



HOW TO USE THE ADVENT COUNTDOWN

ADVENT

Advent is the anticipation of Jesus' coming. Israel waited expectantly for the Messiah King to arrive. What an unexpected surprise that He would come as a perfect baby, born to carry the sins of the world to the cross.

During this season of Advent at Mosaic, we will set our eyes on Immanuel, God With Us. Each day, open a card to find a story or an activity that guides your family through the Advent weeks of Hope, Peace, Joy, and Love. As the Family Team members wrote these devotionals, they prayed that your family will experience the comfort of God's presence in a new way and provide a connection point for your family to enter into spiritual conversations. Make space to watch, pray, and have fun together as you daily think about Christ's birth, God incarnate, God With Us.

THIS PACKET

This packet includes: 27 countdown cards, four coloring cards, a prayer card, jute, and clothespins.

If you need more copies of anything in this packet or would like to share this advent countdown with anyone, the materials are available at mosaicnwa.org/familyadvent. Cut the sheets apart along the cutting guidelines.

COUNTDOWN CARDS

As a family, put these cards in countdown order (the date is on the back of each card to help). Fold each card in half with the design facing out and display the Advent Countdown in your home.

Some ideas to display your countdown include:

- Use the jute and clothespins provided to hang your cards from your mantle, across your dining area, in the kids' playroom or another spot where you can interact with it each day.
- Hole-punch and string the cards on the included jute and hang it in a prominent spot in your home.

- Post the cards on a pin board or magnetic board.
- Place the cards in a bowl or vase on a table or other location where your family spends time together and draw the card out each day.

Each day take a few moments to open the next countdown card together. Decide on a time to do what the card includes: during or after dinner, at bedtime, during one of your car rides, etc. Do not feel pressure to complete every card during this season. This is merely a tool to help you draw closer to each other and to God during this busy time. Do what you can and give yourself grace with the rest!

The Sunday cards will introduce the focus for the week as well as a list of supplies you will need to collect for the activities that week. The Mosaic Family Team has created a video for families to worship together as they focus on the celebration of the birth of our savior Jesus Christ. Watch these on Sundays as a family and discuss the questions from Saturday's teaching. The video and questions will be available at mosaicnwa.org/familyadvent.

COLORING SHEETS

Each week, on Saturday, you'll be prompted to color a specific picture for the week. You can take this opportunity to recap what you have discussed as a family or to catch up on any missed days, if you would like. By the end of Advent, you will be able to put the cards together and complete a bigger picture that shows the full Christmas Story.

PRAYER GUIDE

Commit to saying this prayer together as a reminder that God is With Us. Post that card in a prominent spot where you will see it.





NOVEMBER 29



NOVEMBER 30



DECEMBER 1



DECEMBER 2



Did you know that the Bible says Jesus would be called Immanuel? That means "God with us"! Do you think that means He is only with us at Christmas?

If you remembered that God was with you all the time, are there some thoughts or habits you would want to change in your life? Share those with your family.

Grab some paper and markers and, as a family, make a poster with the words, "Immanuel—God with Us." Let everyone help decorate the poster and then put it on your refrigerator or another place that would be a daily reminder that He is with us.

HOPE

"Here is my servant. I have chosen him. He is the one I love. I am very pleased with him. I will put my Spirit on him. He will announce to the nations that everything will be made right. He will not argue or cry out. No one will hear his voice in the streets. He will not break a bent twig. He will not put out a dimly burning flame. He will make right win over wrong. The nations will put their hope in him."

Matthew 12:18-21 NIV



Jesus is the Promised Messiah. The verses we just read in Matthew are also found in Isaiah 42:1-4 (written many, many years before Jesus was born). He fulfilled all that was promised in the past and has come to make our hope complete. Because of Him, we can live in hopeful expectation for the day He returns and we get to spend eternity with Him.

Spend some time as a family worshiping together (the Family Team has created a worship video to help you with this) and discuss the questions from Saturday's teaching.

Both of these resources are available at mosaicnwa.org/familyadvent.

Supplies needed this week:

Paper, markers, a family picture, a book with the Christmas Story (optional)

"The nations will put their hope in him."

