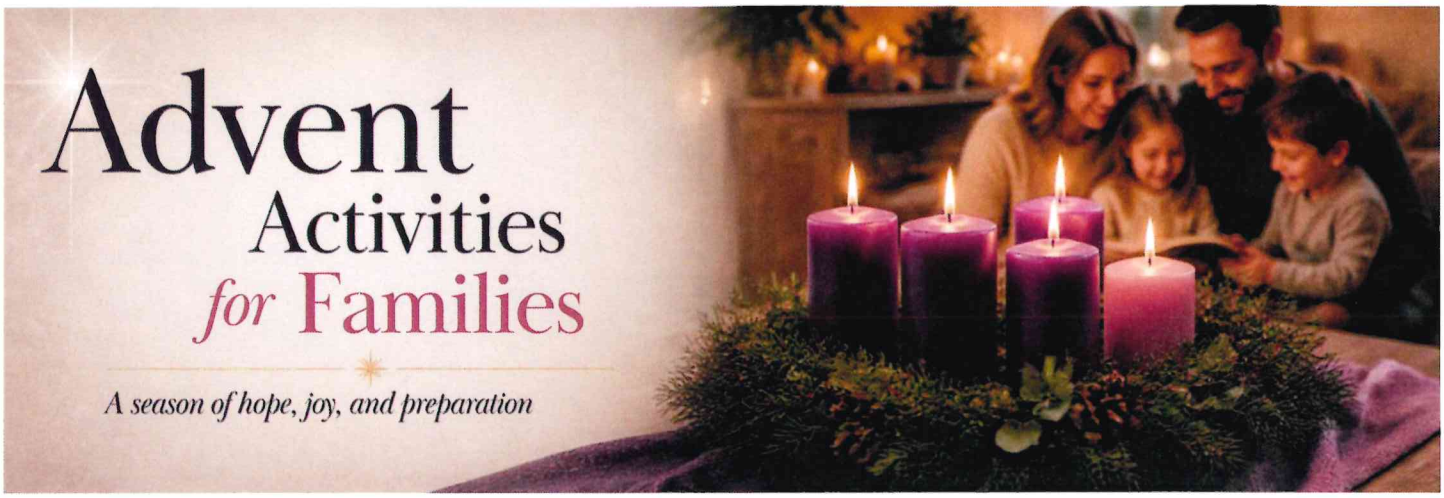


Dear Families,

As we begin the season of Advent, we invite you to share these activities together at home. Each activity is designed to help families slow down, reflect, prepare, and celebrate the hope, joy, peace, and love of Christmas.

Inside this folder, you will find simple Advent activities that families can enjoy together throughout the season. You might choose one activity each week, complete them in any order, or adapt them to fit your family's traditions and schedule.

Thank you for making space for these meaningful moments. We hope this folder brings your family opportunities to talk, create, pray, serve, and celebrate together during Advent

Children's Ministry

Family Advent DEVOTIONS



Family Advent Devotions

Hello families! It's time to journey through the season of Advent! I always love this time of year with my own family as we prepare to celebrate the birth of our Savior, Jesus Christ. Before our journey begins, you may have some questions about Advent, and I also want to share some ways you can use these devotions.

WHAT IS ADVENT?

Advent is the first season of the Christian church year that begins four Sundays before Christmas and ends on Christmas Eve. Advent means "coming." During this season, Christians are preparing for the coming of Christ. We take this season to remember how the Israelites were looking forward to the coming of the Savior, a promise from God. As we celebrate the first coming of Jesus, as a baby born in a manger, we can also look forward to the second coming of Jesus, which is what He promised to us while He was here on the earth (John 14:3).

WHY DO WE USE AN ADVENT WREATH?

The Advent wreath is a tradition in the Christian church that has been around for a long time. It originated in Germany and Scandinavia and was used in homes for families to mark time. They would light a candle each night during Advent until Christmas Day. The light in their homes would greatly increase each day when they lit the candles, which symbolizes the light of Christ.

