



# Advent Challenge

THIS YEAR WE WANT TO EQUIP OUR COMMUNITY TO JOURNEY THROUGH THE STORY OF THE ARRIVAL OF JESUS. ADVENT IS A SEASON OF PREPARATION, PREPARING OUR HEARTS FOR THE BIRTH OF JESUS.

THIS RESOURCE WILL HELP TO MAKE SPACE IN YOUR HEART TO LEARN ABOUT THE CHARACTER OF JESUS AS WELL AS CHALLENGE YOU TO WORSHIP FULLY, SPEND LESS, GIVE MORE AND LOVE ALL – THE PILLARS OF THE ADVENT CONSPIRACY THAT WE USED TO HELP CREATE THIS RESOURCE.

EACH DAY YOU WILL READ A SHORT “EXPLAIN SECTION” TO GIVE CONTEXT TO THE VERSE YOU WILL READ. THEN YOU WILL PULL OUT YOUR BIBLE TO READ! WE SUGGEST A PHYSICAL BIBLE, ESPECIALLY IF YOU ARE DOING THIS WITH KIDS TO HELP THEM LEARN HOW TO LOOK THINGS UP IN THE BIBLE. THERE WILL THEN BE 2-3 QUESTIONS TO HELP GUIDE YOUR THINKING, THEN A PRAYER.

IF DOING THIS WITH CHILDREN YOU WILL THEN FIND THE CORRESPONDING STAMP USING STICKY TACK ONTO YOUR ADVENT TREE.

LASTLY, YOU WILL PARTAKE IN THE DO SECTION. THIS IS TO HELP US TAKE ACTION DURING OUR ADVENT SEASON.



Resources adapted from:  
Advent Conspiracy and  
Family Project: Christmas

### **December 1st - Jesus, Eternal with the Father**

Explain: Before Jesus was born, when God wanted to give His people a message, He would talk to His prophets. A prophet would write down God's message, then tell it to the people. One of God's prophets was Isaiah, who lived seven hundred years before Jesus. God told him many things about the Savior that He was going to send.

Read: Isaiah 9:2

Discuss:

1. What is it like to walk in complete darkness? How is sin like darkness?
2. What does light do to the darkness? Why is Jesus called the light

Pray: Thank You, Lord, that You are perfectly good. You are like the light that chases away the darkness of evil. Fill us with Your light and Your goodness, Lord. In Jesus' name. Amen.

Place the Candle Symbol on your Advent Tree. This stands for a reminder that Jesus brings light to this dark world.

Do: Today is the day of Hope in our Advent Series, we know that Jesus is the hope of the world. Think about one way to bring hope to those closest to you today and follow through on doing that action this week.

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### **December 2nd - Jesus, Eternal with the Father**

Explain: When Jesus lived on this earth, one of His best friends was named John. After Jesus went up to heaven, John told people about Jesus. Years later, when John was very old, Jesus appeared to John and told him to write down everything Jesus told him. This is one of the things that Jesus said.

Read: Revelation 22:13

Discuss:

1. Alpha and Omega are the first and last letters of the Greek alphabet, like our A and Z. What did Jesus mean when He said that He is the A and the Z?
2. We began our lives when we started growing within our mothers. Was that true of Jesus? When did He begin?

Pray: Lord Jesus, You always were and You always will be. We cannot understand it, but we believe it and give You thanks and praise. In Your name. Amen.

Place the Alpha and Omega symbol on your Advent Tree. This stands for the way that Jesus is everywhere and all around us.

Do: Share with your family or write down 3 things you are thankful for.

### **December 3rd - Jesus, Eternal with the Father**

Explain: Today we will read a verse that John wrote. John lived with Jesus for three years and watched everything Jesus did. He knew Jesus better than anyone else, most likely. And this is what he said about Jesus.

Read: John 1:1-2, 14

Discuss:

1. Who is the Word?
2. What do these verses tell us about Him?

Pray: Dear Lord, thank You that You are God, yet You came to earth to show us what God is like. We would never have known if You had not been born in Bethlehem that night. Thank you, Lord Jesus. In Jesus' name. Amen.

Place the Bible Symbol on your Advent Tree. This stands for the way that Jesus was present even before time

Do: Call a family member or friend and tell them how much you care for them.

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### **December 4th - Jesus, The Eternal with the Father**

Explain: So far we've learned that Jesus was with God in the very beginning, long before He was born in Bethlehem. Let's look at something that Jesus did before He came into our world as a baby.

