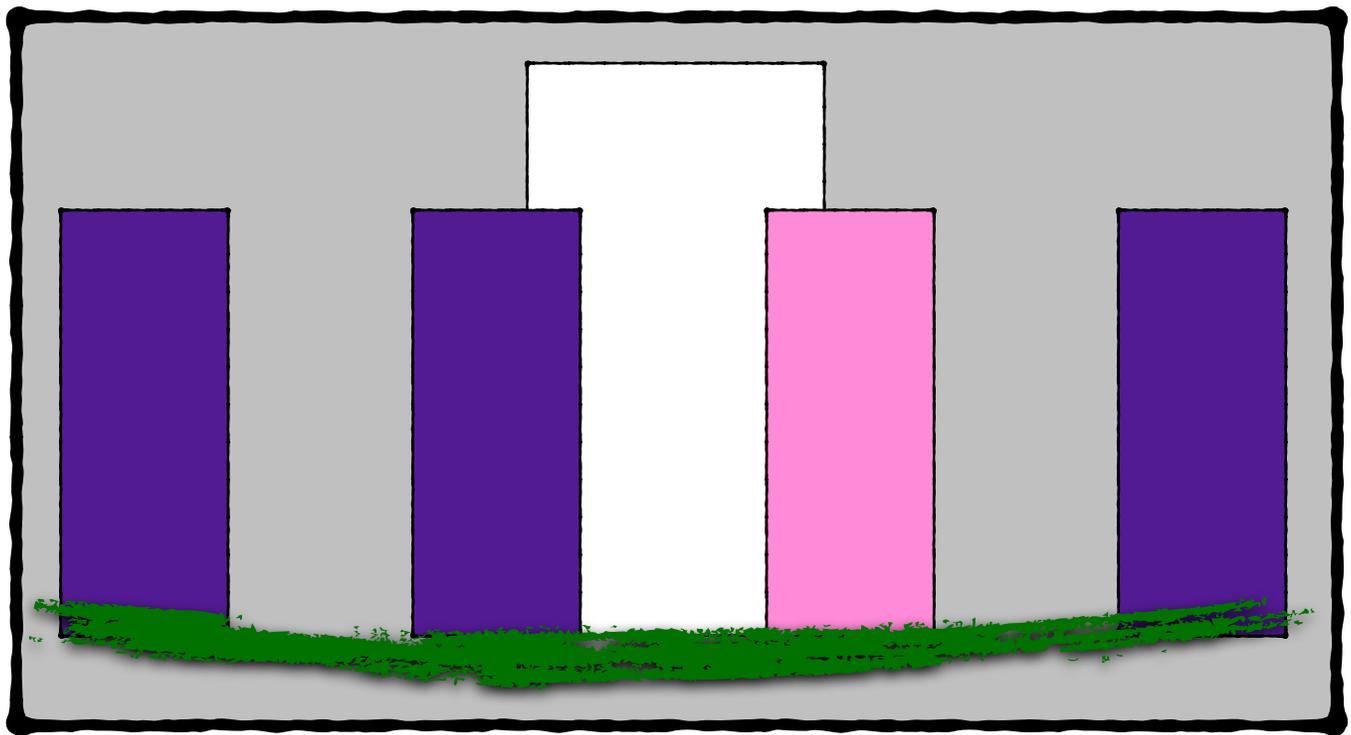


# Advent

*A Weekly Family Time Guide*



*November 29, 2020 Through December 24, 2020*

# *Advent Sunday Family Time*

## Significance of "Advent"

Advent is a time of anticipation, expectant waiting and preparation for the celebration of the birth of Christ. It is also a time of looking towards the Second Coming of Christ. It comes from the Latin word which means "coming or arrival."

Think of it like the time of preparation for the celebrating at a wedding or the moments of preparation for a child to join your family. In the preparation there is an element of celebrating, but the actual celebration is what the preparation is pointing towards.

Think about all the preparations for a wedding. First, the young man might talk with the young lady's parents, then he buys a ring, then he sets up how to ask her to marry him. After the question is asked, they call and tell their friends and family. Then come the details...dress and tux fittings, decorations, service elements, invitations. There is a ton of preparation and celebrating along the way, but it all points towards the day of celebration.

The same is true for when children join our families. You find out they are coming. Then you begin telling people, decorating, and doing a registry so people can help you buy all the things you need. Then, the child arrives and you celebrate.

All throughout our lives there are times of preparation and celebration. This is the same for the Church...preparation and celebration. Advent, Christmas, Lent, Eastertide, Pentecost to name a few. We can use these times, these cycles, to better help us understand the story of Christ, the story of God and God's people, and how each of us are part of that story.

Advent is a time of anticipation and preparation.