Today, we only light five candles (marking weeks instead of days). However, we still use the candles to mark time and increase the light. Each Sunday that we light a candle, the light increases and we grow closer to the day of Christ's birth.

As Christians, we are awaiting the day written about in Revelation 21:23: "The city does not need the sun or moon to shine on it, for the glory of God gives it light, and the Lamb is its lamp." One day Christ will return and His light will be all we need. But until then, we should strive each day to shine His light in this world.*

*The information on the history of the Advent wreath was taken from:
https://www.umc.org/en/content/ask-the-umc-what-do-the-candles-in-our-advent-wreath-mean

Week One - Hope

prepare for. They must not give up hope, for God has promised to send them a Savior. A king. One who will reign over the earth. One who will reveal the glory of the Lord. One who will take away all their sins and remember them no more.

Maybe you are like the Israelites and have lost hope. Maybe you have given up on those dreams. Maybe you don't think you will ever understand math, make good grades, get along with your sibling, or have that dream come true for your life. My prayer for you is that you will remember the hope God provided for the Israelites and know He provides that same hope for you, too. Jesus is our Hope. He is our Savior. He is the one who is there for you. And we can trust in Him because His Word is true. Today, let the light of hope shine in your life.

Light the Candle

Have one person in your family take a lighter and light the candle of Hope.



Discuss

What is a way you can share the hope of Jesus with someone this week?

Closing prayer

Heavenly Father, thank You for the hope you have given us in Jesus Christ. Thank You for sending Him to be born on this earth so that we might be saved. Forgive me for the times when I lose my faith and my hope in You. I ask that You renew my hope in You this Advent season.
In Jesus' name, Amen.

Week Two - Love

Read John 3:16

Do you love your family? Yes, I know you do (even if sometimes they get on your nerves!). So what do you love about your family? Take a moment to go around to each person in your family and share something you love about them.

John 3:16 is probably one of the most well-known verses in the Bible. And it speaks directly of the love God has for us. The love you have for your family does not even come close to the love God has for you.

God had promised the Israelites that a Savior was coming (remember our devotion on hope last week?). He had prophets (like Isaiah) tell everyone that He would send someone for all people. This person would be a King. And most importantly, our Savior.

But the Israelites version of a king was different than what God was sending. They believed the king God would send would be born in a royal palace. They believed the Savior of the world would be royalty. They kept careful watch and expectation of this Savior, but they were looking in the wrong places.

This King wasn't born in a royal palace. In fact, He was born in the most unexpected place. But He was born just like God said he would be...in a manger wrapped in swaddling clothes (Luke 2:7). So those first cries of Jesus didn't come from the king's palace. Those cries came from one of the lowliest places. But those cries were the sound of love. A love that we can never fully give to someone else. A love only the Almighty God can give to us.

God gave to us because He loved us. He gave to us because He wants us to live forever with Him. Jesus was sent down from heaven to be born on this earth to be the ultimate sacrifice for our sins. God gave us the best gift we can ever receive, the gift of a Savior.

Week Three - Joy

the words you speak. It will be seen in your actions. It will be seen all over your face. It is hard to contain the joy of the Lord. Our job as Christians is to spread this joy. We are to share the name of Jesus with others. We aren't to bottle up His joy and save it for ourselves. We are to go out and make His name known. Shout it from the mountaintops. Sing it from the rooftops. Write about it. Go...and tell others the good news of Jesus Christ! Today, let the light of Joy shine in your life.

Light the Candle

Have one person in your family take a lighter and light the two purple candles of Hope and Love. Then light the pink candle, which represents Joy.



Discuss

What is something that brings you joy?

Closing prayer

Giver of Joy, help us to share Your joy with others. Make Your joy so visible in our lives that others will come to know You through us. Remind us continually that Your joy is for everyone and give us the courage to share Your name. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Week Four - Peace

Read Luke 2:14

Do you hear it? Everyone in your house needs to be very quiet in order to hear this sound. Take a second, be still and listen...

