



The Season of Advent

Advent begins the church year by calling us to wait for Christ's coming. The word advent comes from the Latin word *adventus* which means "a coming." The weeks of Advent spark a sense of eagerness and anticipation. When we are expecting the arrival of someone important, we celebrate by organizing our lives around this anticipated event. Advent is an opportunity to center our celebrations around the birth of Jesus. May your advent be filled with anticipation, hope, and joy!

Ways to celebrate Advent

An Advent Wreath. You can buy or make one. All you need is four blue candles and one big white Christ candle to go in the middle. Each week, you light a candle. The Christ candle in the middle is lit on Christmas. Meal times can be a great time to light your advent candles and read a scripture. If mealtimes are hectic at your house, before bedtime is a great time too. Turn out the lights and light the advent candles. You will get a great visual of light casting out the darkness. Our light is coming. You can even end each night with a Christmas story. Some of our favorite family chapter books are: The Best Christmas Pageant Ever and The Gift of the Magi.

Home Decorating. Advent waiting can be captured in our home decorating when we decorate in steps. Have separate days to decorate the tree, display cards, decorating the house, etc. By extending the preparation time, you will discover a sense of growing anticipation as well as a more meaningful progression through Advent into Christmas.

The Nativity. Set up your nativity in stages. We start with an empty manger and a few animals. Shepherds are placed nearby ready to be moved to "neighboring hillsides" when the time comes. Because the holy family should arrive at the stable on Christmas Eve, figures of Mary and Joseph make a four week journey through our house as my kids move them week by week to Bethlehem. Baby Jesus arrives on Christmas Eve. The shepherds hear the Good News, visit baby Jesus and then return home praising God, The wise men have been making a journeying (from the East corner of our house) toward the manger all through Advent. The wise men arrive on Epiphany which is January 6th.

The Advent Calendar. An advent calendar is provided to you on the reverse side of this page. You can reproduce and give them out to family and friends. An advent calendar is a great way for your family to celebrate the season of advent. Each day has a simple activity for your family to do. The activities alternate between service, spiritual growth, family activities you do at home, and fun Christmas activities.

In Christ's service,
Lisa Kammerer
Deacon





Family Advent Calendar 2018

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1 Make or buy an advent wreath to use with your family
2 <i>First Sunday</i> Prophecy candle: Isaiah 9:6 Isaiah 40: 3-5 Isaiah 60:1-3 	3 Make a Christmas card for someone in the military and pray for them	4 Read about the announcement to Mary in Luke 1:26-38	5 Go shopping for a gift from your community giving tree	6 Read about the announcement to Joseph in Matthew 1:18-25	7 Bake Christmas cookies and share some with a neighbor	8 Attend a Christmas event or festival as a family
9 <i>Second Sunday</i> Bethlehem candle: Micah 5:2-5 Luke 2:4 Luke 2:15 	10 Read a story from your favorite Christmas book	11 Look at Christmas lights as a family & talk about how Jesus is the light	12 Read about Mary's visit to her cousin Elizabeth in Luke 1:39-56	13 Visit a nursing home and share a Christmas story or Christmas carols	14 Talk about angels- How were angels a part of Jesus' birth?	15 Write Bible verses on star shapes and decorate the house with them
16 <i>Third Sunday</i> Shepherds' candle: Isaiah 40:10-11 Luke 2:8-11 Luke 2:20 	17 Buy non-perishable food for your local food pantry	18 String cranberries to make a treat for the birds	19 Read about Joseph & Mary's trip to Bethlehem in Luke 2:1-7	20 Watch a Christmas movie as a family with popcorn & hot cocoa	21 Make Christmas ornaments to give away to others	22 Do a random act of Christmas kindness
23 <i>Fourth Sunday</i> Angels' candle: Luke 1:26-33 Matt. 1:20-21 Luke 2: 13-14 	24 <i>Christmas Eve</i> Attend Christmas Eve Worship 	25 <i>Christmas Day</i> Bang pots and pans and shout the Good News: Jesus is Born!				