First Day of Christmas—December 25th

Draw for Secret pals…….

Do something for your pal so each of the 12 days…one the last day guess who yours. You can do a simple chore for them or even give them an inexpensive gift that you made or bought. Remember it is a secret! Have an Epiphany Party on the Twelfth Day.

Second Day of Christmas—December 26th

Have a family game night challenge

Organize a Wii bowling Tournament. Invite the neighbors and their kids over for a fun evening. Offer fun prizes like a decorated chocolate chip cookie….or do it old school and play a board game.

Third Day of Christmas—December 27th

Have a Christmas Scavenger Hunt

Make a list of all the Christmas symbols you see around the house. Assign someone to write clues on post it notes or recipe cards for each item and have them announce. Or hand out the clues. The first person who figures out the clue gets a point. Give them a special activity to do that day.

Examples for clues:

★ I am round like a doughnut (Christmas wreath)
★ I ring in season (bell)
★ I remind you of God’s everlasting love (evergreen tree)
★ I've got the Christmas Story between covers (Bible)
★ I pointed the way for three travelers (star)
★ It all started here (Nativity Scene)

Fourth Day of Christmas—December 28th

Think about those who don’t have enough…..Clean out your toy box. Take the good stuff that you don’t use anymore to a local agency that works with kids….or donate them to the church nursery. ‘Quiet’ toys and books are especially needed.

Fifth Day of Christmas—December 29th

Look up the song “The 12 Days of Christmas”. Have the kids rewrite the song into your own words. Have each of them write one of the verses. Sing your song at supper.

Sixth Day of Christmas—December 30th

Make a Tree of Wisdom

You will need: Bibles, small pieces of paper, pencils, colorful tissue paper, ribbons, gold-foil wrapped chocolate coins or Treasures

Directions: Find wisdom in the Book of Proverbs and come up with some of your own. Write them on slips of paper. Fold the slips with a coin in the middle wrap in tissue paper. Tie them with ribbon and hand on the Christmas tree. Later in the day gather as a family to choose wisdom bundles to open and read. The gold coin is a reminder that wisdom is better than gold.
The 7th Day of Christmas—December 31st

Remembering your Blessings....

Celebrate New Year’s Eve by inviting friends with children over for a pot luck supper and lantern launching. Have enough lanterns for each family unit (available at amazon.com). Write what your family’s blessings for the year, what you are thankful for and what you are concerned about. Launch the lanterns and watch them float away. Celebrate the hopes and dreams for 2013!

8th Day of Christmas—January 1st

Find out what if your family has a traditional New Year’s food. For many people with Norwegian heritage they would make Lutefisk, Lefse, and Meat balls. A Southern tradition is to make Hoppin’ John, Corn Bread, and Collard Greens. What is your family’s favorite meal. Give each person something to make or do to make the meal special.

9th Day of Christmas—January 2nd

Pray for Your Family and Friends

As a family sit down and go through each of the cards and pictures that you received this year. Pray for each of the card senders and share how you know them and share your favorite memories.

10th Day of Christmas—January 3rd

Have a Talent/No Talent Show

Begin planning ahead of time. Encourage everyone to develop some kind of an act….the goal is to have a good time! Encourage the kids to work together to come up with an act. Be Creative!

11th Day of Christmas—January 4th

Idea: Make a Time Capsule to Open Next Year!

What you will Need:

★ a vessel large enough to store your things.
★ Items to include
★ Paper, pens, envelopes

What to do:

Get everyone involved. Find items that remind you of this Christmas season. Avoid putting anything that will attract bugs, so no food type things. Include a newspaper. Have everyone write a letter to themselves or to the entire family. Make a video or power point with pictures from everything you did, store it on a jump drive. Gather as a family to put everything into the time capsule. Open it in one year…Keep them from year to year.

12th Day of Christmas—January 5th

Prepare for “Three Kings Day”, the day of Epiphany that happens on Jan. 6th. It is the celebration of the arrival of the three wisemen who came to visit Jesus. Read about their visit in Matthew 2. To celebrate, make a King’s Cake. Every year along the Gulf Coast people celebrate Mardi Gras with a Kings Cake. The cake is baked and decorated and a small baby doll is hidden in the cake, whoever finds the baby gets to be the King for the day and host next year’s celebration!

EASY KINGS CAKE RECIPE:

2 tubes of Cinnamon Roll dough with frosting*
Purple, green, and gold (yellow) sugars
A small plastic baby (find in the party section)
Mardi Gras Beads

DIRECTIONS:

Prepare large cookie sheet as directed on the package. Open and remove the dough from the tubes. Arrange the rolls on the pan in a circle. Overlap the dough slightly. Bake as directed on the package. When golden brown, remove from the oven. Frost with frosting provided. Sprinkle each color of sugar over warm frosting in sections.

*Homemade or Frozen cinnamon roll dough may be substituted.

THE COLORS OF MARDI GRAS

Meanings: Gold-Power Green-Faith Purple-Justice