What did you hear?

You may have said I hear nothing! But you did hear something! It was the sound of peace. No loud noises, no laughing, no tv or music playing in the background, no one talking. Just stillness, silence, and peace. Don't you love the sound of peace?

When do we usually hear the sound of peace? If you wake up in the middle of the night, you will hear it. No one is moving. Everyone is sleeping and is still. You might hear it in the mountains when you are camping. You might hear it at the beach at night when no one is playing. But this kind of peace usually has an end. Eventually, the sun will rise and everyone will wake up. They will run around the house trying to get ready for school or work. If you're camping, you will hear campers preparing breakfast. If you're at the beach you will hear the sounds of joy as people set up their tents and get their spots for a sunny, relaxing day in the sand. The peace will eventually come to an end.

But I know of a peace that will never end. And that peace comes from Jesus Christ, who is the Prince of Peace.

In the book of Isaiah, the prophet shares with the Israelites that a child will be born and will be given to us. This child will be called "Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace" (Isaiah 9:6b). This child is Jesus and Isaiah is letting the Israelites know that Peace is coming! And the best part...this Peace will have no end. We won't go to sleep and wake up the next morning to find that the peace of Jesus is gone. We can be sure of this because of what Isaiah 9:7 says:

Christmas Eve or Day

But in that town on the night of Jesus' birth, all the hopes and fears the Israelites had had over the many years were met. Jesus was born. God's promise to His people came to be. The wait was over. The Savior had come.

I wish I could say that I would have recognized the arrival of Jesus that night if I lived in Bethlehem. But sadly, I probably would not have. I would have been like every other person in Bethlehem...not paying attention (and most likely asleep).

Let's wake up! Let's pay attention to God. Let's be alert and ready to do whatever God calls us to do. Let's do all we can to walk closely with Jesus. Let's be ready with our eyes and ears open to see Jesus. Today, may the light of Christ shine brightly in your life.

Light the Candle

Have one person in your family take a lighter and light the first four candles of Hope, Love, Peace, and Joy. Then light the white candle, which represents the coming of Christ.



Discuss

What can we do together as a family to help us pay more attention to Jesus?

Closing prayer

Light of the World, You are here! And for that we are grateful. Help us do a better job of watching for You, for listening to You, and for obeying what You ask of us. In Jesus' name, Amen.

HOW TO MAKE YOUR ADVENT COUNTDOWN CHAIN

1. Color and cut.
Color if you wish, then cut out the round topper and paper strips. Keep the GLUE HERE tabs.

2. Attach the first link.
Cut along the line near the bottom of the topper to make a slit. Slip the DEC 25 strip through the slit, then glue or tape its ends together to form a loop.

3. Build your chain.
Thread the DEC 24 strip through the first loop. Glue or tape its ends together.
Continue backward by date until you reach NOV 29.

4. Hang it up.
Punch a small hole near the top edge of the topper. Thread ribbon or twine through the hole and tie a loop for hanging.

5. Read, reflect and pray.
Starting NOV 29, remove the matching dated link from the free end each day. Read its message and pray together. Remove the final DEC 25 link on Christmas Day!

*Adult help recommended for cutting the slit and punching the hole.



Cut along this line to make a slit

GLUE HERE

NOV 29

26

days until

Christmas



Watch and Wait

Jesus tells us to stay ready
for his coming. During Advent,
we prepare our hearts for him.

☆ Mark 13:33-37 ☆

GLUE HERE

NOV 30

25

days until

Christmas



A Light of Hope

Isaiah promises a great light
for people living in darkness.
Jesus, bring us your light.

☆ Isaiah 9:1-2 ☆

GLUE HERE

DEC 01

24

days until

Christmas



A Promise of Peace

Isaiah promises a child
called the Prince of Peace.
Jesus, help us be peacemakers.

