



Advent Guide

Rescue is Coming!



Advent Guide

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 Remedy 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: We Need to be Rescued

God created us and the world in perfection, but because of our sin and rebellion, perfection was lost and was replaced with darkness and despair. Because of this profound loss, we have a deep need to be rescued.

Week 2: Rescue is Coming!

God promised throughout history that he would not leave his people alone or without hope. He promised to send someone to rescue them. While they lived in darkness, they could hope that a great light was coming and look with expectancy toward that day.

Week 3: Rescue is Here!

Praise God! He did not forsake his people. He sent Jesus into the world to rescue us from our sins and restore us to him. The dark night of despair has given way to the bright light of morning. This is why we celebrate Christmas.

Ways to Observe Advent

Helpful Resources for the Season

Advent Scriptures

Ideas for Living On Mission this Advent Season

Week 1: We Need to be Rescued

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 1:
DEC 6-12

WITH THE FAMILY

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). -Matthew 1.21-23

Read Matthew 1.21-23. If possible, have a child read the passage aloud to the family.

Discuss: Why do we need to be saved from our sin?

Activity: Sit together as a family, but separate one person in a chair across the room. Use bandanas or yarn to tie their hands and feet together and secure them to the chair.

Read Isaiah 59.2. What are the consequences of sin? Ask the family member across the room how they feel about being tied up and separated? Talk about how they can't escape on their own. They need to be rescued!

Read 2 Tim. 2.26. If possible, have a child read the passage aloud to the family

Discuss: The Bible tells us that we have been captured by Satan in our sin. We need someone to rescue us!

Read 1 Peter 3.18. Have someone from the family go and rescue the captured (separated) family member, and bring them back to the family.

Discuss: Only Jesus can bring us back to God. He is our only rescuer. We often try to fix our sin by ourselves, but we are helpless in our sin, apart from Jesus. We need to turn away from our sin and believe that Jesus saves us from our sin. Explain how we need Jesus every day to help us battle sin and our enemy, Satan.

Pray: 1) Ask God to show everyone in the family what sin they need to confess. 2) Thank God for sending Jesus as our rescuer. 3) Ask Jesus to rescue you from your sin, and bring you back to God.

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. 6-12

PERSONAL REFLECTION

The word of God clearly shows us our spiritual condition if we are left to ourselves. Adam and Eve were created in the presence of God and were cast out of His presence because of their sin and disobedience (Genesis 3.24). The result of their sin and ours is spiritual death (Genesis 2.17, Romans 3.23, Romans 6.23) and separation from God.

Psalm 66.18 tells us, “If I had cherished iniquity in my heart, the Lord would not have listened.” Our problem is more that the fact that we have sinned and continue sinning. We cherish our sin more than being in fellowship our creator. We treasure things, people, relationships, money, or things we hide from everyone above God. Why? How is this possible? Jeremiah 17.9 tells us, “The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately sick; who can understand it?”

Read Ephesians 2.1-3.

This passage paints a clear picture of our depravity apart from a savior. We are dead in our sin. We live and move following the pattern of the world. We follow Satan, the prince of the power of the air, as he deceives us and lies to us about our sin. We are sons of disobedience carrying our own desires with no regard for the One who created us. We are children of wrath, which magnifies our desperate situation.

Ephesians 5.6 tells us that the wrath of God comes on the sons of disobedience. John 3.36 warns us that the wrath of God remains on the person who does not obey Jesus. Apart from Jesus Christ we are dead men/women walking, separated from God because of our sin, with the wrath of our holy and just creator bearing down on us. We desperately need a rescuer!

We all need to sit and contemplate the depth of our depravity. Sometimes we need to wait in the darkness and cry out to God for a miracle. We need to be rescued! Jesus was murdered and buried, and then God miraculously intervened by raising Him from the dead. This victory came after a very dark day on Friday when God punished the sin of those whom Jesus is rescuing. God’s wrath and coming eternal judgement are real, and so is our sin. We need to be rescued!

Reflection:

- What sin is presently in your heart that have you have not confessed to God?
- Do you believe that Jesus is able to rescue you and meet your every need?

Response:

- What is God doing in your heart through this truth in His word?
- How do you need to respond in faith and obedience?
- 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: Rescue is Coming!

