



Advent Guide



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Some inspiration for this resource was taken from
The Village Church, *Advent Guide*.
www.thevillagechurch.net

All scriptures, unless otherwise noted, are taken from the
English Standard Version (ESV), Crossway Bibles.

Matthew 1.21-23

**“She will bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus,
for he will save his people from their sins.”**

**All this took place to fulfill what the Lord
had spoken by the prophet:**

**“Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son,
and they shall call his name Immanuel”
(which means, God with us).**

WHAT IS ADVENT?

Jesus has come and is coming.

The first coming of Christ was long awaited by the people of Israel, having been foretold many times throughout their history. They waited for a savior who would rescue and restore them, and his anticipated coming was the hope of Israel.

Though his first coming was not as most of the Jews and their contemporaries expected, Jesus did come to rescue and restore. He came to save his people from their sins and restore them to God by his sacrificial death and resurrection. His death on the cross was the turning point in all of history, and he has saved a people for himself called the church. His birth, or his first coming, is what we celebrate at Christmas.

His second coming has yet to happen, but has been promised in Scripture. The church, the new people of God, wait with expectant longing for his final appearing, when he will conquer his enemies, put an end to all suffering and evil, and consummate his rule as king over all things.

Advent is from the Latin word meaning “arrival.” Advent is a season of anticipation and celebration of the coming of Christ. We remember the darkness and despair of sin, the promise of God to rescue, and the longing and expectancy that preceded that rescue. We celebrate because God fulfilled his promise by sending Jesus. And we look with anticipation toward Jesus’ second coming to restore all things. It is a season of jubilation and reflection, remembering and watching. It is a time to reflect on the fulfilled promises of God and look with hope and expectancy toward his sure fulfillment of more.

Advent officially begins on the fourth Sunday before Christmas and continues until Christmas Day. It is celebrated in a variety of ways from formal church services to families around the table. Whatever traditions and forms may be used, Advent is a season for the church to remember and celebrate the coming of her savior. It’s a season for the bride of Christ to look with longing expectancy toward the final coming of her groom.

Church, rejoice! Jesus has come and is coming!

USING THIS GUIDE

This guide is designed to lead us together through the season of Advent. Its purpose is to remind us of the gospel, lead us to ponder and experience part of the expectant longing of Israel, and prepare our hearts to celebrate the coming of Jesus, our Savior, with profound joy and hope.

Our Hope

This guide is intended to help you and your family connect deeply with the celebration of Christmas, moving past the busyness and materialism that can easily distract us during the holidays. We also hope that walking through this season as a church family will lead to a stronger community and a deeper love for Jesus and the gospel.

A Word of Caution

The holiday season can quickly become stressful and busy as many things compete for our time, money, energy, and ultimately our hearts. If we're not careful and intentional we can lose track of time, and, before we realize it, the holidays are over and we've missed the beauty and purpose of the season.

We encourage you to think through what you want this Advent season to be like for your family. What do you hope to cultivate in them? What things do you want them to remember? What traditions do you want to start? What things do you want them to value about the Christmas season? What plans do you need to make now to turn the focus to worshipping Jesus as we remember the gospel?

Plan Ahead

To fully experience this season, we encourage you to read and plan ahead. Read through the family devotions beforehand and plan your time together. Be creative. Look for ways to engage others in your Missional Community or other friends, and look for ways to serve others. If you miss the Sunday messages, listen to the podcast.

Additional Resources

We've included some additional resources at the back of this guide. Our hope is that they will be useful as you celebrate this season and will help you to remember the gospel and worship Jesus. One of the resources is a list of suggested activities to help you live on mission during this season. We encourage you to choose a few activities and intentionally find ways to engage and serve people as we experience the season together.

We look forward to this season in the life of our Church. We pray God uses it profoundly.

WEEKLY OUTLINE & ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

We have provided a guide for family time and a guide for personal reflection for each week of Advent. The Sunday messages themselves will serve as guides for discussion in Missional Communities. We encourage you to use this guide, the messages from Sundays during Advent, and the additional resources to walk with your family and the Remedy family through this season.

