heart of wisdom.'*

None of us knows what's going to happen, neither to our nation and wider world, nor to ourselves, family and friends. Thus the final verse of Watts' hymn picks up the theme from his opening lines, of God as our great Helper and Saviour. In the form of a prayer that God might continue to bless us.

*'... be Thou our Guide while troubles last, and our eternal Home'*, it reiterates the plea to turn to God for the help we so urgently need. Will we take up this challenge in 2025?

*O God, our help in ages past,  
Our hope for years to come,*



## Isaac Watts



Isaac Watts was the eldest of nine children born to a respected non-conformist Southampton schoolmaster on 17 July 1674. He began to learn Latin at the age of four, as well as Greek and Hebrew, taught by Mr. Pinhorn, headmaster of King Edward VI Grammar School. He was so gifted – writing verses at the age of seven – that a Southampton doctor together with friends, offered to sponsor an Oxbridge education for ordination in the Church of England. Isaac declined, and at sixteen in 1690, entered the Dissenting Academy at Stoke Newington under Mr. Thomas Rowe, an independent Congregational minister. In 1698 Watts became assistant minister of the Independent Church, Berry Sreet, London, becoming pastor in 1702. The next six years were spent at Stoke Newington, as tutor to the son of an eminent Puritan, Sir John Hartopp. The theological and philosophical study required, became the foundation for his later numerous publications.

In 1705 his *Horae Lyricae*, a collection of hymns and poems, was published, many sung from manuscripts in Southampton Chapel. In 1712, he accepted an invitation to visit Sir Thomas Abney, at Abney Park, where he lived for 36 years until his death, preaching as often as his failing health permitted.

Isaac Watts was a prolific writer, publishing over 800 hymns typically sung after he had preached a particular sermon, and relating to the text he had been speaking about. His theological and philosophical fame was considerable, such that the University of Edinburgh bestowed on him the degree of Doctor of Divinity in 1728. For many years both the University of Oxford and schools used his major works on theology and logic as popular textbooks.

Isaac Watts died on 25 November 1748, and was buried at Bunhill Fields, a Puritan resting place in London, whereas Westminster Abbey has a memorial bust.



Visitors to Southampton can admire an imposing Victorian

statue of Watts in East Park, opposite the Southampton Art Gallery and explore the Isaac Watts Memorial United Reformed Church in Winchester Road, Southampton. In addition, the imposing Civic Centre tower clock with nine bells, as well as striking the hour on the largest bell weighing 58 cwt, chimes the tune of Watt's famous hymn at 8am, 12 noon and 4pm!





# Storm haven

You know me through and through  
and so I give myself to You.

You are the one safe place,  
the only haven from the storm –  
there is no other.

In You I hide,  
My Shelter and my Comforter.

Forgive the things  
which keep me from Your side;  
which hold me back,  
that I may enter in  
between the harbour walls  
to anchor deeply,  
rest untossed,  
and find Your peace at last.

Catherine Aldis 2002 Threads of Gold pg Kevin Mayhew

## Facing a New Year

Does the coming of 2025 daunt you? As we start a new year, there are just so many unknowns. The world around us is so very troubled, with wars and conflict seemingly almost everywhere. I find the words in the following poem resonate with me, even though referring to the period at the start of World War II.



### The Gate of the Year

It was Christmas, 1939 and Great Britain had been at war with Nazi Germany since September. In his Christmas broadcast, King George VI said words which could apply to us today towards the end of the first quarter of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

“.... Among all free peoples the love of peace is profound, for this alone gives security to the home. But true peace is in the hearts of men, and it is the tragedy of this time that there are powerful countries whose whole direction and policy are based on aggression and the suppression of all that we hold dear for humankind....”

Measuring his words carefully, King George VI spoke from the heart:

“A new year is at hand. We cannot tell what it will bring. If it brings peace, how thankful we shall all be. If it brings us continued struggles, we shall remain undaunted.”

Towards the end of his nine minute broadcast, the King added,

“I feel that we may all find a message of encouragement in the lines which, in my closing words, I would like to say to you.”



He then read a short extract from a poem given him by his 13 year old daughter, Princess Elizabeth. Written in 1908 by British poet Minnie Louise Haskins, its original title was 'God knows'.

*I said to the man who stood at the Gate of the Year,  
'Give me a light that I may tread safely into the unknown.'  
And he replied, 'Go out into the darkness,  
And put your hand into the Hand of God.  
That shall be better than light, and safer than a known way.'*



The King finished his address by saying, "May that Almighty hand guide and uphold us all."