☆ Isaiah 9:5-6 ☆

GLUE HERE

DEC 02

23

days until

Christmas



Prepare the Way

Isaiah calls for a path
to be prepared for the Lord.
Let us get ready to welcome him.

☆ Isaiah 40:3 ☆

GLUE HERE

DEC 03

22

days until

Christmas



A Wonderful Promise

Isaiah promises a child
called Emmanuel, meaning
God is with us.

☆ Isaiah 7:14 ☆

Cut along this line
to make a slit

GLUE HERE

DEC 04

21

days until

Christmas



A Peaceful Kingdom

Isaiah pictures a peaceful world
where a wolf lives with a lamb
and no one harms another.
Jesus, help us live in peace.

Isaiah 11:6-9

GLUE HERE

DEC 05

20

days until

Christmas



A Messenger from God

God sends Gabriel to Mary
with news that she will have
a son named Jesus.

Luke 1:26-33

GLUE HERE

DEC 06

19

days until

Christmas



Make Room for Jesus

John calls people
to turn to God and be baptized.
He prepares the way for Jesus.

Mark 1:1-9

GLUE HERE

DEC 07

18

days until

Christmas



Do Not Be Afraid

Mary wonders at the greeting.
Gabriel reassures her that
she has found favor with God.

Luke 1:29-30

GLUE HERE

DEC 08

17

days until

Christmas



Mary Says Yes

Mary accepts God's message
and offers herself to serve him.
Help us trust God as Mary does.

Luke 1:38

Cut along this line
to make a slit

GLUE HERE

DEC 09

16

days until

Christmas



A Joyful Visit

Mary greets Elizabeth.
Elizabeth's baby leaps for joy,
and she blesses Mary
for trusting God.

Luke 1:39-45

GLUE HERE

DEC 10

15

days until

Christmas



A Song of Praise

Mary praises God, her Savior.
She rejoices in the great things
he has done for her.

Luke 1:46-49

GLUE HERE

DEC 11

14

days until

Christmas



Joseph Has a Dream

An angel appears to Joseph
in a dream and tells him
to welcome Mary. Her child
comes through the Holy Spirit.

Matthew 1:20-21

GLUE HERE

DEC 12

13

days until

Christmas



Joseph Trusts God

Joseph wakes from his dream
and obeys the angel's message.
He welcomes Mary into his home.

Matthew 1:24

GLUE HERE

DEC 13

12

days until

Christmas



Rejoice in the Lord

Paul teaches us to rejoice,
keep praying, and thank God
in every situation.

1 Thessalonians 5:16-18

Cut along this line
to make a slit

GLUE HERE

DEC 14

11

days until

Christmas



His Name Is Jesus

The angel tells Joseph
to name the child Jesus,
because he will save his people
from their sins.

Matthew 1:21

GLUE HERE

DEC 15

10

days until

Christmas



God Loves the World

God loves the world so much
that he gives his only Son.
Jesus, help us share your love.

John 3:16

GLUE HERE

DEC 16

9

days until

Christmas



Make Room in Your Heart

Mary welcomes God's will.
The empty manger reminds us
to welcome Jesus into our hearts.

Luke 1:38

GLUE HERE

DEC 17

8

days until

Christmas



O Wisdom

Jesus is God's wisdom
and helps us know God.
Jesus, teach us what is good.

1 Corinthians 1:24, 30

GLUE HERE

DEC 18

7

days until

Christmas



O Lord

God calls Moses from a bush
that burns but is not destroyed.
Lord, help us listen to you.

Exodus 3:2-6

Cut along this line
to make a slit

GLUE HERE

DEC 19

6

days until

Christmas



O Root of Jesse

Isaiah pictures a new ruler
from Jesse's family as a shoot
growing from an old stump.
Jesus, bring us new hope.

Isaiah 11:1-2, 10

GLUE HERE

DEC 20

5

days until

Christmas



O Key of David

Jesus holds the key of David.
What he opens, no one can shut.
Jesus, open the way for us.

