

FAMILY ACTIVITY GUIDE

WEEK 1 | Prophecy Candle (Hope)

Advent is a time when Christians prepare to celebrate the coming of Christ as the baby born in Bethlehem at the first Christmas.

As a family, make an Advent Wreath. Use a real or artificial wreath and 5 LED candles. There are 3 purple candles, 1 pink and 1 white. (Tip: If you can't find pink or purple LED candles, cover the white ones with colored paper.) Another option is to let your child make a paper advent wreath. See examples taken from Pinterest below:



As you light the first candle, explain that this candle reminds us that hundreds of years before Jesus was born, people were living under a mean leader who made their lives hard. Special men called prophets offered hope to the people as they wrote in the Bible that Jesus, the Savior of the world would be born. One of those men was Isaiah the prophet. Read what he wrote in Isaiah 7:14.

Additional Ideas:

Create a countdown to Christmas where you can mark off the days as you anticipate (hope for) the celebration of Jesus' birth. It can be as simple or as elaborate as you like.

Create an ornament to help you remember that even in the beginning when sin entered the world, God had a plan to save us. Be creative and use whatever materials you have on hand.

Make Jesse Tree Ornaments to trace the hope of God's promise throughout scripture:
<https://awellpurposedwoman.com/jesse-tree-tradition-free-printable/>

Spend the 24 days leading up to Christmas creating an ornament from the Storybook Bible: <https://www.faithgateway.com/jesus-storybook-bible-advent-calendar-printable/>

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WEEK 2 | Bethlehem Candle (Love)

Light the Bethlehem Candle as a reminder that God loved us so much that he sent his Son, Jesus, to save us from our sins. The prophets foretold that Jesus would be born in a manger in the small town of Bethlehem. In a special place in your home, set up a nativity.

Gather around the nativity and read Luke 2:1-7. Make a craft stick nativity ornament for the Christmas tree:



- For the structure, glue 2 craft sticks together to form a roof, 2 craft sticks for the sidewalls and one craft stick for the floor.
- Cut 3 craft sticks different lengths to create Joseph, Mary and baby Jesus. Glue figures to the floor.
- Glue hay or raffia, cut in short pieces, around baby Jesus.
- Cut another craft stick to create an angel to glue on the top of the roof.
- Hang the ornament on the tree!

Additional Ideas:

Take a Children's Hunger Fund box/list (Wayside Christmas Project) for you and your kids to fill. Talk about how this shows love to others by meeting their needs. Return the box to one of our campuses by December 20: <https://waysidechapel.org/events/christmas-outreach/>

As a family, think of someone you know who might be lonely this Christmas and needs to be reminded that Jesus loves them -- maybe a single mom or dad or an elderly neighbor. Make a goody bag for them -- include whatever you think they would like. Leave the package on their front porch, ring their doorbell, and leave.

Create an ornament to help you remember God's love for you. You could create a manger, a cross, or even an empty tomb. Be creative and use whatever materials you have on hand.

Instead of the typical gingerbread house, create a gingerbread nativity: <https://gluesticksblog.com/honey-maid-graham-cracker-nativity-scene/?m>

As a way to foster thankfulness and focus on love towards others, create an Advent Blessing Jar with the family: <https://www.thirtyhandmadedays.com/advent-blessing-jar/>

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WEEK 3 | Angel Candle (Peace)

We light the Angel Candle to remind us that God announced the gift of this Son, Jesus Christ, to the world with choirs of angels. The angels declared, "Do not be afraid!" and they offered the shepherds a message of peace.

Read Luke 2: 8-14. Make an angel card to give away:



- On white paper, trace and cut out your child's hands.
- Cut a white triangle for the angel's gown, and a white circle for the head.
- Glue the circle, triangle and hands on a piece of folded, colored paper to make an angel.
- Using a marker, draw on a halo, or glue on gold string or tinsel.
- Include a message inside the card and give it away.

Additional Ideas:

Spend time as a family talking about things that are bothering you right now. Write them down on sheets of paper. Then spend time praying together -- praise God for who He is and tell Him about your troubles. When you are finished, crumple up your "troubles" and throw them in the trash (or in the fire if you have a fireplace and it is cold enough to have a fire).

Create a string of fruit to hang like a garland to help you remember the fruit of the Spirit. Label each piece of fruit with one of the qualities mentioned in Galatians 5:22-23.

For another angel craft, try this fun painting: http://www.thatartistwoman.org/2008/11/hand-and-foot-angels_24.html

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WEEK 4 | Shepherd Candle (Joy)

We light the Shepherd Candle to honor Jesus Christ, our Good Shepherd, and to remind us to do as the shepherds did the night that Jesus was born. We are to worship Jesus and spread the news that the Savior of the world has been born.

Enjoy a candy cane while reading Luke 2:15-20. Use a candy cane to tell your child and others about Jesus.



- Turn a candy cane upside down so that it looks like the letter “J”. J is for Jesus—the promised Savior.
- The red stripes on the candy cane remind us Jesus’ blood was shed for us on the cross.
- The white stripes on the candy cane remind us that our sins were washed away when Jesus took the punishment for our sins on the cross.
- Turn the candy cane right side up so it looks like a shepherd’s crook. Explain that Jesus is the Good Shepherd and His sheep hear and follow His voice.
- Share the good news of Jesus and a candy cane with a friend!

Additional Ideas:

As a family, go caroling in your neighborhood. Knock on doors and when someone answers sing songs that share the joy of Jesus’ birth.

Make a J ornament to remember the joy we have in Jesus. Use pipe cleaner with beads, dough, or construction paper to make your J.

Create jingle bells so you can sing joyfully to Jesus: <https://thejoysofboys.com/easy-jingle-bells-craft/>

Using the “Joy Bean Bag Toss”, remind your kids that joy can be a response we have to many different situations: <https://meaningfulmama.com/week-8-character-development-joy-day-53.html>

Make and decorate a birthday cake for Jesus and eat it on Christmas Day as we celebrate the joy of His birth: <https://littleshootsdeeproots.com/kids-ideas-blog/creating-advent-birthday-party-jesus/>