(Though Advent is traditionally four weeks leading up to Christmas, we will be celebrating the three Sundays in December, and the weeks following, leading up to Christmas. That is why there are only three weeks in this guide.)

Week 1: Promises

Our God is a promise-keeping God. Over thousands of years he made many promises to his people, the biggest being that he would send a Rescuer to save them from their sins. Their hope and confidence was that he is a God who keeps his promises, and we rest in the same hope.

Week 2: Longing

While God did make some grand promises, and we have confidence that he does keep his promises, there was an extended period of waiting and longing for the ultimate rescue that God promised. This longing increases our anticipation and our desire for him when we wait in hope.

Week 3: Arrival

God kept his promise. He did send a Rescuer. And he did not just send him for us; He sent him to dwell among us. At Christmas we celebrate this event when the Kingdom of Heaven invaded Earth in the form of a baby. Our Rescuer has come!

Ways to Observe Advent

Helpful Resources for the Season

Advent Scriptures

Ideas for Living On Mission this Advent Season

Week 1: Promises

Come, Thou Long Expected Jesus

**Come, Thou long expected Jesus
Born to set Thy people free
From our fears and sins release us
Let us find our rest in Thee**

**Israel's strength and consolation
Hope of all the earth Thou art
Dear desire of every nation
Joy of every longing heart**

**Born Thy people to deliver
Born a child and yet a king
Born to reign in us forever
Now Thy gracious kingdom bring**

**By Thine own eternal Spirit
Rule in all our hearts alone
By Thine own sufficient merit
Raise us to Thy glorious throne**

WEEK 1:
DEC 4-10

WITH THE FAMILY

Not one word of all the good promises that the Lord had made to the house of Israel had failed; all came to pass. -Joshua 21.45

Read Joshua 21.45. Our God is the God who speaks. When He speaks to us He tells the truth every time. He never lies, ever!

Discuss: Has anyone ever lied to you? How did it make you feel? Is it easy to trust someone who lies? God is not like us. He is perfect and holy! We can trust our great God because when He talks to us He tells the truth and gives us some great promises. We can read His promises to us in the Bible.

Activity: Using a blank sheet of paper and crayons or markers, have each person in your family write “God Keeps His Promises” across the top. Then, have them draw a big circle in the center of the paper and use it to make an emoji of how they feel because God always keep His promises. Parents, read the following promises to your children from your Bible. As you read the verses ask each person in the family to write the Scripture reference on their paper.

Joshua 1.9 - Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be frightened, and do not be dismayed, for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go.

Ezekiel 36. 26-27 - And I will give you a new heart, and a new spirit I will put within you. And I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes and be careful to obey my rules.

Matthew 1.21 - She will bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins.”

Discuss: Talk with you children about how God promised to always be with His people wherever they go (Joshua 1.9). Explain that we are not like God. Apart from Him we lie and break our promises. God has to give us a new heart and put His Spirit in us (Ezekiel 36.26-27). Share the good news that God promised to send Jesus to save us from our sin (Matthew 1.21)! Jesus wants us to confess our sin to Him and trust him, and He promises to give us a new heart and put His Spirit in us.

Pray: Pray together as a family by thanking God for keeping His promises. Ask God to help you confess your sin to Jesus and believe the promise that He will save us and be with us forever.

Choose an idea from the “Suggestions for Living on Mission” resource at the back of this guide and do it with your family or Missional Community this week.

WEEK 1:
DEC. 4-10

PERSONAL REFLECTION

I will recount the steadfast love of the Lord, the praises of the Lord, according to all that the Lord has granted us, and the great goodness to the house of Israel that he has granted them according to his compassion, according to the abundance of his steadfast love. For he said, "Surely they are my people, children who will not deal falsely." And he became their Savior. -Isaiah 63. 7-8

We all too easily forget the promises of our great God. More times than not, it's not that we haven't heard Him speak to us; it's that we forget what He has said. This Advent season is an opportunity to recount the promises of God to us, and be reminded that God is fulfilling all of His promises in and through the Gospel.

Our God is a promise keeping God! What promises from God, through His word, come to mind as you meditate on His goodness? Take a few minutes to write them down.