A reminder that God **does** know what we are going to face and has promised to never fail nor forsake us, if we place our trust in Him.

Worth a try in 2025?

# This day in history - January

**January 1<sup>st</sup> 1863** The 'Emancipation Proclamation' is issued by Abraham Lincoln to free slaves in US confederate states.

**January 3<sup>rd</sup> 1892** J.R.R. Tolkien was born. He wrote The Hobbit in 1937 and The Lord of the Rings in 1954.



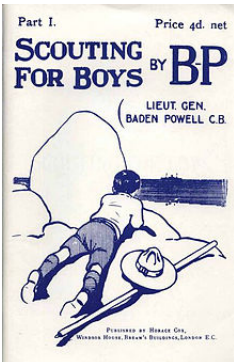
**January 5<sup>th</sup> 1896** Die Presse newspaper (Germany) publicly announces Wilhelm Röntgen's discovery of X-rays and their potential for new methods of medical diagnoses in a front-page article.



**January 9<sup>th</sup> 1969** First trial flight of Concorde supersonic jetliner in Bristol, England.

**January 10<sup>th</sup> 1863** London Underground opens. "The Tube" is the world's oldest underground railway.

**January 19<sup>th</sup> 1955** The board game 'Scrabble' makes its debut in Australia and the UK.



**January 24<sup>th</sup> 1908** Boy Scouts movement begins with the publication of the first instalment of Robert Baden-Powell's Scouting for Boys.

**January 28<sup>th</sup> 1807** The first public street lighting with gas takes place in Pall Mall, London.

**January 31<sup>st</sup> 1961** Ham the Chimp travels into outer space. The chimpanzee survived the US Mercury Program test flight with just a bruised nose.

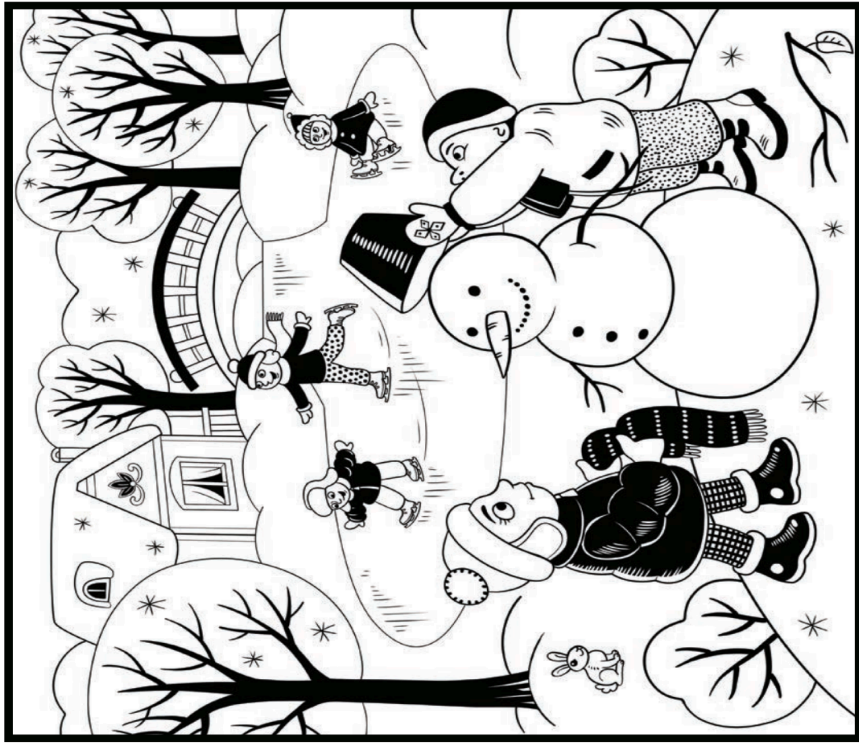
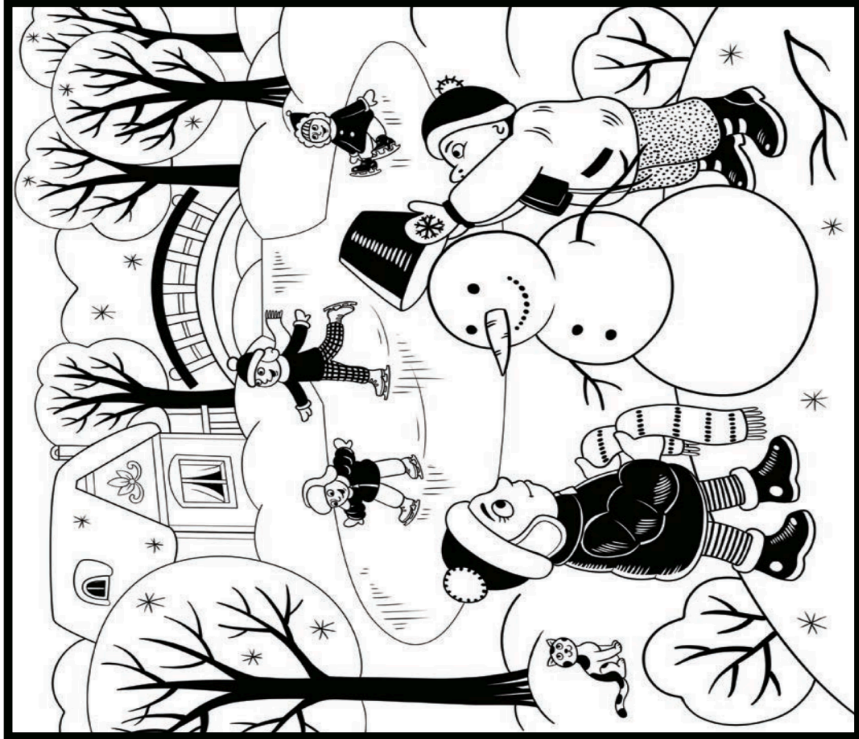
## All answers start with the letter J