## *Advent Set Up*

1. Supplies
  - Wreath
    - Option 1: Use a Styrofoam ring with some evergreen
    - Option 2: Purchase a pre-made wreath
  - Candles
    - 3 violet candles
    - 1 pink candle
    - 1 large white candle.
  - Purple Cloth (the color of royalty)
2. Place the wreath on the purple cloth with the violet candles at the 3 o'clock, 6 o'clock and 12 o'clock positions and the pink candles at the 9 o'clock position. Then place the large white candle in the middle.
3. The Advent Wreath (cloth, wreath, and candles) can be placed as a centerpiece or on any table.
4. Light a candle each Sunday as well as the previous week(s) candle(s). Lighting candles on the wreath each week of Advent reminds us of the progression of anticipation and expectation.

5. Have one of your family members read the suggested passage for each Sunday.
6. Close each Sunday's time by singing "O Come, O Come, Emmanuel." The words are included on the following pages.



### **Family Activity Ideas**

Each week there is also a suggested family activity and family outing. This could be done on any day of the week. They are just suggestions to help your family have fun and build excitement for the day of celebration of the birth of Jesus. They can be switched around to different weeks. You can even take this guide with you and lead the daily time together in the car on your way home from an outing.

#### **Week 1**

Family Activity  
Make Caramel Apples

Family Outing

View Christmas Light Display (make hot chocolate and perhaps view a community park display or drive around your community)

#### **Week 2**

Family Activity

Wrap each bedroom door with Christmas paper (Allow the kids to pick their own wrapping paper design. Kids share a room? Let one wrap the bathroom or linen closet or other doors in your house.)

Family Outing

Visit a decorated department store (Example: Bass Pro Shop or Cabela's)

#### **Week 3**

Family Activity

Create Gingerbread Houses (Kits available at local grocery store)

Family Outing

Attend a community event (Christmas parade, Christmas festival, Christmas concert, etc.)

#### **Week 4**

Family Activity

Bake a Birthday Cake for Jesus

Family Outing

Participate in a Christmas Eve Service

## Advent Week One - November 29

Gather around the Advent Wreath

The *circle* of the wreath represents God's care. God's love is so great it has no beginning or end. The *evergreens* represent the hope of eternal life.

The purple cloth represents the royalty of Jesus – that he is the King of kings.

### **Symbol**

The first candle (violet) is the candle of prophecy. It is the candle of **Hope**.

Light the candle in the 3 o'clock position in the wreath.

### **Scripture**

Isaiah 9:2-3, 6-7

### **Share**

This week is the week of Hope and Prophecy. What does it mean to have hope? (A feeling of looking forward for a certain thing to happen, a feeling of trust) Do you have any ideas of what a prophecy might be? (It is a prediction of something that will happen but it hasn't happened yet) This scripture that we just read includes both of these words; it is a Prophecy of Hope for the world. This scripture points to Jesus' birth even BEFORE it actually happened! It also points to who Jesus is and will be as King forever and ever. We can have hope in the Lord because we can trust God. We, as followers of Jesus, can look back to the amazingness of Jesus' predicted birth and look forward to the promise of Heaven and living in eternity with God! Everyone think of one thing that you are hopeful for (looking forward to) during this Advent season and share your idea.

### **Sing**

Sing the first verse of "O Come, O Come, Emmanuel" (Lyrics on the final page)

### **Pray**

Close in prayer keeping in mind the symbol, scripture and discussion of the evening.

## Advent Week Two - December 6

Gather around the Advent Wreath

### **Symbol**

Review the meaning of the circle, evergreens, purple cloth, and first candle.

The second candle (violet) is the candle of Bethlehem. It is the candle of **Peace**.

Light the candle in the 6 o'clock position in the wreath and the candle in the 3 o'clock position.

### **Scripture**

Micah 5:2

### **Share**

This week is the week of Peace and Bethlehem. Bethlehem is a small village south of Jerusalem not far from the Mediterranean Sea. (Optional: look up the location on a map.)

This scripture is prophecy just like last week. This scripture is telling us that Jesus will be born in Bethlehem long BEFORE it actually happened. What does the word peace mean? (Free of being disturbed, calm, no war) What kinds of things make you feel the most peaceful? Can you think of times when you have felt God's peace in your life?

### **Sing**

Sing the first verse of "O Come, O Come, Emmanuel" (Lyrics on the final page)

### **Pray**

Close in prayer keeping in mind the symbol, scripture and discussion of the evening.

## Advent Week Three - December 13

Gather around the Advent Wreath

### **Symbol**

Review the meaning of the circle, evergreens, purple cloth, and first and second candles.

The third candle (pink) is the candle of the Shepherds. It is the candle of **Joy**.

Light the candle in the 9 o'clock position in the wreath and the candles in the 3 o'clock and 6 o'clock positions.