Revelation 3:7

GLUE HERE

DEC 21

4

days until

Christmas



O Radiant Dawn

Zechariah speaks of light
coming to people in darkness
and guiding them toward peace.
Jesus, shine on us.

Luke 1:78-79

GLUE HERE

DEC 22

3

days until

Christmas



O King of Nations

Isaiah promises a child
whose kingdom brings peace
and justice. Jesus, our King,
help us care for one another.

Isaiah 9:5-6

GLUE HERE

DEC 23

2

days until

Christmas



O Emmanuel

Matthew explains Emmanuel:
God is with us. In Jesus,
God comes close to his people.

Matthew 1:22-23

Cut along this line
to make a slit

GLUE HERE

DEC 24

1

day until

Christmas



The Journey to Bethlehem

Joseph travels to Bethlehem with Mary, who is expecting her baby. Jesus will be born while they are there.

Luke 2:4-7

GLUE HERE

DEC 25

It's

Christmas!

JESUS IS BORN

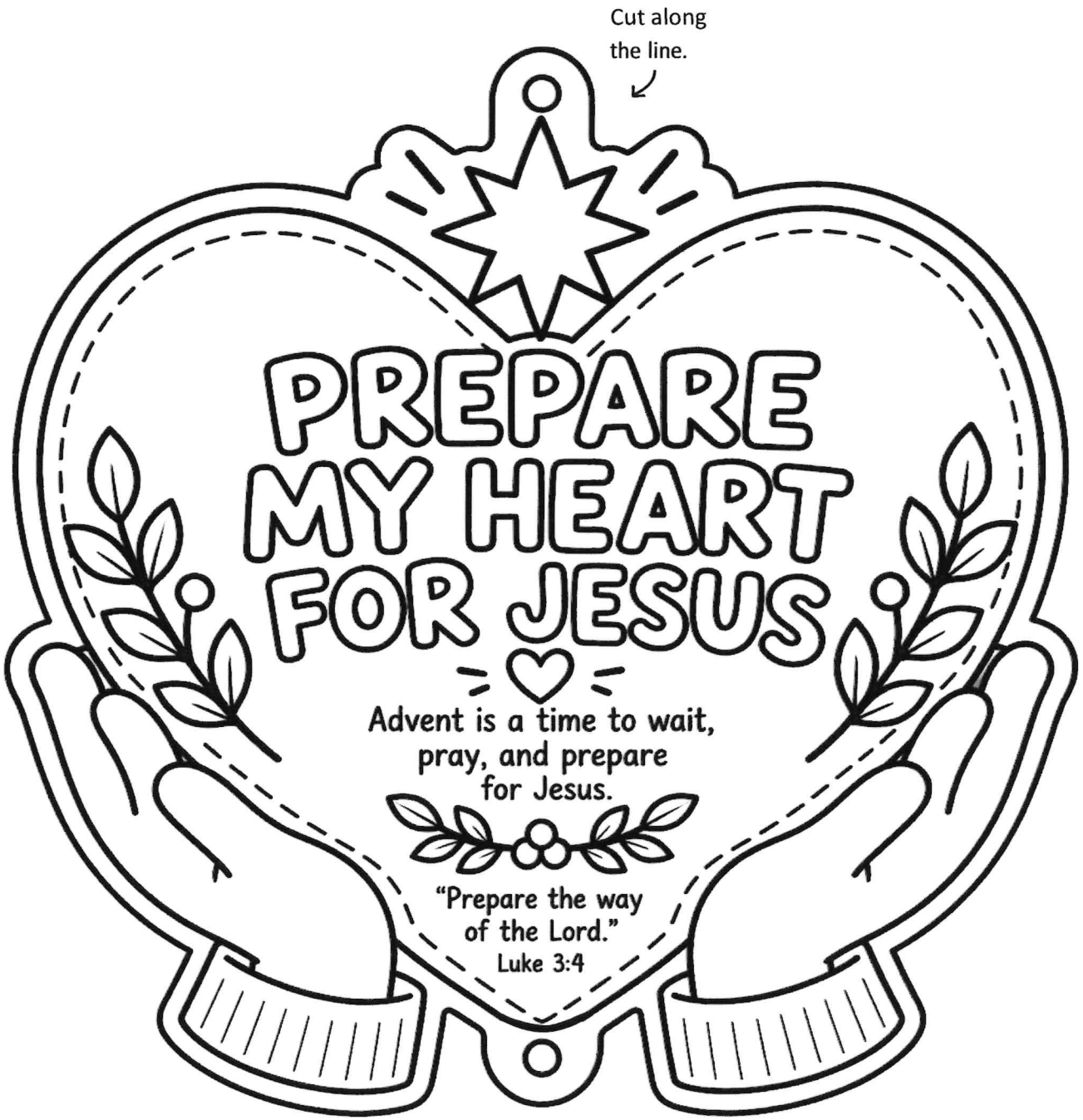


Jesus Is Born!

Mary gives birth to Jesus and lays him in a manger. An angel tells the shepherds that the Savior has been born.

Luke 2:6-12

Cut along this line to make a slit


Cut along
the line.
PREPARE
MY HEART
FOR JESUS
Advent is a time to wait,
pray, and prepare
for Jesus.
"Prepare the way
of the Lord."
Luke 3:4

HOW TO

1. Color the heart and Advent candles. 2. Cut along the solid outer lines.
3. Punch holes in the marked spots.
4. Connect the pieces with yarn, string, or ribbon in this order: Heart → Hope → Peace → Joy → Love 5. Hang and display your Advent craft!

