



Micro Cults

Recap

Coherence– if a religion is contradictory, it simply cannot be true. For example, if a religion claimed that “Person Z is god, and person Z is not god,” that religion would be incoherent

Explanatory Power and Scope– Does the worldview explain what we experience in enough detail? If a worldview does not explain our world, or it cannot account for certain phenomena, then it lacks explanatory power

Correspondence– Does the worldview match the facts we know about the world to our experience of the world? If we know that the worldview in question promotes claims we know are false, it does not match reality

Pragmatic Test– Can we live by this worldview?

Verification– Can this worldview be falsified?

Recap

Islam is not simply a religion, it is the basis for **society** (political, cultural and relational)

Recap

For our struggle is not against **flesh and blood**, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms. [Ephesians 6:12](#)

“emotional health and spiritual maturity are inseparable. It is not possible to be **spiritually mature** while remaining **emotionally immature**.” Peter Scazzero, [Emotionally Healthy Spirituality](#)

Where does **truth** come from?

How to identify a cult: Six tips from an expert, CBS News, 48 Hours

Up to **10,000** cults still exist today in the United States, according to psychologist Steve Eichel, a recognized international cult expert and president of the International Cultic Studies Association. He outlined several ways to identify cults.

"Most cults are extremely **small** and very deliberately try to stay under the radar," Eichel told "48 Hours" correspondent Peter Van Sant. "Unless they commit a crime, unless they do something that draws attention to them--negative attention and criticism to them--we generally don't know about them."

The Warning Signs of a Dangerous Cult Can Sneak Up on You, Samantha Vincenty

cults often don't fit the common **stereotypes** of communes and matching robes. "My experience is they live in their houses and apartments, going to work. You wouldn't even know they're in a cult unless you start having a conversation with them,"

In his **BITE Model**, Hassan divides an extensive list of those common methods into four major categories. Based in research and theory from leading expert psychologists and scholars who've studied brainwashing, "BITE" stands for Behaviour, Information, Thought, and Emotional control.

Hassan calls mind control a "**bi-directional** process between the predator and the person targeted."

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Most people know that certain religious and political cult groups **manipulate** and **control** members. In addition, there are other types groups that recruit millions of people all over the world that use deception and coercive influence with cult-like features. Many are **multi-level marketing** schemes (MLMs).

According to research by the FTC, a whopping **99%** of recruited sellers lose money in an MLM venture.

To understand how MLMs recruit and maintain participants requires examining them as **cults**. Most MLMs use tactics of recruitment, financial manipulation, and the promise of large profits. But, like all cults, they employ thought control, magical thinking, thought-stopping, and self-blame. Failures are blamed directly on the consultants, for lack of hard work or competence.

The term “cult” refers most often to a group of people with usually **atypical** beliefs living in relative isolation from the world. They tend to centralize around one charismatic person—the cult leader—who orders the **beliefs, behaviours,** and **customs** of all the other members. Many cults stand in as de facto **new religions** for their followers, but some are **irreligious** in nature. [MasterClass](#)

The word “cult” descends from the Latin “cultus,” an ancient word encompassing the concepts of **adoration, education, and cultivation.**

People join cult movements for various reasons, most of which revolve around a desire for **meaning** and **community.**

A cult offers **certainty** in **uncertain** times

Let God's curse fall on anyone, including us or even an **angel from heaven**, who preaches a **different kind** of **Good News** than the one we preached to you. **Galatians 1:8**

Mormons are a religious group that embrace concepts of Christianity as well as revelations made by their founder, Joseph Smith. They primarily belong to The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, or LDS, which is headquartered in Salt Lake City, Utah, and has more than **16 million** members worldwide.

Joseph Smith Jr. was born in Vermont on **December 23, 1805**. When Smith was 14, he said he received a vision from God and Jesus that told him **not to join** any Christian denominational churches.

Three years later, Smith claimed that an **angel named Moroni** appeared to him. Moroni revealed that Smith had been selected to translate the Book of Mormon, a sacred text that was written around the 4th century and named after Moroni's father, Mormon.

