

Family ADVENTure Experience

The Wonders of His Love



Family ADVENTure Experience

The Wonders of His Love

We hope this Family ADVENTure Experience will help you prepare for celebrating the arrival of the Messiah. As you prepare, may you delight in the Wonders of His love.

The word Advent means coming. For Christians, the season of Advent is when we remember the long awaited coming of the Messiah, Jesus. Lighting the five candles of Advent is a tradition throughout the Church. It's a chance to reflect on the significance of the Christmas season and look forward to celebrating Jesus and His amazing love.

This family devotional is a meaningful and fun way to create your own Advent tradition. Over the next month, take time as a family, each Sunday (or sometime in the week), to prepare your hearts for Christmas. On the first Sunday, gather as a family and assemble your Advent wreath, by placing four candles around your wooden circle, and one candle (Christ's candle) in the middle. Next, follow the simple prompts for each week:

- LIGHT the appropriate candle(s) to mark the week.
- READ the brief devotional thought.
- LOOK up the passage from the Bible.
- PRAY and give thanks to God.
- PLAY a simple activity to reinforce the point of today's Biblical truth.

WEEK ONE: HOPE CANDLE (NOV. 27)

LIGHT

Light the Hope candle.

READ

We were not made for the dark. We need light. For thousands of years people lived in the darkness of their heart. They tried to do life without God but no one could find their way. Without God they stumbled and fumbled along. They needed someone to turn on the light and lead them out of the darkness of their hearts. So God gave light to his people. Isaiah announced that Jesus was and is the promised Light of the World.

LOOK UP

Isaiah 9:2

ASK

- What is so bad about living in the darkness of the heart?
- Why is it so good that Jesus is the Light of the World?
- How does Jesus give you hope?

PRAY

Dear God, thank you for reminding us during this time of year that you keep your promises—every single time! Thank you for the promise of Jesus. Thank you for the hope that we have in Him. Please help us to remember what you did for your people—and for us—when you sent Jesus to be our Savior and Light of the World. Please help us shine your light to those around you. We love you, and we pray these things in Jesus' name, amen.

PLAY

Glow Stick Ring Toss: Make circles out of your glow sticks. Turn out the lights. Take turns trying to toss them onto a doorknob or into a large bowl.

Point: Light can shine in the darkness! Go and be the light of Christ this week!

WEEK TWO: JOY CANDLE (DEC. 4)

LIGHT

Light the Hope and Joy candles.

READ

The root of a tree provides everything it needs to keep it fresh, green, and alive. A long time ago God's people thought they could live without their root, God. Before long, they were like a tree chopped down...no more life and no more fruit. However, God made a promise; one day God would send someone to bring people back to life, true life. Jesus would be like a little sprig shooting up from a stump.

LOOK UP

Isaiah 11:1-2

ASK

- Why do you think Jesus came like a “shoot”, a tiny plant?
- How has Jesus brought you new life?
- How does it make you feel that Jesus brings new life?

PRAY

Dear God, thank you for the promise of new life through Jesus Christ. Forgive us Lord when we try and go our own way, ignoring you. Would you remind us to stay rooted and connected to you, because you are everything we need? Thank you for the strength, wisdom, and courage we can find in you, always. The best life is found in you. We can have deep joy because of all we have in you. We love you, and we pray these things in Jesus' name, amen.

PLAY

Creation Creation: Go outside and find pieces of nature to gather and create a picture. You can create a star, a heart, a nativity scene... the ideas are endless! Create something new out of leaves, sticks, bark, and rocks.

Point: Thank God for the new life we have in Him, the “shoot.”

WEEK 3: LOVE CANDLE (DEC. 11)

LIGHT

Light the Hope, Joy, and Love candles.

READ

In the Bible we read how God's people decided not to obey God anymore. They are described as sheep wandering away from their shepherd. God is a good shepherd. Even when his people wandered, the Lord promised that He would still take care of them. He loves his sheep. He loves you and is always with you.

LOOK UP

Isaiah 40:11

ASK

- How have you wandered away from the Lord, doing your own thing?
- How does it make you feel knowing God loves you no matter what?
- How can we show God's love to others?

PRAY

Dear God, thank You for being such a loving shepherd. Thank you for never giving up on us, even when we go our own way. Help us to always remember how much you love us—so much that you sent your own Son to rescue us. And help us remember the true meaning of Christmas as we celebrate with our family and friends. We love you, and we pray these things in Jesus' name, amen.

PLAY

Guess the Gift: Wrap five common household items as presents. Then have each family member guess what each one is, just by holding and shaking it. See who gets the most correct. (You can also put small objects in a bag and guess without looking inside.)

Point: There is no guessing with the Lord. He knows what each of us is like, how to take care of us, and loves us just the same.

WEEK 4: PEACE CANDLE (DEC. 18)

LIGHT

Light the Hope, Joy, Love, and Peace candles.

READ

Water and fire. They can seem simple and are even elements we sing about at Christmas. (“Over the river and through the woods...” and “...chestnuts roasting on an open fire...”). In our Bible passage today, we read that water and fire can be scary, too. Even still, God has promised to always be at your side. He can calm you and bring you peace amidst the hardest of days. He will never leave you. He is your always and forever friend.

LOOK UP

Isaiah 43:2

ASK

- What does it mean to have peace?
- When is it hard to find God’s peace?
- What about Jesus being near can help you not be afraid and have peace?

PRAY

Dear God, thank you for this reminder that your peace is for everyone and for any time. You love and care about each one of us. Thank You for the peace that comes when we put our faith in you. Please help us to trust you and live your way every day. We love you, and we pray these things in Jesus’ name, amen.

PLAY

Christmas Coin Toss: Give each child five coins. Line the kids up, five feet away and facing the wall. Invite them to toss each coin toward the wall, to get close to the wall without touching it. The coin closest to the wall without touching it, wins.

Point: We can find peace anytime knowing that Jesus loves us and is always close to us.

CHRISTMAS DAY: CHRIST'S CANDLE

LIGHT

Light all 5 candles with the Christ candle last.

READ

Merry Christmas! It is Jesus' birthday! The Lord invites you to His party. Are you hungry for the Lord? Do you thirst for His love? Then you have all you need. The banquet is ready for you! Jesus is the Bread of Life. Jesus is the best gift of all. Let's celebrate and thank him today!

LOOK UP

Isaiah 55:1

ASK

- What makes the freeness of the Lord's invitation such amazing news (reread today's verse).
- How can we keep our focus on Jesus today, Christmas?
- How can we stay focused on Jesus throughout the whole year?

PRAY

Dear God, thank you for sending Jesus to be our Savior. Thank You for sending Jesus to be a light in this world, that can seem so dark. This Christmas, keep us focused on Jesus, the true reason for why we celebrate. Please capture our hearts with the wonders of your love. Help us show your love to others this Christmas. We love you. We pray this in Jesus' name, amen.

PLAY

Sing "Happy Birthday" to Jesus, then blow out the Advent candles.