Mathew 12:21 NIV

Talk with your children about what they hope to get for Christmas and how excited they are for Christmas day to see if they get it.

Talk about how excited and hopeful people in the Bible were knowing that Jesus was going to be born. They knew that Jesus was going to be special and God was sending Him to us for a special reason: to give us all the hope of salvation.



Choose a scene from the Christmas story, assign roles, and act it out.

Or, read a book about the Christmas story.

"The angel greeted her and said, 'the Lord has given you special favor. He is with you.'"

Luke 1:28 NIV

Mary was just told that she was going to have a baby. She was told that God was with her.

Mary must have felt so loved and so special to know that she was part of God's plan. His plan was to give people the hope they had been waiting for. That hope was the gift of a baby and the salvation the baby would bring.

Who was that baby? (Jesus)

What is salvation? (Believing that Jesus died on the cross for us so that our sins would be forgiven.) We are all special and all very loved by God. Our hope is knowing that God is with us.



Have everyone go pick out a family picture that is in the house (on the fridge, coffee table, or even a photo album).

Let each person tell the family what they hope for the person in their picture (ie. dreams, wishes, for that person in the picture).

Pray for your family to know that God is with them and they should always look to Jesus. He is our hope.



DECEMBER 3



DECEMBER 4



DECEMBER 5



DECEMBER 6

What do you hope for this Christmas?

...time with your family?

...a new bike?

...lots of snow?

Take a few minutes and let each member of the family list three things they hope for this Christmas and why.



The heroes of the Old Testament hoped for something too. They hoped for a Savior that would take away the sins of the world. But hope did not come in the way they expected, as a mighty king. Instead, just as the prophets foretold, the Hope of the world came as a tiny baby. Jesus came to bring salvation to the world. He is the reason we can have hope in all circumstances.

Pray:

God, we thank you for sending your Son as a tiny baby. We thank you that because of His sacrifice we can have hope for now and for eternity. It is because of your great love in sending your Son that we can have HOPE!

Amen

Many times, we get so excited about celebrating Jesus' birth that we forget that God sent Jesus to show His love by paying for our sins. He is our Savior!

"God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son. Anyone who believes in him will not die but will have eternal life."

John 3:16 NIRV

Why did God give Jesus to us?

(For God so loved the world...)

What does He promise to those who believe and trust in Him?

(Everlasting life)



This Christmas season take the time to regularly thank God for sending His Son. Start by doing that today and continue to do that through Advent.

PEACE

"I have spoken all these things while I am still with you. But the Father will send the Friend in my name to help you. The Friend is the Holy Spirit. He will teach you all things. He will remind you of everything I have said to you. I leave my peace with you. I give my peace to you. I do not give it to you as the world does. Do not let your hearts be troubled. And do not be afraid."

John 14:25-27 NIRV

The world's peace is fragile and empty. We may get glimpses of peaceful moments but these are not the true, lasting peace that can only come from living a life with Jesus. He brings us peace that is beyond anything that we can understand.



Spend some time as a family worshiping together (the Family Team has created a worship video to help you with this) and discuss the questions from Saturday's teaching. Both of these resources are available at mosaicnwa.org/familyadvent.

Supplies needed this week:

A comfort item (blanket, stuffed animal,...),
pencil and paper



Take today to look back at the week and remember some of your favorite thoughts and conversations. If you missed any days, maybe you would like to take this opportunity to pick one of those cards to complete.

Find the coloring sheet with the wise men and color it as a family (or have a separate copy for each child). As you color, talk about what the wise men must have been thinking as they followed the star.



DECEMBER 7



DECEMBER 8



DECEMBER 9



DECEMBER 10

“Let the peace that Christ gives rule in your hearts. As parts of one body, you were appointed to live in peace. And be thankful.”
Colossians 3:15 NIRV

Talk with your kids about how Jesus is called the Prince of Peace. He is called this because He can bring us peace even if we have problems. Mary and Joseph faced a lot of problems traveling to Bethlehem and not having a place to stay, but they knew that God would take care of them because He had given them Jesus to bring to the world.



Bundle up and go outside after nightfall.