### **Scripture**

Luke 2:1-12

### **Share**

In this scripture, we hear about Jesus being born to Mary and Joseph. This week is the week of Joy and Shepherds. What happened to the shepherds in today's scripture? How do you think they were feeling? The word Joy means to have great happiness. Talk about all of the places you see joy in this story from today. What kinds of things make you feel the most joy? Can you think of times when God has brought joy in your life?

### **Sing**

Sing the first verse of "O Come, O Come, Emmanuel" (Lyrics on the final page)

### **Pray**

Close in prayer keeping in mind the symbol, scripture and discussion of the evening.

## Advent Week Four - December 20

Gather around the Advent Wreath

### **Symbol**

Review the meaning of the circle, evergreens, purple cloth, and first, second and third candles.

The fourth candle (violet) is the candle of the Angels. It is the candle of **Love**.

Light the candle in the 12 o'clock position in the wreath and the candles in the 3 o'clock, 6 o'clock and 9 o'clock positions.

### **Scripture**

Luke 2:13-20

### **Share**

This week is the week of Angels and Love. How would you feel to see the entire sky filled with angels praising God? What do you think it looked like and sounded like? If you were there that night, what do you think you would have done? The word love means deep affection or to like something or someone a lot. Talk about where you see love throughout the whole story of Jesus' birth. What kinds of things or people do you love? Can you think of times when you have felt God's love for you in your life?

### **Sing**

Sing the first verse of "O Come, O Come, Emmanuel" (Lyrics on the final page)

### **Pray**

Close in prayer keeping in mind the symbol, scripture and discussion of the evening.

## Christmas Eve - December 24 or Christmas Day - December 25

Gather around the Advent Wreath

### **Symbol**

Review the meaning of the circle, evergreens, purple cloth, and first, second, third and fourth candles.

The fifth and last candle (white) is the **Christ Candle**. It represents Christ, the Light of the World.

Light the candle in the center of the wreath and all 4 other candles.

### **Scripture**

John 3:16-17

### **Share**

Jesus came into this world because of God's great love for us. Think about all of the scriptures we have shared together throughout this Advent season. We have seen through the prophecies how God had planned for Jesus to come even long before he was born. We have seen the angels bring the good news of his birth. We have seen the shepherds so filled with joy about the good news that they can't help but share the joy of that message to everyone. This Christmas we celebrate the Hope, Peace, Joy, and Love of God through Jesus, the Son of God, as God's gift to us and the world. From your family time together during these last weeks of Advent, take turns and share one thing that you learned, that you feel like God is teaching you, or that has been meaningful to you.

### **Sing**

Sing the first verse of "O Come, O Come, Emmanuel" (Lyrics on the final page)

### **Pray**

Close in prayer keeping in mind the symbol, scripture and discussion of the evening.

## *O Come, O Come, Emmanuel*

O come, O 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, O Israel.

O come, Thou Dayspring, come and cheer  
Our spirits by Thine advent here;  
Disperse the gloomy clouds of night,  
And death's dark shadows put to flight.  
Rejoice, rejoice! Emmanuel  
Shall come to thee, O Israel.

O come, Thou Wisdom from on high,  
And order all things, far and nigh;  
To us the path of knowledge show,  
And cause us in her ways to go.  
Rejoice, rejoice! Emmanuel  
Shall come to thee, O Israel.

O come, Desire of nations, bind  
In one the hearts of all mankind;  
Bid Thou our sad divisions cease,  
And be Thyself our King of peace.  
Rejoice, rejoice! Emmanuel  
Shall come to thee, O Israel.

You can find the tune to this hymn at <http://cyberhymnal.org/htm/c/o/m/comtlong.htm> or Fernando Ortega has a simple version on iTunes.

### *12 Days of Christmas Family Time Guide*

Also available 12 Days of Christmas Family Time Guide. It begins on December 25 and ends with a 3 Kings' Day celebration on January 6.

For more information, contact [info@equiptoengage.org](mailto:info@equiptoengage.org).

## Created By:

This resource is created by Trey and Candice Brooks, Co-Directors of Equip to Engage.

Equip to Engage is called to serve children's leaders through quality, affordable, local leadership development. This is accomplished with retreats, weekend events and specialized programs.

What makes Equip to Engage unique? We concentrate on equipping, encouraging and connecting local children's leaders and local churches. We understand many children's leaders are lay people and are unable to attend national conferences. Equip to Engage brings resources and encouragement to the local church or geographical area.

Equip to Engage collaborates with local and district leaders as it seeks to make gatherings and resources as cost effective as possible for children's leaders. Equip to Engage desires to be a resource to the local and district church.

For more information about Equip to Engage,  
check out [equiptoengage.org](http://equiptoengage.org)  
or email [info@equiptoengage.org](mailto:info@equiptoengage.org).

We hope this is a useful and simple tool for your family to anticipate and celebrate the coming of Emmanuel - God with us!