Read: Colossians 1:15-16

Discuss:

1. What is it that Jesus did?
2. What things did Jesus create?

Pray:

Lord, You created all things. You are so great. I know that I can trust You because You are the creator and ruler of the universe. In Jesus' name. Amen.

Place the Planets Symbol on your Advent Tree. This stands for our reminder of creation.

Do: Think of a random act of kindness that you can do today for a friend or family member

### **December 5th - Jesus, Sent to Save Sinners**

Explain: Yesterday we learned that Jesus made all things. The last and best thing that Jesus made was humans. He created Adam and Eve. He made people so that He could love us and we could love Him back. But something happened to cause a problem.

Read: Isaiah 59:2

Discuss:

1. When you do something wrong or bad, how do the people who care about you feel? What do they do? Why?
2. Ever since Adam and Eve decided to disobey God, we have all sinned and turned away from God. God didn't want us to turn away. He wants us to be close to Him. What did he do to take care of this problem?

Pray: Dear Lord, I am so sorry for the sins I commit. Thank You that You want to be close to me and You sent Jesus to take away my sin so that I can be close to You forever. In Jesus' name. Amen.

Place the Black heart Symbol on your Advent Tree. This stands for a reminder of the sin, or wrong in our lives.

Do: Look in your pantry and see if there is anything you can donate to Community Cares and find a local bin to drop it off at (usually at grocery stores)

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### **December 6th - Jesus, Sent to Save Sinners**

Explain: What was the problem that we talked about yesterday? God needed to do something to take care of the problem of our sin so that we could be close to Him again. This verse tells us about what sin is and what God did about it.

Read: Isaiah 53:6

Discuss:

1. What does this verse tell us about what sin is?
2. What did God do about our sin?

Pray: Heavenly Father, thank You so much for sending your Son to take our sin on Himself. He came to be punished in our place. We are sorry for our sin, yet we are so thankful that You loved us enough to die for us. In Jesus' name. Amen.

Place the Cross Symbol on your Advent Tree. This stands for a reminder that Jesus came to take the punishment for our sin on the Cross.

Do: Make something that you can give to a neighbor and drop it off to show you were thinking about them. (food, cookies, a card, a note)

### **December 7th - Jesus, Sent to Save Sinners**

Explain: Before Jesus came, God made a way for people's sins to be forgiven. Every year they had to sacrifice a perfect lamb on an altar. Now this lamb couldn't really take away their sins, but it did show how God would someday send a perfect sacrifice. The verse that we read today tells us what John the Baptist said when he saw Jesus walking toward him.

Read: John 1:29

Discuss:

1. Why did John call Jesus the Lamb of God?
2. Why did Jesus leave heaven and come into the world?

Pray: Thank you so much, Lord Jesus, for coming into the world to take away my sin. In Your name. Amen.

Place the lamb Symbol on your Advent Tree. This stands for a reminder that Jesus is the Lamb of God who came to take away the sin of the world.

Do: Pray for those around the world and in our own country who don't have clean water to drink

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### **December 8th - Jesus, Born of the Virgin Mary**

Explain: These are verses that you have heard many times. This time, close your eyes and try to imagine what it was like for Mary and Joseph. How did they feel? What did they see, hear, and smell around them?

Read: Luke 2:1-7

Discuss:

1. What was it like for Mary and Joseph that night?
2. If you were God and could pick where your Son would be born, would you have picked this poor family who had nowhere to stay? Why do you think God chose this setting for Jesus?

Pray: Thank You, Lord, that You care for each one of us no matter if we were born in the fanciest hospital or the smallest of barns. We can have faith because you brought your son to earth with us in mind. In Jesus' name. Amen.

Place the Baby Jesus Symbol on your Advent Tree. This stands for a reminder that Jesus came as a baby to save us.

Do: Today we will do a Breath prayer, to center not on the chaos that this week has to bring but a reminder of the richness Jesus birth brings us. Inhale - Jesus came Exhale - Jesus loved.



### **December 9th - Jesus, Sent to Save Sinners**

Explain: When you were a tiny baby, your parents did lots of things to take care of you. They had to get up in the middle of the night and feed you when you cried. They had to watch over you every minute. It wasn't easy — it was hard work. Why do you think they did these things?

Our heavenly Father loves us, even more than our earthly parents do. This verse tells us how He shows us His love.