1. Young Kangaroo
2. Semi precious stone popular in China
3. A tree with blue flowers and fern leaves
4. A religious order set up by Ignatius Loyola in 1540
5. A famous dish from New Orleans
6. Improvised music
7. Bring bad luck to
8. Mary's biblical husband
9. French word that means pretty
10. Another word for a trip
11. A French way to cut vegetables
12. A large rally of Scouts or Guides
13. A fast growing tropical Asian fruit tree
14. Another word for ceremony/commemoration
15. A large vein on the neck or throat
16. Discarded articles
17. A machine that automatically plays a selected musical recording
18. The liquid extracted from fruit



# Spot the Differences 12 to find!



## Beginnings



As we begin a new year see if you can solve the puzzle below.

1. Which letter can you add to the beginning of the word "ear" to make a period of 365 days? O M B Y
2. Which letter can you add to the beginning of the word "at" to get a word meaning "to consume"? O I R E
3. Which letter can you add to the beginning of the word "lip" to get a word meaning "to fall"? S E O R
4. Which letter can you add to the beginning of the word "rain" to get a form of transportation? N E A T
5. Which letter can you add to the beginning of the word "aster" to make a holiday? F L E K
6. Which letter can you add to the beginning of the word "ash" to get a word meaning "an itchy red spot on your skin"? I L A R
7. Which letter can you add to the beginning of the word "one" to mean "finish"? G B D I
8. Which letter can you add to the beginning of the word "maze" to mean "surprise"? H A L E
9. Which letter can you add to the beginning of the word "east" to get something that "helps bread to rise"? T Y E S
10. What word can you spell by using the answers, in order, of the first nine questions?

# Word Search



## NEW YEAR'S EVE

R R C T M I D N I G H T H D  
F W E H O U R G L A S S F N  
I D S S E C O N F E T T I N  
R C P T O E X I V K N H E J  
E A A O F L R P K O A O C A  
W L R A J E U S I D W P O N  
O E K S B E K T G S P E U U  
R N L T T R A D I T I O N A  
K D E C O R A T I O N S T R  
S A R Y B J Q O P T N Y D Y  
X R S E F F A M I L Y S O O  
B Z L D B P A R T I E S W G  
Q E Z Q E C H A M P A G N E  
C Z Q I S H O L I D A Y L Y