Read 2 Corinthians 1.20. Every promise from God to His people that we read in the Old and New Testament point us to Jesus Christ! They do so for a very specific purpose: God wants us to experience the joy of knowing and being known by Jesus. God is directing us to see Jesus and glory in His presence and salvation. We get Jesus, and God gets glory for satisfying our soul through Christ.

Read the following promises in Scripture:

Ezekiel 36. 22-27; Isaiah 43. 1-7; and 2 Corinthians 5.21

How do these promises from God provide perspective and hope in your current life circumstances? We have an enemy who is constantly whispering lies to our heart that contradict God's promises to us. Each of our hearts are prone to listen to, and possibly believe, the lies and accusations from the evil one. God does not leave us alone in this battle for our hearts and minds.

Read 1 John 3.19-20. What a great promise! God is greater than our heart, His promises are true, and He is faithful! We need to be reminded of God's greatness by consistently hearing and remembering His promises to us through His word.

Pray and ask God to draw you to Himself this Advent season. Ask Him to reveal any lies that are not from Him, and ask Him to show you promises that point you consistently to Jesus.

Reflection & Response:

- What is God saying to you as you meditate on His promises?
- How can you respond in obedience to what God is saying?
- Choose an idea from the "Suggestions for Living on Mission" resource at the back of this guide and do it with your family or Missional Community this week.

Week 2: Longing

Oh Come, Oh Come, Emmanuel

**Oh come, oh come Emmanuel
And ransom captive Israel
That mourns in lonely exile here
Until the Son of God appear**

**Rejoice! Rejoice!
Emmanuel shall come to thee, oh Israel**

**Oh come, Thou Rod of Jesse, free
Thine own from Satan's tyranny
From depths of Hell Thy people save
And give them victory o'er the grave**

**Rejoice! Rejoice!
Emmanuel shall come to thee, oh Israel**

**Oh come, Thou Day-Spring, come and cheer
Our spirits to Thine advent here
Disperse the gloomy clouds of night
And death's dark shadows put to flight**

**Rejoice! Rejoice!
Emmanuel shall come to thee, oh Israel**

WEEK 2:
DEC. 11-17

WITH THE FAMILY

The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who dwelt in a land of deep darkness, on them has light shined. - Isaiah 9.2

Read Isaiah 9.2-3. If possible, have a child read the passage aloud to the family.

Discuss: Have you ever walked in the dark? How did you feel? What does the passage mean when it says the people “walked in darkness?” (a reference to sin)

Activity: Find a dark room or closet and have your family try to walk or do something in the dark. When you feel the urge to turn some light on for help, leave it off a little longer. Then turn on a flashlight or lamp and ask them to try again.

Was it hard to walk (or do something) in the dark? How did you feel? How did you feel the longer the light was off? How did it feel when the light came on? Reread Isaiah 9.2. What, or who, do you think the great light is? (Jesus)

Read Isaiah 9.6-7. Who is the child this passage is talking about? (Jesus) Why do you think this child born would give the people so much joy?

Read Matthew 1.21. Jesus came into the world to save us from our sins. But before Jesus, God’s people walked in the darkness of sin. They were angry and sad, hurting others and being hurt by others. They disobeyed God and did whatever they thought would make them happy, but whatever happiness they found never lasted long. They just couldn’t find a way out of their sad situation. They needed to be rescued—and God knew that.

So God sent people called prophets to promise his people that he would not forget about them or leave them in their sad situation. He would rescue them. One of those prophets was Isaiah. Though he told the story of Jesus, he lived many, many years before Jesus, and the stories Isaiah told were God’s promises to his people that he would rescue them. Thankfully, God keeps his promises. But it must have been hard to wait and keep believing.

Discuss: What are some promises God has made to us? (Never to leave us, to be with us, to take care of us, to help us understand his Word, take away all the sadness, etc.) How does it feel when he takes a while to keep them? Is it sometimes hard to believe that God really will keep his promises?

Pray: Have different members of the family pray: Thank God for 1 or more promises he has made to us. Thank God for keeping his promises. Ask God to help us trust him even when it’s hard.