According to **Moroni**, this spiritual book contained information about the ancient people who inhabited the Americas. He revealed that the book was inscribed on golden plates near Palmyra, New York, which was close to where Smith lived at the time.

Although the plates were first revealed to him on September 22, 1823, Smith said he was not allowed to retrieve them until September 1827. The **Book of Mormon** was translated and published in **1830**.

Book of Mormon

Mormons believe that the Book of Mormon **confirms** information found in the Holy Bible.

The text gives an account of ancient prophets who lived in the **Americas**.
It covers events that occurred from about **2500 B.C. to 400 A.D.**

According to the book, some **Jews** came to America to avoid persecution in Jerusalem. They divided into two groups who fought each other: the Nephites and the Lamanites. In 428 A.D., the Nephites were defeated. The text says that the Lamanites are the same group that's known as the **American Indians**.

According to the Book of Mormon, Jesus Christ appeared and preached to the Nephites in the Americas after his crucifixion.

Book of Mormon vs the bible

The eighth article of faith in Mormonism states, “We believe the Bible to be the word of God as far as it is **translated correctly**.” Also, Mormons frequently claim that many “plain and precious truths” have been **removed** from the Bible

The Book of Mormon likewise alludes to this **corruption** of the Bible in 1 Nephi 13:26: “And after they go forth by the hand of the twelve apostles of the Lamb, from the Jews unto the Gentiles, thou seest the formation of that great and **abominable church** which is most abominable above all other churches; for behold, they have taken away from the gospel of the Lamb **many parts** which are **plain and most precious**; and also many **covenants** of the Lord have they taken away.”

Core Tenet

Latter-day Saints see all people as children of God in a full and complete sense; they consider every person divine in origin, nature, and **potential**. [Becoming Like God, LDS](#)

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints teaches that all human beings, male and female, are beloved **spirit children** of **heavenly parents**, a Heavenly Father and a Heavenly Mother. This understanding is rooted in scriptural and prophetic teachings about the nature of God, our relationship to Deity, and the **godly potential** of men and women. The doctrine of a Heavenly Mother is a cherished and distinctive belief among Latter-day Saints. [Mother in Heaven](#)

Here, then is eternal life—to know the only wise and true God; and you have got to learn **how to be Gods yourselves**, and to be kings and priests to God, the same as all **Gods** have done before you . [Joseph Smith, 1844](#)

The Lord created you and me for the purpose of **becoming Gods** like Himself, [Brigham Young](#)

[It appears that the Book of Mormon] had **no place** in the New World whatsoever ... [It] just **doesn't** seem to fit anything ... in anthropology [or] history.... It seems misplaced. **Dr. Ray Metheny, Professor of Anthropology, BYU**

The first **myth** that we need to eliminate is that Book of Mormon **archaeology** exists. Titles on books full of archaeological half-truths, dilettante on the peripheries of American archaeology calling themselves Book of Mormon archaeologists regardless of their education, and a Department of Archaeology at BYU devoted to the production of Book of Mormon archaeologists do not insure that Book of Mormon archaeology really exists. **Dr. Dee Green, Former Editor of the University Archaeological Society Newsletter**

Now, I'm an archaeologist, and I work in Mexico where some people think that the events occurred. So a lot of Mormons ask me every week if I find any evidence. And I tell them, "**No.**" **Dr. John Clark, Professor of Anthropology, BYU**

You **happily** put up with whatever **anyone** tells you, even if they preach a **different Jesus** than the one we preach, or a **different kind of Spirit** than the one you received, or a **different kind of gospel** than the one you believed. [2 Corinthians 11:4](#)

Classic Cults: Modify Jesus, modify the bible

As man now is, **God once was**; As **God now is**, man may be. Lorenzo Snow, D&C 76:58; 132:19—20, Joseph Smith, Lectures on Faith, Mormonism

Jesus was **created** by Jehovah as the archangel Michael before the physical world existed, and is a lesser, though mighty, god, **Jehovah Witness**