Read: 1 John 4:9

Discuss:

1. How did God show us His love?
2. Do you think this was a hard thing to do? Why?

Pray: Heavenly Father, thank You for Your great love for us. You loved us so much that you did the hardest thing You could do - You gave up Your one and only Son. In His name we pray. Amen.

Place the Red Heart Symbol on your Advent Tree. This stands for a reminder that God's love for us - love that cost Him His one and only Son.

Do: Pray and thank God for giving us His son Jesus

### **December 10th - Jesus, Sent to Save Sinners**

Explain: One night, a man named Nicodemus came secretly to ask Jesus some questions. Jesus explained to Nicodemus why God had sent Him into the world.

Read: John 3:16

Discuss:

1. Why did the Father send Jesus into the world?
2. God loves us so much that He gave us His most precious gift. What do you do with the gifts under the Christmas tree? What do you think God wants us to do with His gift?

Pray: Thank You for giving us your Son, Jesus, so that we can live forever with You. I thankfully receive Your gift of Jesus as Lord and Savior.

Place the Gift Symbol on your Advent Tree. This stands for a reminder that Jesus is the greatest gift of all.

Do: Plan to participate in your location's anchor cause this winter (St. Catharines - Norms, or cooking dinner at the shelter - connect with Erica, Welland - Harvest Kitchen, connect with Aimee, Vineland, put together a welcome bag for the migrant workers - reach out to Nate)

### **December 11th - Jesus, Spoken of by the Prophets**

Explain: Yesterday we talked about sin being like darkness and Jesus as the light. Here is another message that God gave Isaiah about darkness and light

Read: Isaiah 60:1-3

Discuss:

1. Where was the darkness?
2. What does this passage tell us about whom Jesus would come to save?

Pray: Thank You, Lord Jesus, that You came to save people from every nation. Help me to be a light to all the people that I know, by telling them about Your love. In Jesus' name. Amen.

Place the Sun Symbol on your Advent Tree. This stands for a reminder that Jesus is the Light of the World.

Do: Intentionally put money aside from somewhere you would usually spend it this week and donate to our church so that we can continue to serve and love the communities God has asked us to love. (if you buy a coffee everyday, donate that money - if you do chores donate what you would normally receive)

### **December 12th - Jesus, Spoken of by the Prophets**

Explain: Jew's were Abraham's children's children's children (and so on!). Everyone else was called a Gentile. God promised Abraham wonderful things for his family, the Jews. But He also promised Abraham that his family would bring happiness to the whole world. This verse tells us how

Read: Isaiah 49:6b

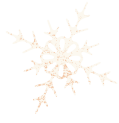
Discuss:

1. God is talking to those Jews who would believe in Jesus. What did God promise that they would do?
2. God kept His promise. Here we are on the other side of the world two thousand years after Jesus was born-and we have been told about Jesus. Jesus wants us to be a light to people who don't know Him. Whom can you tell about Jesus?

Pray: Dear Lord, You came to save us, and we are so thankful. Help us to show our thankfulness by telling others about You. In Jesus' name. Amen.

Place the lamb Symbol on your Advent Tree. This stands for a reminder that Jesus is the Lamb of God who came to take away the sin of the world.

Do: Research the Indigenous people who lived and are still live in your area. Learn something new about their culture through videos, books or websites.



### **December 13th - Jesus, Spoken by the Prophets**

Explain:

God also told Isaiah what the Savior would be like.

Read: Isaiah 9:6

Discuss:

1. What do we learn about the Savior from this verse?
2. Tell what each of these names means.

Pray: We praise You, Lord Jesus, that You are the Wonderful Counselor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, and the Prince of Peace. Help me to remember this, and to trust You with my life. In Jesus' name. Amen.

Place the Dove Symbol on your Advent Tree. This stands for a reminder that Jesus is the Prince of Peace

Do: Engage in a Breathe Prayer - Inhale and say Peace of Christ, Exhale and say You are God.

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### **December 14th - Jesus, Spoken by the Prophets**

Explain: Today's verse follows yesterday's verse about Jesus being the Prince of Peace. It talks about how Jesus rules the world. We actually can't see Jesus on this earth yet, but someday we will.

Listen and try to imagine what it will be like.

Read: Isaiah 9:7

Discuss:

1. What kind of a king is Jesus?
2. If we love and obey Jesus, then He is our king right now. What can you do today to love and obey Jesus?

Pray: Dear Lord, I want You to be my King - every day of my life. Please help me to love and obey You as the King of my life. In Jesus' name. Amen.