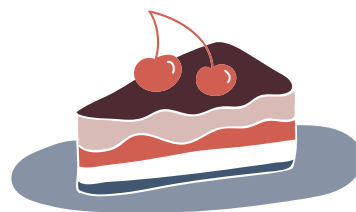
What do you hear?

What do you smell?

What can you see?

Is it a peaceful night or a noisy one?

Just think, the starry sky you see might be very similar to what the shepherds saw the night Jesus was born.



“‘Comfort my people,’ says your God. ‘Comfort them.’”
Isaiah 40:1 NIRV

Go get something that brings you comfort (blanket, stuffed animal, comfort food...). Why do you love this item? When do you want it with you?

God sent His Son to comfort His people.

How does that make you feel?

How does God comfort you?

Pray together and thank God that He comforts us.

Read 1 John 1:5-9.

Confessing or talking about our sins, fears or emotions can be a scary thing. But God knows that we experience freedom when we talk about what is going on inside of us.

Give everybody a piece of paper and something to write with. Everyone can go to different parts of the house and sit for one minute in silence and think of one thing they need to confess to Jesus. Write it on the paper and then fold it up. Come back together and wad those papers up and throw them into the trash (or you could build a fire and throw them into it!).

Read verse 9 again to see what God promises to do if we confess.



Watch this video and enjoy a calm moment of peace.
The Mountain—vimeo.com/22439234.
This link is also available at mosaicnwa.org/familyadvent.

When is there a lack of peace in your house?
What are some ways you can invite the peace of God into your home this Advent?



Parents, ask your kids if there is anything that is making them sad, afraid, or confused. Remind them they can talk to you about anything.

Pray together and thank God that He promises to forgive and bring light into all the dark places.



DECEMBER 11



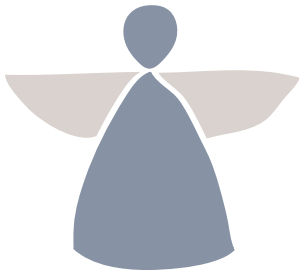
DECEMBER 12



DECEMBER 13



DECEMBER 14



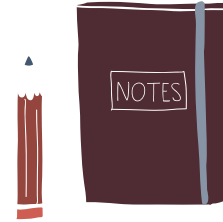
Take today to look back at the week and remember some of your favorite thoughts and conversations. If you missed any days, maybe you would like to take this opportunity to pick one of those cards to complete.

Find the coloring sheet with the angels and color it as a family (or have a separate copy for each child). As you color, listen to some Christmas songs and imagine how beautiful it must have been to hear the angels declaring that Jesus had come to be our Peace.

This year has been a little crazy for everyone, right?! You may have had some things that were important to you get canceled. Maybe you had to adjust to virtual school. You may have even felt a little worried with all the changes around you. However, the good news is that God is always with us no matter what circumstances we are in and He wants us to come to Him and have peace in our hearts.

Philippians 4:6 NIV, tells us, "Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God."

Being anxious is when we feel afraid or nervous about what might happen. What great news that God doesn't want us to feel this way!



As a family, grab a piece of paper and spend a few minutes writing down some of the ways God has blessed and helped you in 2020. Think about all the things you are thankful for this year.

Next, allow family members (if they would like) to share anything they are anxious about. Close your time together with a prayer thanking God for your blessings and praying for peace in your circumstances.

JOY

"But the angel said to them, 'Do not be afraid. I bring you good news. It will bring great joy for all the people. Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you. He is the Messiah, the Lord.'"
Luke 2:10-11 NIRV

"I have told you this so that you will have the same joy that I have. I also want your joy to be complete."
John 15:11 NIRV

Christmas is a time of great joy.
What makes you feel joyful about Christmas?
We celebrate the birth of baby Jesus at Christmas. He brought joy to the world when he came to Earth to be our Savior.

Can you imagine the level of joy that must have been felt when people heard of Jesus' birth? Remember, this was the long-awaited Messiah. In these verses in John, we see that His words still bring us that same joy today as His birth did more than 2,000 years ago.

Like peace, we may feel happy or even joyful at times, but true joy comes from Jesus, the living Word!