"Unlike the Bible, which passed through generations of copyists, translators, and **corrupt religionists** who tampered with the text, the Book of Mormon came from writer to reader in just one inspired step of translation" **Prophet Ezra Taft Benson**

that the church has **corrupted** the Bible over the centuries; thus, they have re-translated the Bible into what they call the New World Translation, **Jehovah Witness**



\$4.2 Trillion



Helen Lewis, BBC
"The New Gurus"

In just one day in October 2021, two of China's top live-streamers, Li Jiaqi and Viya, sold **\$3 billion** worth of goods. That's roughly three times Amazon's average daily sales

86% of Women Use Social Media for Purchasing Advice

60% of Millennials are more likely to take advice from Youtubers than Traditional Media Personalities

8 out of 10 Consumers have purchased something due to an Influencer Recommendation

Four in five surveyed U.S. consumers (81%) have made a purchase through clicking a link or image an influencer shared.

66% trust a product recommendation so long as the influencer discloses their relationship with a brand.

Post Modern Cults

Problem with the world/yourself, health, productivity, wealth

Can't **trust** information, it has been corrupted or manipulated, people (big Pharma, government, corporations, etc) don't want you to know

“I have learned”, “I have discovered”, “I can show you... (the ‘guru’ has **special knowledge**, at a cost)

* Christian version is use Christian-ese language to show solution with the idea that God wants you happy and prosperous

Celebrity is a worldly form of **power** and evaluation of **human worth**. It is not a spiritually **neutral** tool that can be picked up and put down, even for godly projects. The moment celebrity is adopted and adapted for otherwise noble purposes—sharing the good news and inviting others into rich kingdom life—it **changes the project**. And it changes **us**. **Katelyn Beaty, in her book *Celebrities for Jesus: How Personas, Platforms, and Profits are Hurting the Church***

“In a time when **large swaths** of the American church have merely mimicked worldly concepts of power, going for **bigger, louder, and glitzier**, we have to return to the **small, the quiet, the uncool, and the ordinary**. Obscurity may very well be the spiritual discipline the American church needs to practice the most in the coming century.”

What concerns me is how Christians in MLM sometimes **co-opt biblical lingo** to justify questionable ideas and methods. They often use verbiage that projects MLM as not only admissible within the church, but beneficial. [Will Anderson, Gospel Coalition](#)

In a digital age, those who most effectively wield the power of public perception might as well be **gods**. To be honest, I'm growing more worried every year as I watch how quickly people believe things they see in their social media feeds, **spawning new kinds of faith** on an almost weekly basis...But look a little deeper and you'll see there's something else that you're selling: confidence. Or put differently, you're **selling belief**—belief that you can trust these people or these products or this process that has made them so successful and happy. You, too, can have all this! And you'll be so much happier for it if only you believe hard enough. [Neil Carter](#)

In the most recent Gallup Poll on Values and Belief (May 2022), a mere **20 percent** of Americans said they believed in the Bible being the literal Word of God. This number is down from the previous poll of 24 percent in 2017.

Evangelical Christianity in America is in the midst of a **wholesale generational, cultural, and doctrinal transformation**. Underlying all of these developments is a more fundamental change in the way evangelicals **understand and interpret** their most cherished text, the **Bible**. Though evangelicals proclaim themselves — and are portrayed in most media accounts — to be univocal followers of an inerrant, plainly interpreted Bible, in fact there is **widening diversity** in their approach to Scripture. [Jim Hinch](#)

176 million Americans claim to be Christians—69% of the population. Yet, only **6%** of U.S. adults—which is **9%** of those identifying as Christians—possess a **biblical worldview**, believing the Bible to be accurate and reliable, among other convictions.

Where does **truth** come from?