Place the Crown Symbol on your Advent Tree. This stands for a reminder that Jesus is King and we can trust and obey Him

Do: Look at your calendar and find a specific amount of time this weekend that you can put aside for Sabbath, it can be 20 minutes, an hour, a whole afternoon or full day. Spend time as a family if you have kids leaning into God, or by yourself in communion with God.

### **December 15th - Jesus, Born of the Virgin Mary**

Explain: The Bible doesn't tell us of any angels appearing or prophets speaking for the four hundred years before the time of Jesus' birth. Why, all of a sudden, were all these angels appearing?

Read: Luke 2:8-14

Discuss:

1. Describe what the shepherds saw that night.
2. Shepherds were not considered important people. Why do you think God sent His angels to these poor shepherds?

Pray: Thank You, Lord, that everyone is important to You - even poor, simple shepherds. Thank You that no matter how rich, smart or important I am or am not, You came to save me from my sins. In Jesus' name. Amen.

Place the Angel Symbol on your Advent Tree. This stands for a reminder of the angels who came to announce Jesus' birth to the shepherds.

Do: Today is the morning of Joy in our Advent series, list 3 things that bring you joy!

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### **December 16th - Jesus, Spoken of by the Prophets**

Explain: God told Isaiah more about what the Saviour would be like.

Read: Isaiah 40:11

Discuss:

1. Who is the Shepherd? Who is the flock?
2. What do we learn about what the Savior would be like? Was Jesus like this?
3. How does Jesus care for you like a shepherd?

Pray: Dear Jesus, You are so gentle and kind to us. Thank You for loving us and caring for us like a shepherd. In Your name we pray. Amen.

Place the Shepherd's Staff Symbol on your Advent Tree. This stands for a reminder that Jesus is the Good Shepherd

Do: Go onto any music platform and put on a worship playlist or song and really listen to the lyrics, sing them in your head or out loud and give thanks to God through worship

### **December 17th - Jesus, Spoken of by Prophets**

Explain: Do you remember Israel's greatest king, King David? David was the son of Jesse. In these verses, God promises that the Savior will come from David's (and Jesse's) family. Remember, we learned that He would sit on David's throne.

Read: Isaiah 11:1-3

Discuss:

1. Jesus was the Branch that would come from the stump or family of David. Matthew 1 and Luke 3:23-31 show that Jesus did come from David's family. What does this tell us about how God keeps His promises?
2. What else does this verse tell us about what Jesus would be like?

Pray:

Heavenly Father, thank You for keeping all Your promises. And thank You that Jesus knew everything and obeyed You. Help me to happily obey You today, Lord. In Jesus' name. Amen.

Place the Stump and Branch Symbol on your Advent Tree. The stump is the family of Jesse and David. Jesus is the Branch that grew out of the family, just as God promised.

Do: Today, pray for places that do not have peace, physical peace, spiritual peace, or civil peace, in our community and around the world.

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### **December 18th - Jesus, Spoken of but the Prophets**

Explain:

God told the prophet Micah where the Savior would be born.

Read: Micah 5:2

Discuss:

1. God is talking to the little village of Bethlehem. What message does He have for Bethlehem?
2. Where was Jesus born? Why was He born there? God had it all planned out.

Pray: Thank You, Lord, that You planned every little detail of how and where Jesus would be born. Nothing happened by accident. You are a great and wonderful God. We praise You in Jesus name. Amen.

Place the Nativity Scene Symbol on your Advent Tree. This stands for a reminder that Jesus was born in Bethlehem, just as God had said many years before.

Do: In the next 24 hours, everytime you take drive, turn the music off and outloud say a prayer to God about where you are going and how you can share His love in that space.

### **December 19th - Jesus, Spoken of by Prophets**

Explain: Here God tells Isaiah about the birth of this Savior that would come seven hundred years later.

Read: Isaiah 7:14

Discuss:

1. What would this special baby boy be called?
2. Emmanuel means "God with us." How does this name fit Jesus? (Read Luke 1:32.)

Pray: How wonderful You are, Lord! Thank You for coming to earth to be one of us! In Jesus' name. Amen.

Place the manger Symbol on your Advent Tree. This stands for a reminder that the miracle of Jesus' birth, as the prophets foretold.

Do: Go around your house today and find items that you can donate to those in need. A lot of household items can be donated to Start me Up Niagara!