Cut along the line.



LOVE is the final piece

and

bottom hole.

MY ADVENT REFLECTION

Prepare My Heart for Jesus

1 Who are we preparing our hearts for during Advent?

- ○ Jesus
- ○ Moses
- ○ Noah



2 Which Advent word do you want to practice this week?
Circle one or color it.



3 I can prepare my heart for Jesus by...

_____

_____

_____

_____

4 Draw one way you can share Jesus' love this Advent.

"Prepare the way of the Lord."
Luke 3:4



GLUE HERE

GLUE HERE

Handle Strip

HOPE

PEACE

JOY

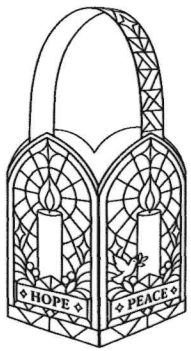
LOVE

GLUE HERE

GLUE HERE

GLUE HERE

GLUE HERE



HOW TO

1. COLOR :Color the lantern.
2. CUT : Cut along the outer lines.
3. FOLD & GLUE : Fold the panels and glue the tabs.
4. ADD HANDLE : Glue the handle to the lantern.

GLUE HERE

GLUE HERE

Handle Strip

HOPE

PEACE

JOY

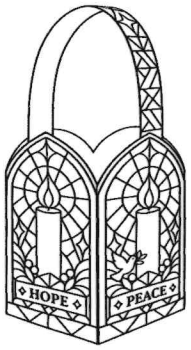
LOVE

GLUEHERE

GLUE HERE

GLUE HERE

GLUE HERE



HOW TO

1. CUT : Cut along the outer lines.
2. FOLD & GLUE : Fold the panels and glue the tabs.
3. ADD HANDLE : Glue the handle to the lantern.


Welcome to
BETHLEHEM
Immanuel
Wonderful Counselor
Mighty God
Everlasting Father
Prince of Peace
The Branch
Redeemer
Jesus
Son of God
Savior
Christ (Messiah)
Lord
Son of David
Son of Man
The Word
Lamb of God
Bread of Life
Light of the World
The Gate
Good Shepherd
The Way, the Truth & the Life
High Priest
King of Kings & Lord of Lords
Alpha & Omega
Bright Morning Star