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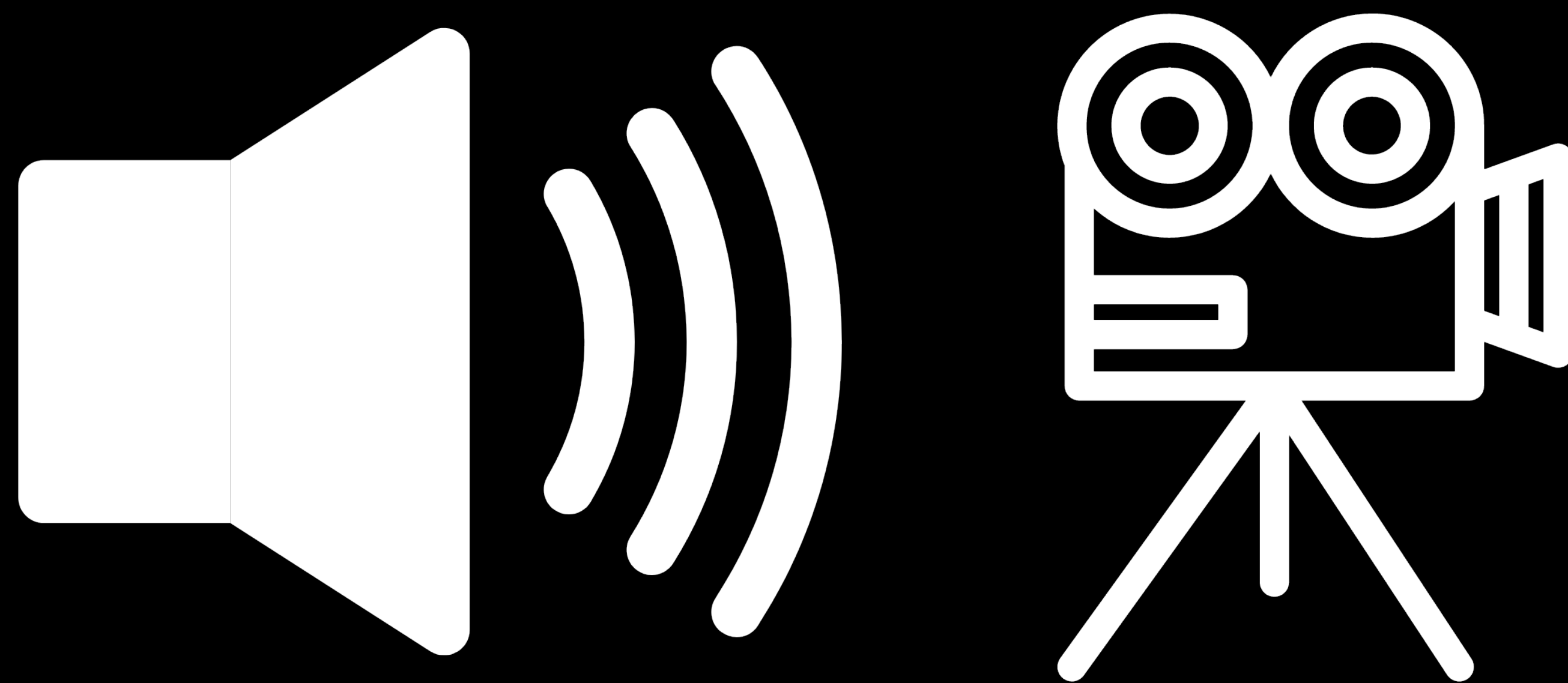
And he (Jesus) added, “God blesses those who do not **fall away** (offended/stumble) because of me.” [Matthew 11:6](#)



If Jesus is not **all**, the enemy
will provide cheap **substitutes**

Let God's curse fall on anyone, including us or even an **angel from heaven**, who preaches a **different kind** of **Good News** than the one we preached to you. **Galatians 1:8**

I am **shocked** that you are **turning away** so soon from God, who called you to himself through the loving mercy of Christ. You are **following** a different way that **pretends** to be the Good News but is not the Good News at all. You are being **fooled** by those who deliberately **twist** the truth concerning Christ. **Vs 6-7**