Choose an idea from the “Suggestions for Living on Mission” resource at the back of this guide and do it with your family or Missional Community this week.

WEEK 2:
DEC. 11-17

PERSONAL REFLECTION

Whom have I in heaven but you? And besides You, I desire nothing on earth. -Psalm 73:25

We live in a day and age where we long and wait for almost nothing. We can go to Amazon and have almost anything in the world shipped to our front doors in two days. We can get on google and immediately get almost any information we want. The problem with these kind of longings is that they are superficial and many times numb us from longing for Jesus.

Advent gives us an opportunity to imagine the long-awaited coming of the Messiah, who was promised thousands of years before his arrival in Bethlehem (John 8:56; Hebrews 11:13). Generations of saints had promises from God in Scripture, and types (examples or forerunners) that heightened their yearning for the coming One.

As we imagine ourselves in this kind of expectation, we begin to see glimpses of how Jesus expected his disciples to see predictions for his ministry in the entire collection of Scriptures (Luke 24:27, 44), not simply a few isolated prophecies. With this kind of yearning, the pages of the Hebrew Bible rustle with Jesus from Genesis to Chronicles.

We see this type of longing all throughout the Psalms. We see a yearning, a longing, a desire to be with the Psalmist's savior.

Read Psalm 73:25. Whom have I in heaven but you? And besides You, I desire nothing on earth.

The beauty of Advent season is we have a chance to check our desires and check our hearts—to pause and recalibrate what we truly long for and what can truly satisfy.

Reflection & Response:

- What do you truly long for?
- What things in your life that you long for do you need to remove?
- How can you begin to see how Jesus is better than these things you long for that cannot satisfy?
- How do these things affect your heart, your love for Jesus, and your approach to this Advent season? What do you need to do in response to that?
- Choose an idea from the “Suggestions for Living on Mission” resource at the back of this guide and do it with your family or Missional Community this week.

Week 3: Arrival

Hark! The Herald Angels Sing

**Hark! The herald angels sing, “Glory to the newborn King!
Peace on earth and mercy mild, God and sinners reconciled!”**

**Joyful, all ye nations rise, join the triumph of the skies
With angelic host proclaim “Christ is born in Bethlehem”
Hark! The herald angels sing, “Glory to the newborn King!”**

**Christ, by highest heaven adored; Christ, the everlasting Lord
Late in time behold him come, offspring of a virgin’s womb
Veiled in flesh the Godhead see; hail the incarnate Deity
Pleased with us in flesh to dwell, Jesus, our Emmanuel
Hark! The herald angels sing, “Glory to the newborn King!”**

Hail the Heaven-born Prince of Peace!

Hail the Son of righteousness

**Light and life to all He brings, risen with healing in His wings
Mild He lays His glory by, born that man no more may die
Born to raise the sons of earth, born to give them second birth
Hark! The herald angels sing, “Glory to the newborn King!”**

WEEK 3:
DEC. 18-25

WITH THE FAMILY

And the angel said to them, "Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people." Luke 2.10

Why is Christmas such a big deal? What is so fun and exciting about it? What are some of your favorite things to do around Christmas to celebrate?

Read Luke 2.8-18. The angel told the shepherds he had good news of great joy for all the people. Does that sound like something to get excited about? What is something you think would be good news of great joy? What was the good news the angel was talking about? (Hint: the answer is in verse 11.) The good news of great joy was that TODAY a Savior has been born!

God's people had been waiting a very long time for something. As they waited, and waited, and waited, God sent people called prophets to remind them that their Savior was coming and that they should always trust and obey him while they waited. They must have really been looking forward to the day when their Savior would finally come.

What is something very exciting that you have had to wait for? How did you feel while you waited? Imagine how excited God's people must have been and how hard it must have been to wait!

Then one night an angel appeared in the sky to a bunch of shepherds while they were in the field watching their sheep. He was there to announce that their Savior had been born TODAY. The one they had waited so long for was finally here!

Think about that very exciting thing that you had to wait for. How excited were you when you finally got it?

Who was the Savior the angel was talking about? Why is it exciting that he came? Why does he say that it means great joy for *all the people*?