Hallelujah, What a Savior! (Christmas)

(www.austinstoneworship.com)

**Shining star in heaven so bright, lowly tend their flocks by night
Could this be our faith now sight?
Hallelujah, what a Savior!**

**Gift of gifts in manger laid, hope of men no more delayed
God the Just, His love displayed
Hallelujah, what a Savior!**

**Hallelujah! Praise to the One whose blood has pardoned me
Oh what a Savior, Redeemer and King, your love has rescued me**

**Eternal Word made flesh was He
The promise prophets longed to see
Jesus Christ, our mystery
Hallelujah, what a Savior!**

**And now the church, His praises bring
Blood-brought bride and matchless King
Heaven and earth now join to sing
Hallelujah what a Savior!
Hallelujah what a Savior!**

WEEK 2:
DEC. 13-19

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, 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 as it got longer? How did it feel when the light came on? Were you even more glad when it came on because it was off for so long? 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: 1) Thank God for 1 or more promises he has made to us. 2) Thank God for keeping his promises. 3) 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. 13-19

PERSONAL REFLECTION

Passages like Psalm 69.1-3 and Isaiah 64.5-7 express the bitterness and anguish of life shrouded in darkness and despair, and all of us can identify. Our separation from God and from other people is painfully clear, our hearts are wicked and discontent, and we yearn for things to be made right. These are the consequences of sin. We saw that last week.

Psalm 13 is another place we see this anguish. **Read verses 1-3.** Don't you love the honesty of these words? Most of us don't dare speak this way toward God, at least not out loud, but David let it fly.

"How long will you let my days be filled with sorrow? You're obviously hiding from me or have forgotten me. Is that going to last forever?" You can hear the contempt and the despair in his words. And if we're honest, all of us can identify with them. We know well the pain of needing to be rescued.

Thankfully, that isn't the end of the Psalm...or the story. **Read verses 5-6.** These words are profound. Immediately on the heels of David's despair, wondering if maybe God has forgotten about him, he is declaring his trust and joy in Him, remembering how *good* God has treated him.

This is the hope we have in the gospel. It is a hope in the future. In the midst of David's deep pain, anguish, and uncertainty about God, he remembered God's promise to rescue, and that caused him great hope and joy, even in the midst of his pain.

What things in your heart or your life right now leave you yearning for restoration and rescue? Have you been honest with God about them? Have you been honest to anyone else about them? Do you find yourself more consistently aware of these things or of the promises of God to rescue and restore?

Read 1 Peter 1.3-9. When Peter says, "In *this* we rejoice," what is he talking about?

He's talking about a confident expectation of restoration and unending joy in the presence of God. Even though we are currently grieved by trials, we rejoice in the midst of them because of what awaits us. And what confidence do we have in that reality? We have confidence because God has already fulfilled one promise to rescue when he sent Jesus to save us from our sins, and that is what we celebrate at Christmas.

Reflection:

- Are there some things in your heart that you need to say to God or to someone else? Do it.
- Give some thought to the promises of God, both those he's fulfilled and those he has yet to fulfill. In what do you place your hope?

Response:

- 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: Rescue is Here!

O Holy Night

O, holy night!

**The stars are brightly shining
It is the night of our dear savior's birth
Long lay the world in sin and error pining
Till he appeared and the soul felt its worth
A thrill of hope, the weary world rejoices
For yonder breaks a new and glorious morn**

Fall on your knees

Oh hear the angel voices

Oh night divine

Oh night when Christ was born

Oh night divine, Oh night divine

Truly he taught us to love one another

His law is love and his gospel is peace

Chains shall he break, for the slave is our brother

And in his name all oppression shall cease

Sweet hymns of joy in grateful chorus raise we

Let all within us praise his holy name

Christ is the Lord! Then ever, ever praise we

His power and glory ever more proclaim

His power and glory ever more proclaim

WEEK 3:
DEC. 20-25

WITH THE FAMILY

“Where is he who has been born king of the Jews? For we saw his star when it rose and have come to worship him.” - Matthew 2.1

Read Matthew 1.21. Last week we read that Jesus came to save us from our sins.