UCC Tech



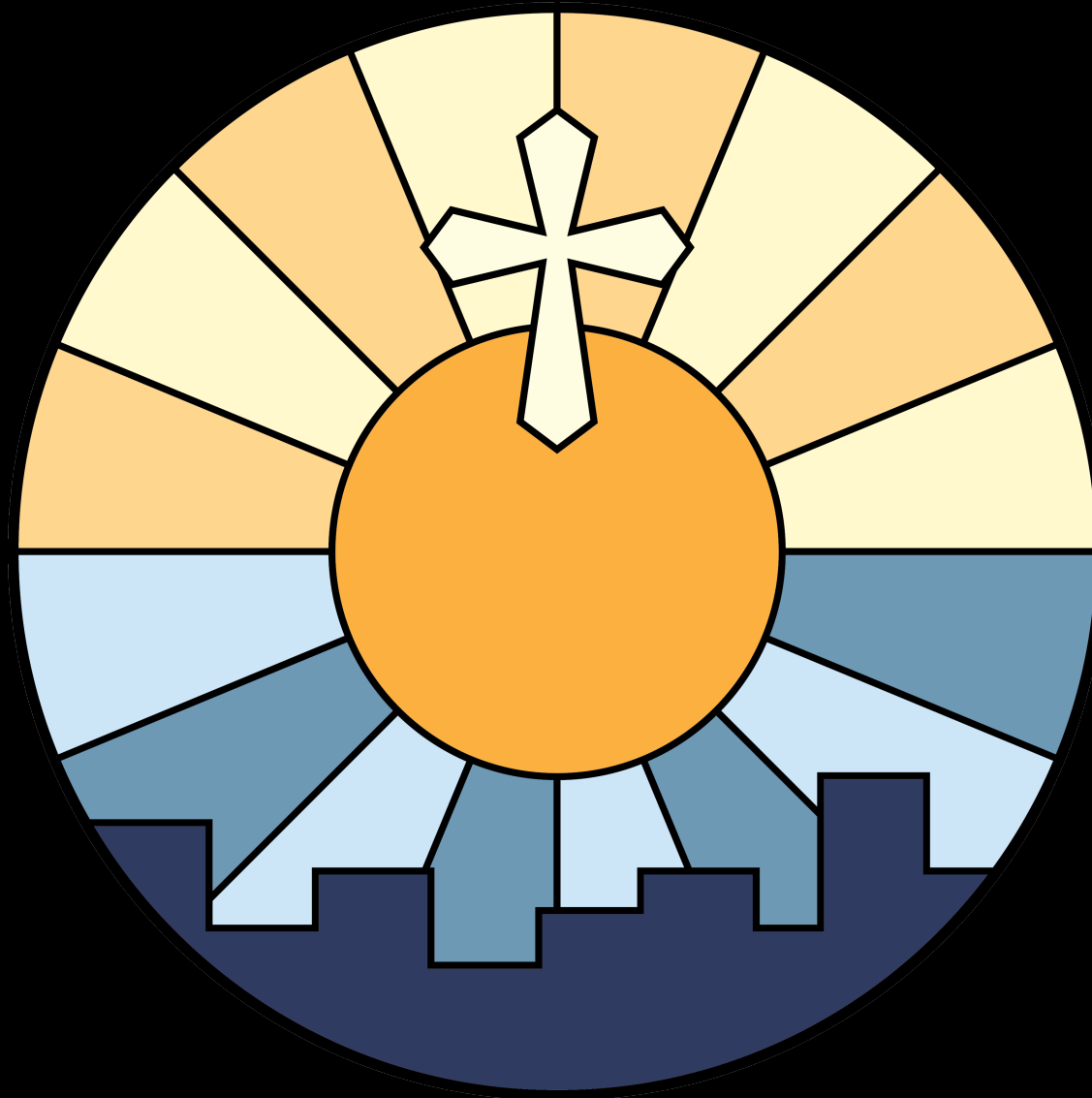
Coldest Night of the Year
Saturday February 25th

“Frosted Flakes”



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