Hourglass

Decorations

Champagne

Calendar

Celebration

Fireworks

Countdown

Confetti

Midnight

January

Hope

Parties

Holiday

Family

Toast

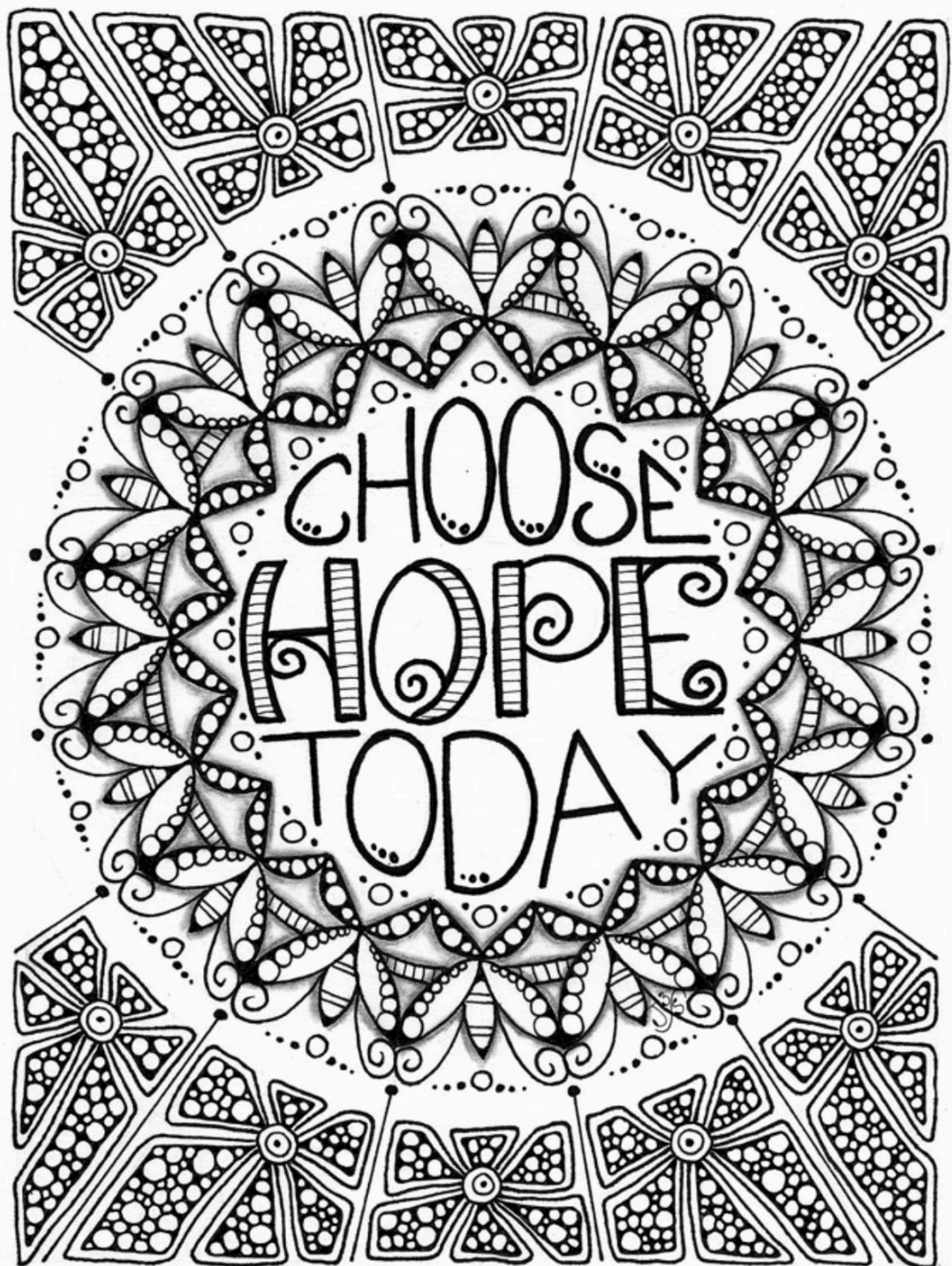
Cheers

Resolutions

Tradition

Sparklers







### Answers to J Quiz

- |              |               |
|--------------|---------------|
| 1. Joey      | 10. Journey   |
| 2. Jade      | 11. Julienne  |
| 3. Jacaranda | 12. Jamboree  |
| 4. Jesuits   | 13. Jackfruit |
| 5. Jambalaya | 14. Jubilee   |
| 6. Jazz      | 15. Jugular   |
| 7. Jinx      | 16. Junk      |
| 8. Joseph    | 17. Jukebox   |
| 9. Jolie     | 18. Juice     |

*The Caraway Team wish you a very Happy New Year*

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**Messy Vintage**