

# Advent Fair-The Jesse Tree

We held an Advent Fair on the second Sunday of Advent. Our theme this year was “The Jesse Tree”.

## **History of the Jesse Trees**

The Jesse tree represents Jesus' family tree. The name is taken from Isaiah 11:1, in which Jesus is referred to as a shoot coming up from the “stump of Jesse”, the father of David. The ornaments on the Jesse tree tell of Jesus' ancestors, and of the events leading to Jesus' birth. Traditionally an ornament is placed on the tree for each day in Advent. The ‘tree can be a branch, mobile, or a banner. Directions for one idea follows

**Goal:** Engage children and caring adults in conversation about God’s faithful people and their stories. The children engage in activities to make ornaments, while they are working, the booth/ helper, tells the story of the character on the ornament. The children take the ornament home and retell the story to their parents.

## **Event Planning:** Start planning early.

### Two months ahead of time:

- Set the date and time for the event and put on the church calendar. The first Sunday in Advent is a good time.
- Put an article in the church newsletter, youth newsletter, websites, facebook page. Anywhere where you have people looking for information
- Prepare posters for advertizing the event.
- There are many resources available on line, including pictures and directions for ornaments. If I do this again, I will make cards as handouts that I can give to the children that explains the story behind the ornament. I did prepare a handout that worked.
- Decide how you would like things to go. You can have an event that is for children and their Sunday School teachers or children or their parents. One church started in early fall to have families make multiple ornaments of the same thing that were sold and the money used for mission projects. At the fair, people could buy or take the pre-made ornaments. While offering opportunities for children to participate in service activities such as making placemats for a nursing home, making/packaging Chex mix to give to shut ins,
- Gather ideas and make handouts to give to adults about the Jesse Tree and other fun activities that they can do at home. Suggestions for handouts-advent wreath/candle lighting devotions to use at home, Hanging of the greens blessings, ideas for setting up Nativity Scenes, etc.

### At least a month ahead of time.

- Choose which ornaments will be made. Look for a variety of mediums
- Gather needed supplies. Suggestion: ask congregation for scraps of fabric, ribbon, wrapping paper and leftover craft items. Purchase the rest. A very popular backing was old CDs or DVDs. We ran out quickly.
- Recruit volunteers to staff the event.
- Coordinate with other ministries if you are taking a public area of the church
- Make samples of each of the ornaments that you will be making. If you are using a new recipe or technique, make sure you test it before hand.

- Begin making handouts
- Make posters to mark the booths
- Train/communicate directions to the volunteers

### The week Of:

- Set up a large area with tables that were booths. Each booth makes a different Christmas Ornament that will be made and taken home. Helpers were stationed at the booth, to explain how the story related to Jesus and give out the supplies.
- Sort and organize the supplies, make sure each booth has the things that they will need, including string or ribbon to hand the ornaments
- Prepare thank-yous for everyone who helped.

### Supplies-

- Small bags for the kids to put their things into
- Colored table cloths for the tables. Blue is the color for Advent. These can be inexpensive disposable ones. Keep them they can be reused.
- Glitter, glitter pens, sequins, glitter glue, sparklies (the decorations that are put on tables, they come in many sizes and shapes. Pick some that fit the theme of the ornament such as hearts or stars)
- CDs/DVDs that are no longer useable or advertizing
- Small colored paper plates
- Fun Foam
- Felt
- Markers
- Popsicle sticks
- Paint pens, paint and brushes (if you are brave or have a smaller group)
- Molding clay-a simple recipe is included
- Scissors
- Foam Stickers-stars
- Cotton balls
- PomPoms
- Ribbon and cords
- Wrapping paper scraps
- Stickers
- Pipe cleaners
- Paper scraps
- Bark
- Hole punches, and shape punches
- Stamps and ink
- Straws
- Any scraps and treasures you have on hand
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### Symbols and Stories

There are many great ideas for ornaments that you can use. Check the library or resource center for titles of books, or do a search on the internet. Key word Jesse Tree. Below is a beginning list of stories and where they are found. Look on the internet for the current years list, patterns, and pictures. Key word: Jesse Tree

#### **God**

Creation-God's Eye, Earth, Clouds (Genesis 1:1-2:3)

#### **Adam and Eve**

Apple (Genesis 2:4-3:24)

#### **Noah**

Ark or rainbow (Genesis 6:11-22, 7:17-8:12, 20-9:17)

#### **Abraham**

Stars (Genesis 12:1-7, 15:1-6)

#### **Isaac**

Ram (Genesis 22:1-19)

#### **Jacob**

Ladder (Genesis 27:41-28:22)

#### **Joseph**

Colorful coat (Genesis 37, 39:1-50:21)

**Moses**

Tablets of the law (Exodus 2:1-4:20)

**David**

Harp (1 Samuel 16:17-23)

**Isaiah**

Lion and lamb (Isaiah 1:10-20, 6:1-13, 8:11-9:7)

**Mary**

Lily (Luke 1:26-38)

**Elizabeth**

Small home/mother and child (Luke 1:39-55)

**John the Baptist**

Shell (Luke 1:57-80, 3:1-7)

**Joseph**

Hammer or saw (Matthew 1:18-25)

## To make a Jesse Tree

The tree can be made as a banner, as a cut out, or with branches. The simplest is to take a branch without leaves and place the branch in a pail with rocks or sand. Below is one that is more permanent. The branches will be used at Easter for another project.

To make one that is branches.

Supplies:

- A branch with many 'arms' or crazy bamboo from WalMart
- Cement or plaster of paris
- A sturdy pail or coffee can
- Small balls
- A piece of string or rope

*Have supplies gathered. Make cement or plaster as directed by manufacturer. I found a small bag of cement, there was enough to make two. Place the bamboo branches in the mixed cement. Use spacers to keep the sticks separated. Loosely tie the tops to keep them in place. Branches should lean off to the side slightly, and not be straight up in the air. Be careful not to tie it to tight or close together or all the bamboo will be too close together.*

## Modeling Clay Recipe

4 cups flour

1 cup Salt

1 ½ cup hot water

Cookie Cutters

Acrylic paint, glitter, decorations

Ribbon

Combine flour and salt in a large bowl.. Add hot water. Stir with a spoon to blend, when the dough is cool enough to handle and has formed a ball, remove from the bowl and knead until smooth. Roll out a handful on floured board and cut desired shaped with cookie cutters. If they will be hung, poke a hole prior to baking. Hole should be bigger than you need, some shrinkage will occur. A chop stick works well. Place on a microwave safe plate and microwave for 2 minutes on one side, turn and microwave 1 minute on the other side. Watch closely, Depending on the size and number of ornaments in the microwave, they will burn. Let them cool and harden for a few minutes. Paint and decorate as desired. This is a fun activity to do with children.

Apples, stars, shells, noah boats, work well for the Jesse Tree.

For more information contact: Elayne Werges, St. John Lutheran Church, Nashua, Iowa  
elayne@butler-bremer.com