Activity: Act out the story of the shepherds from Luke 2.8-18. Really play up the excitement that Jesus has been born TODAY!

What are some things we can do around Christmas to remember and celebrate that Jesus came to save us from our sins? How can we show or tell those around us that Jesus came to save them from their sins, too?

Pray: Parents and kids, ask how you can pray for each other. Who are you praying for by name, asking God to save? Pray for those people together as a family, and take a few minutes this week to invite someone to be your guest at our Christmas service on December 18th.

Choose an idea from the "Suggestions for Living on Mission" resource at the back of this guide and do it with your family or Missional Community this week.

WEEK 3:
DEC. 18-25

PERSONAL REFLECTION

Read Matthew 4.12-17. A lot of this passage is unfamiliar and a bit odd, but as we get to the end of it we can see that Matthew is showing us how Jesus began his ministry on Earth. The message he proclaimed and taught was this: Turn from your sin and follow me; the Kingdom of Heaven is here.

Matthew is saying that the Kingdom of Heaven has invaded the Earth in Jesus coming to live as one of us. Salvation is offered. People walking in the darkness of sin—longing, aching for rescue—have seen a great light. And in describing all of this, Matthew references an old promise.

Read Isaiah 9.1-7. The promise Matthew referenced was made by God a long, long time ago to his people. It was a promise that he would not abandon them, but that he would come to them—that the darkness they walked in because of sin would eventually end, and the light of salvation would shine on them. But they had waited hundreds and hundreds of years without receiving this promise.

In the way he described the beginning of Jesus' ministry, Matthew is saying that this long-awaited and well-known promise has been fulfilled in Jesus. The darkness the people walked in spanned hundreds, even thousands, of years. But now there was no more waiting, no more longing, no more walking in darkness. Now the Kingdom of Heaven had come in Jesus. Rescue had arrived!

In Isaiah 9.6, you see the phrase, "To us a child is born." We know that the coming of Jesus is the fulfillment of God's promise to send a rescuer, one to break the power of darkness, and one whose Kingdom will never end. At Christmas, we celebrate the birth of that child. So we do not just celebrate the birth of a baby. We celebrate the coming of salvation into the world! Longing and hope have now become reality (Rom. 8.24-25).

But our celebration is not just of salvation. It is the celebration of a *long ago promised, long ached for*, salvation. We celebrate that Jesus came into the world to save us from our sins, and that in doing it, Jesus came to rescue us from the aching and longing that sin brings!

All of us can identify with that. All of us know the aching of crying out for something to change. All of us know what longing for something is like. All of us know the darkness of sin. We see it. We feel it. And the good news of great joy at Christmas is that Jesus came into the world to rescue us from it.

The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light. For to us a child is born; to us a son is given.

Reflection & Response:

- What that Jesus rescued you from? What are you still longing for rescue from?
- How can you celebrate what you have received and put your hope in Jesus this Christmas?
- How can you tell or show others that your hope is in Jesus this Christmas?
- Choose an idea from the "Suggestions for Living on Mission" resource at the back of this guide and do it with your family or Missional Community this week.

1 Peter 1.8-13

Though you have not seen him, you love him. Though you do not now see him, you believe in him and rejoice with joy that is inexpressible and filled with glory, obtaining the outcome of your faith, the salvation of your souls.

Concerning this salvation, the prophets who prophesied about the grace that was to be yours searched and inquired carefully, inquiring what person or time the Spirit of Christ in them was indicating when he predicted the sufferings of Christ and the subsequent glories. It was revealed to them that they were serving not themselves but you, in the things that have now been announced to you through those who preached the good news to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven, things into which angels long to look.

Therefore, preparing your minds for action, and being sober-minded, set your hope fully on the grace that will be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ.

WAYS TO OBSERVE ADVENT

There are a number of ways to observe and celebrate Advent. The most important thing is to find ways that make sense for your family, remind you of the gospel, and help you reflect on the hope that Jesus brings. Here are a few suggestions:

Advent Wreath and Candles

An Advent wreath is typically made of evergreen branches, either real or fake, arranged in a circle. Both the evergreens and the circle represent the never-ending nature of God, his constant presence with us, and the never-ending life that Jesus offers.