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### **December 20th - Jesus, Born of the Virgin Mary**

Explain: Do you know what your name means? In the Bible, names were very important. They usually meant something. They stood for who the person was and what they would do.

Before Jesus was born, God sent His angel Gabriel to Joseph. Gabriel told Joseph what the baby should be named.

Read: Matthew 1:20-24

Discuss:

1. What reason did the angel give for naming the baby Jesus?
2. Jesus means "The Lord saves." Why does this name fit Jesus?

Pray:

We are so thankful that You came to save us, Lord Jesus. In Your name. Amen.

Place the Symbol of Joseph on your Advent Tree. This stands for a reminder that Joseph is the earthly Father of Jesus

Do: Pray for people in your school and workplace, that this Christmas season that you would be able to show them the love of Christ through your actions. Maybe take this a step further and invite that person to Church before the end of December (there are 3 services left!)



## **December 21st - Jesus, Born of the Virgin Mary**

Explain:

After the angels disappeared, the shepherds didn't just say, "Wasn't that a nice concert?" They were excited! Let's see what they did ...

Read: Luke 2:15-20

Discuss:

1. What did the shepherds want to do? What did they do after they saw Jesus?
2. You, too, have met Jesus. You see Him each day as you read His Word, the Bible, and as you pray to Him. Do you get excited about Him? Whom can you tell about Jesus?

Pray: Thank You, Lord, that we can see You and worship You, just as the shepherds did. Help me to be excited about knowing You. Help me to tell my friends about all the good things You have done. In Jesus' name. Amen.

Place the Musical Notes Symbol on your Advent Tree. This stands for a reminder that the Shepherds went on their way praising God and telling others about what they had seen.

Do: Write a letter or make a card for someone who works at our church and bring it to church tomorrow to help make them know you care about them.

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## **December 22nd - Jesus, Born of the Virgin Mary Peace Morning**

Explain:

Just as God promised, He chose a young woman to be the mother of His own Son. What was her name? God told her about this special job by sending His angel Gabriel.

Read: Luke 1:26-38

Discuss:

1. What message did Gabriel bring to Mary? How would you feel if you were Mary?
2. How did Mary respond to this message?

Pray: Dear Lord, nothing is impossible for You. Help me obey You as Mary did. Help me not to be afraid but simply to trust and obey You. In Jesus' name. Amen.

Place the Symbol of Mary on your Advent Tree. This stands for a reminder that Mary is Jesus' mother.

Do: This morning is the morning of Peace in our Advent Series, what does peace mean to you? Pray for an area in your life where you need peace, pray for a part of our world where you feel needs peace.

## **December 23rd - Jesus, Born of the Virgin Mary**

Explain: The wise men who followed the star were not kings - they were men who studied the stars. We don't know how many wise men there were; the Bible doesn't say. See what you can figure out about these wise men.

Read: Matthew 2:1-8

Discuss:

1. Why were the wise men looking for the newborn king?
2. Herod was a wicked man who was the king of the Jews at that time. Why did he want to find Jesus?

Pray: Dear Lord, I want to be like the wise men. They looked for You so that they could worship You. Help me to do this each day. In Jesus' name. Amen.

Place the Star Symbol on your Advent Tree. This stands for a reminder that a star led the wise men to the Christ Child.

Do: Pray that your heart would be ready to receive the Good News of Christ over the next two days. Make it a priority to attend a Christmas Eve service at Church

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## **December 24th - Christmas Eve**

Explain: Each of the gifts that the wise men brought has a special meaning. Gold stood for the riches of a king. Incense was used by priests in temple worship. Jesus would be our high priest. Myrrh was a perfume put on dead people. Jesus would die as the perfect sacrifice for our sins. The wise men's gifts showed that Jesus would be King, Priest, and Sacrifice.

Read: Matthew 2:9-12

Discuss:

1. What do these verses tell us about the wise men? Why did they bring Jesus gifts?
2. What gift can you give to Jesus tonight?

Pray: Dear Lord, You gave Your life for me. Nothing I could give You could ever repay You. But I know that You want me to give You my life. So this Christmas, Lord, I give You my heart -all that I am and have is Yours. In Jesus' name. Amen.

Place the 3 Wise Men's Gifts Symbol on your Advent Tree. This stands for a reminder that we can give gifts to Jesus just as the wise men did to show gratitude.

Do: As you lay your head down tonight think through the journey that Mary and Joseph were going on to bring Jesus into the world.