Sing *Joy to the World* with your family.



Spend some time as a family worshipping together (the Family Team has created a worship video to help you with this) and discuss the questions from Saturday's teaching. Both of these resources are available at mosaicnwa.org/familyadvent.



DECEMBER 15



DECEMBER 16



DECEMBER 17



DECEMBER 18

Go to fellowshipworship.com/advent
and watch "I Find My Joy."

Read this explanation from Ethan
Davis about how this song came to be:

I was at a place in my life where I was struggling to finish the sentence, "I find my joy in...." In that moment of frustration, I was playing guitar and started proclaiming that my joy was found in the Lord. This song came at a time when I was searching in all the wrong places for fulfillment. It became a declaration of faith that true, lasting joy is found only in the Lord. Every time I sing these words I am reminded not only of what He has done for me, but also what He is doing. He is faithful to finish His work in my life. I know that, "even when I fall in the battle, there is victory" because Jesus is an incredible source of joy!



Take some time together as a family to finish the sentence,
"I find my joy in..."

One-sentence Story Challenge:

Get a nativity set and take turns telling the nativity story, but each person can only say one sentence and the next person has to "add-on" to the story.

Now read the story of the wise men in Matthew 2:10-11.

The wise men came from far away to see Jesus.
Who are some people far away from you who
need to hear about Jesus?



Go to operationworld.org to find information and
prayer guides for other countries. Have each member
of the family pick a country to pray for. Pray they hear
about Jesus and believe.

Watch "Shepherd Dad" (Slugs & Bugs) –
[youtube.com/watch?v=G7U06C0dfhg](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=G7U06C0dfhg).

This link is also available at mosaicnwa.org/familyadvent.

This is a moving song that tells of a dad and a son who are visited
by the angel Gabriel the night of Jesus' birth. The dad leaves
his son in charge of the flock and goes to the manger, but then:

"One look in the manger, and one shepherd turned and ran.
The shepherd dad ran through the streets
back to the fields where tending sheep
he found his shepherd son, he found his shepherd son
and leaping like a mountain cat
he scooped his son up on his back
and said 'Hold on tight!
Our Savior is born tonight!'"



It's moving because it's a father flinging duty to the wind and
running with abandon to draw his son into the majesty of God's
great revelation in Jesus Christ (Joy to the World! The Savior's
come!) It's moving because it's a father drawing his son into
a grand adventure. It's moving because it's a dad showing his
son how little self matters and how much Christ matters.

May you be swept off your feet and rushed
to the Savior's side this holiday season.

Time to choose! This or that?

Hot dogs or hamburgers?

Live in a house of chocolate or a house of Cheetos?

Mac and cheese or mashed potatoes?

Warm weather or cold weather?

TV time or computer time?

Snowstorm or rainstorm?

Feet for hands or hands for feet?

Joy or sadness?



Joy isn't always something we feel, but it IS something we
can choose. No matter what this week has been like, you
can choose today to be filled with joy and put it on display
in your life. It will be a game-changer for your day and the
week ahead. Jesus was born for us. And He is with us,
always. That is surely something to be joyful about!



DECEMBER 19



DECEMBER 20



DECEMBER 21



DECEMBER 22

LOVE

"It was just before the Passover Feast. Jesus knew that the time had come for him to leave this world. It was time for him to go to the Father. Jesus loved his disciples who were in the world. So he now loved them to the very end."

John 13:1 NIRV

"I give you a new command. Love one another. You must love one another, just as I have loved you. If you love one another, everyone will know you are my disciples."

John 13:34-35 NIRV

Jesus modeled what true love is when He loved His disciples to the very end and by giving His life for all of us. He calls us to love one another, loving to the very end, and giving sacrificially to others.



Spend some time as a family worshiping together (the Family Team has created a worship video to help you with this) and discuss the questions from Saturday's teaching. Both of these resources are available at mosaicnwa.org/familyadvent.

Supplies needed this week: card-making items



Take today to look back at the week and remember some of your favorite thoughts and conversations. If you missed any days, maybe you would like to take this opportunity to pick one of those cards to complete.