There are typically five candles, four arranged around the circle and one in the center. Three of the candles are traditionally purple and represent royalty. The fourth candle is pink and represents joy. The fifth candle, in the center, is white and represents purity.

The first candle is typically lit on the fourth Sunday before Christmas, and another candle is lit each week to represent the growing light that Jesus brings into the world. This helps us to remember and reflect on the growing hope and anticipation that preceded Jesus' first coming. The white candle is lit on Christmas Eve or Christmas Day and represents Jesus' coming into the world. Just as the white candle represents Jesus' purity, so we too, in Jesus, are purified of our sins and given his perfect righteousness.



You may choose to read a scripture each week and light the candles as a family. You might also want to light the candles during dinner and eat with nothing but the candlelight, giving a visual picture of the growing light that Christ brings. Kids will enjoy lighting the candles.

Noel Piper, in her book *Treasuring God in our Traditions*, suggests also using a nativity as part of the setup if you have smaller kids. She notes that the symbolism of the candles could easily be lost on smaller kids, and the nativity will help them to remember the reason for the celebration.

Using a nativity or not, what you use for the wreath, how many candles, or what color aren't as important as the symbolic reflection and the reminder that it brings.

Advent Calendars

Many families use Advent calendars to count down the days to Christmas. Most calendars start the first day of December and lead up to Christmas Day. They usually include 24 windows, pockets, or drawers that are opened to reveal a scripture, story, picture, or small gift.

There are many kinds of Advent calendars, some Christian and some secular. You can find several at www.christianbook.com. The point of the calendar is that as each window is opened, the anticipation of Christmas grows, similar to the anticipation and longing for the Messiah that Israel experienced. If you decide to do your own scriptures, you can choose scriptures that start with prophecies about the Messiah and lead up to the birth of Jesus. You can also choose scriptures that talk about Christ's power to save his people from their sins.

Advent Tree or Jesus Tree

Some families set up an Advent tree in addition to or in place of a traditional Christmas tree. (Christmas trees are a cultural part of celebrating Christmas, and we are not advocating that you not set one up. An Advent tree is simply another option and a way to draw the focus of the Christmas season to Jesus intentionally).

You can get a regular tree, a small tree, or even a tree branch from outside. Anything will work. The idea of an Advent tree is that you decorate it over the course of the month with reminders of who Jesus is and the hope he brings.



You may choose to read scripture together or have a family devotion related to the Advent season and afterward allow the kids, (and the parents, if you're so inclined), to add something to the tree that reminds them of Jesus or God's salvation. Some examples are things that represent the Christmas story (manger, shepherds, stars), things that relate to Jesus' life (carpentry tools, a fish, bread), symbols of who Jesus is in scripture (a lion, a lamb, a father), or anything else.

This is a great way for kids to be creative. You can use actual Christmas ornaments, items you find around the house, or you can make your own ornaments. Ask the kids to say what it is about the item that reminds them of Jesus before they hang it. It could even be something light-hearted, like a man snoring to represent Jesus sleeping in the boat. The Advent tree is a great way to reflect and have fun with your family.

John and Noel Piper have some good ideas for items to put on the Jesus tree in their blog post at Desiring God. It can be found here: <http://www.desiringgod.org/blog/posts/jesus-tree>.

HELPFUL RESOURCES FOR THE SEASON

Playlists

If you have a Spotify account you can search for “RemedyChurch” and find two playlists we have created to help you observe this season. One is called “Songs for Advent” and is filled with songs that will help you worship and reflect on the truths of the Advent season. Many of the songs are favorites that you will recognize.

The other playlist is called “Advent at Remedy” and will feature songs that we are singing on Sundays at our worship gathering during the Advent season. Becoming familiar with these songs will help you participate when we gather.