Discuss: What is sin? (disobeying God) Can you name a few sins that you have committed this week? Who came to save us from our sins? And how did he do that? (He died on the cross.)

Now here’s another question: Who did Jesus come to save?

Read Matthew 2.1-2. On the night Jesus was born God caused a star to shine bright in the sky, so bright that these men saw it all the way from another country. They were not part of God’s people, the Jews. They were called Gentiles. God’s promise to save his people from their sins was usually only talked about to Jews, not Gentiles.

But on this night, God did something amazing. God showed the whole world that Jesus wasn’t just coming to save those who thought they were his people. He was coming to save the entire world.

The wise men knew this, so they set off to find the baby king. They did not find Jesus in the stable on the night he was born, like the Shepherds. Their journey took them a very long time, but when they found him, look what they did...

Read Matthew 2.10-11. When the wise men found Jesus, they worshipped him and gave him gifts (younger kids might enjoy acting this out). They knew that he was not just king of those who called themselves his people. He was the king of the whole world, and he had come to save the whole world from their sins.

Discuss: Who did Jesus come to save? Did he come to save you? What about your mom or dad? What about your friends and neighbors?

Activity: Give everyone a sheet of paper. On the top half of the paper draw a picture, symbol, or verse that reminds you that Jesus came to save the entire world. On the bottom half of the paper, write the names of some people in your life that are not followers of Jesus. Talk about some ways you can show and tell the love of Jesus to these people.

Pray: Have different members of the family pray: 1) Thank God for sending Jesus to save us from our sins. 2) Ask God to save the people you listed. 3) Ask God to help you find ways to show and tell them that he loves them and sent Jesus to save them.

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. 20-25

PERSONAL REFLECTION

Why do we celebrate Christmas? Take a minute and write down your answer.

This season quickly fills up with parties, family, traditions, Santa, Elf on the Shelf, shopping, presents, debt, regret, and any number of other things. It's easy for the real weight of the season to get lost. As we recognized this in our kids (and ourselves, to an extent), we began to ask them a probing question: "Why do we celebrate Christmas?"

What we found was that, even looking through our Bible/gospel/disciples of Jesus lens, our first answer to this question was "because Jesus was born." While that answer is 100% true, it does not go deep enough to get at the real weight of why we celebrate.

Read Titus 3.3 and Romans 1.18 & 2.5. Write down 3-4 words or feelings that come to mind when you read these verses. These are just a few of the many, many passages we could read to point out the bleak picture of who we are when left to our own desires.

Now read Psalm 69.1-3 and Isaiah 64.5-7. Write down 3-4 words or feelings that come to mind when you read these verses. A few that come to my mind are helpless, despair, and need intervention. Not only is our situation bleak because of our selfishness and rebellion, we are powerless to do anything to change it. We're like a car stuck in the mud who keeps spinning our tires trying to get out, only to find the hole getting bigger. We need something outside of ourselves to intervene. We need to be rescued.

Read Titus 2.11. Nothing we could do would ever be enough to change our bleak situation. Only the grace of God could do it. What we longed for, yearned for—the thing we needed most—has come. The phrase "the grace of God" is a reference to the goodness of God to mankind, and its ultimate expression was personified in Jesus.

Only the grace of God could rescue us, and Jesus' birth signified its coming in fullness. That's why there is so much joy in Christmas (Is. 9.2-3)! We don't celebrate a family holiday or simply the birth of a great man or leader. The birth of Jesus was more than a baby coming into the world, even God's son. It was the appearing of the grace of God, offering salvation—rescue & restoration—to everyone who would believe. It was the arrival of our long-awaited rescue, and it truly is good news of great joy for all people!

Reflection:

- What things do you tend to get most excited about at Christmas?
- Looking into your own life and heart, why do you think there is reason to celebrate this Christmas?

Response:

- What reminders, rhythms, or traditions do you need to put in place this week so that your affections are stirred and your heart led to worship at the appearing of the grace of God?
- 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
Holiday!: A Collection of Christmas Classics, Crystal Lewis
Christmas From the Realms of Glory, Bebo Norman
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

Psalms 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. Provide gifts for foster kids through Empty Stocking (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 and invite 1-2 couples from your Missional Community and 1-2 couples who are not part of your Missional Community.
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.