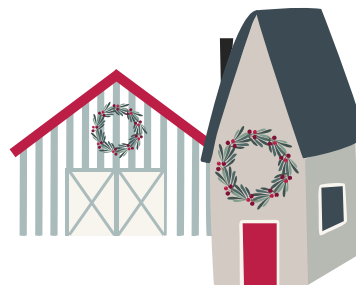
Find the coloring sheet with the shepherds and color it as a family (or have a separate copy for each child). As you color, talk about what you might have thought and felt if you were a shepherd in those hills and had just heard the Good News of Jesus' birth!

Christmas is a time of year when we give gifts! Americans start shopping on Black Friday and keep shopping until the 24th of December—our culture celebrates gift giving. The wise men visited baby Jesus and shared "gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh" (Matthew 2:11). Scripture tells us "they were overjoyed" when they came to where the Christ child was. The opportunity to worship and give generously of their time (what a long trip!) and treasure (what extravagant gifts!) propelled them to come to Bethlehem. It's like the story Jesus tells of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:25-37), one who gave the very best of what he had to love another.

As a whole, our culture does not celebrate God's best gift. God himself sent His beloved son, the One who freely gives life and rescues us from death. As we celebrate the Savior's birth this Christmas, let's not forget the ultimate gift that was given to us.



What gift could we give this season that loves God or others like we love ourselves?



Drive around your town and look at the Christmas lights that have been put up.

As you are driving, talk about how the people in the homes/ places you are driving past need to know the love of Jesus.

As a family, pray that they would come to know Jesus.

You might even pick a couple of specific places to drive to and pray for (school, friend's neighborhood, sports field, etc.).

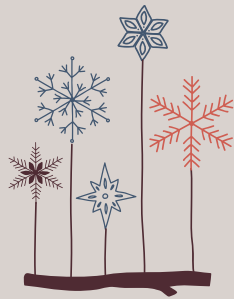


DECEMBER 23



DECEMBER 24

MERRY
CHRISTMAS



DECEMBER 25



Mosaic's Family Ministry Team wishes your family a very, Merry Christmas. It is our prayer that your family will make new memories and help each other focus on Jesus throughout this next year.

May the hope, peace, joy, and love of Jesus be shared together for generations to come!

mosaicnwa.org/familyadvent
mosaicnwa.org/familyresources

Let's play a game of SHOW & TELL!

Take turns showing and telling someone in your family how much you love them.

How did God SHOW & TELL of His love for us?
God SHOWED us His love by sending His Son to save us from our sin.

John 3:16 NIV says, "God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son. Anyone who believes in him will not die but will have eternal life."

God used the prophets of the Old Testament to TELL the world that He was going to send us a Savior. That Savior would be in the form of a baby named Jesus who was Immanuel, "God with us." God loves us so much that He sent His Son to be with us and to take away the sins of the world so we can live with Him forever.
What an incredible gift!

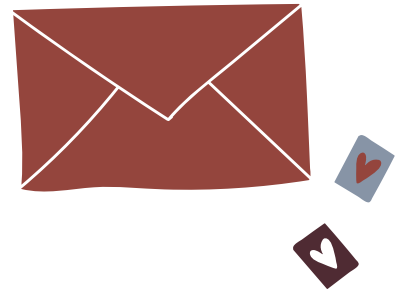


Say a prayer thanking God for showing His love for us by sending His Son.

"We love because he loved us first."
1 John 4:19 NIV

Christmas is a time when we can show love for others. God sent us Jesus because He loves us. Talk about ways you can show love to others. You can show love by being kind to each other, helping each other, and serving those less fortunate.

Draw pictures or make cards together as a family. Give them to a family member, elderly neighbor, or someone that serves you.



MERRY CHRISTMAS!

Sometime today, take a moment to read the entire Christmas story from Luke 2. You could take turns reading a few verses each.

Find the last coloring sheet, the one with Joseph and Mary, and color it as a family (or have a separate copy for each child). As you color, remember that God sent His son, Jesus to this earth to save you from your sins. He is Immanuel, God With Us.

Celebrate that today!

[Put all your coloring sections together like a puzzle to see the big picture tell the full Christmas Story!]