Albums

Glory in the Highest, Chris Tomlin
A Worship Initiative Christmas, Shane and Shane
A Day of Glory, Austin Stone Worship
Christmas, Francesca Battistelli
All I Really Want For Christmas, Steven Curtis Chapman
Rose of Bethlehem, Selah
Oh For Joy, David Crowder Band
Songs for Christmas, Phil Wickham

Songs

Oh Come, O Come, Emmanuel
Oh Holy Night
What Child is This?
Come Thou Long Expected Jesus
Hark! The Herald Angels Sing
Hallelujah! What a Savior (Christmas Version), by Aaron Ivey
Oh Little Town of Bethlehem
Joy to the World
Go Tell It on the Mountain
I Heard the Bells on Christmas Day
Oh Come All Ye Faithful

Books

Treasuring God in Our Traditions, Noel Piper
Song of the Stars: A Christmas Story, Sally Lloyd-Jones
Jesus Storybook Bible, Sally Lloyd-Jones
Jotham’s Journey: A Storybook for Advent, Arnold Ytreeide
Bartholomew’s Passage: A Family Story for Advent, Arnold Ytreeide
Tabitha’s Travels: A Family Story for Advent, Arnold Ytreeide

ADVENT SCRIPTURES

Promises of God

Isaiah 7.10-14; 9.2-7; 11.1-16; 52.13-53.12
Jeremiah 31.31-34; 33.14-16
Ezekiel 36.22-32
Micah 5.1-5

Longing for Redemption

Psalm 69.1-3
Isaiah 64.1-12
Hebrews 11.13-16
1 Peter 1.10-11

Anticipating the Fulfillment of the Promises

1 Samuel 3.1
Amos 8.11-12
Matthew 1.20-23; 2.1-10
Luke 1.26-38, 39-56; 2.8-15

Fulfillment of God's Promises in Jesus

Matthew 1.18-25; 2.11
Luke 2.1-21, 22-38
John 1.1-14
2 Corinthians 8.9
Philippians 2.5-11
Colossians 1.15-22

Awaiting the Second Advent of Christ

Acts 1.6-11; 17.30-31
Romans 7.24-25; 8.18-25
1 Thessalonians 3.11-13
Hebrews 10.23-25; 11.39-12.3
1 Peter 1.3-9
2 Peter 3.1-14
1 John 2.28

SUGGESTIONS FOR LIVING ON MISSION

These are a few suggestions for living on mission this Advent season. These ideas can be done as individuals, with your family, or with your Missional Community. Our challenge to you is to choose a handful of ideas from this list, or come up with your own, and put them into action during the weeks of Advent as ways to build community, have gospel conversations, and show people the love of Christ as we look toward Christmas.

1. Adopt a family in need - buy gifts, clothes, food, etc.
2. Put up Christmas decorations for an older or a busy family.
3. Rake leaves for a neighbor.
4. Take Christmas cookies to neighbors, co-workers, or friends.
5. Recruit some neighbors to go caroling in your neighborhood or at a local nursing home.
6. Invite friends or neighbors over for coffee and dessert.
7. Host a cookie exchange - 5-6 people make cookies, get together, and exchange cookies.
8. Discuss, pray, and give to Remedy's Christmas Challenge (info at Remedy-Church.com).
9. Hand deliver Christmas cards rather than mailing them.
10. Invite friends with kids to watch a kids' Christmas movie together. Make hot chocolate or cider and let the kids wear their pajamas.
11. Invite friends and neighbors to watch an appropriate adult Christmas movie.
12. Organize a night to go look at Christmas lights with friends and neighbors. Carpool or walk together.
13. Host a Christmas-themed dinner party. Invite 1-2 people/couples from your Missional Community and 1-2 people/couples who are not part of a church.
14. Serve at a soup kitchen, homeless shelter, or some other needs-focused ministry. Invite neighbors and friends to join you.
15. Invite a family or friend to join you for Christmas dinner.
16. Invite a friend to join you on the Candlelight Tour of Homes in Waxahachie. Buy their ticket.
17. Invite a friend to Bethlehem Revisited in Waxahachie and to coffee afterward.
18. Host a football watching party and invite people from your Missional Community and other friends and neighbors.
19. Host a s'mores party in your front yard. Set up a fire pit and provide hot chocolate and/or coffee.
20. Invite family, friends, and neighbors to be your special guest at our Christmas service and to dessert or coffee afterward to discuss their thoughts about the service.