



DO NOT FEAR

ADVENT GUIDE

HOPE JOY



LOVE PEACE



2021
NOVEMBER 28 - DECEMBER 25

www.fbg.church

FBG
CHURCH | Adven 

INTENTIONAL ADVENT PLANNING SHEETS

CLARITY, PEACE & PURPOSE THIS HOLIDAY SEASON

What is one word you pray will characterize this Advent season for you and your family?

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Let this word serve as a guide to plan your Advent season, but also as a reminder to recalibrate when you feel yourself giving into the busyness of the season.

List three memories you'd like to create this Advent season.

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What time of day can you set aside to walk through scripture and/or this Advent guide with your family?

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As specifically as possible, plan two ways your family can serve others this Advent season.

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Write down the names of two people you can pray for and serve this Advent season.

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Jot down some simple, fun ideas and activities for you and your family to do this Advent season.

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How can you personally pursue Christ this Advent season?

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Is there anything you can identify that might be getting in the way of pursuing peace this Advent season?

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Which of these tasks, thoughts, hurts or ideas can you let go of this year?

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.....

TIS THE SEASON... DECEMBER

<p>NOV 28</p> <p>ADVENT BEGINS</p>			1
<p>5 Second Sunday of Advent</p> <p>Generations Singers</p>	6	7 MCwL Toy Store	8
<p>12 Third Sunday of Advent</p> <p>Generations Singers</p> <p>Advent Baptisms</p>	13	14	15 Collide Stud Christmas P
<p>19 Fourth Sunday of Advent</p> <p>Advent Baptisms</p>	20	21	22 No Collide, F
<p>26 Worship Services at 9 & 11:15am, no classes</p>	27	28	29 No Collide, F

	2 Generations Painted Churches Day Trip	3 Downtown Christmas Stroll	4 Kids of Mission Serve Event Downtown Georgetown Christmas Stroll
	9 MCwL Toy Store	10 MCwL Toy Store	11 MCwL Shoes & Movie Event
ent party	16	17	18
ReGen	23 Christmas Eve Eve Service, 6pm	24 Christmas Eve Services, 4 & 6pm	25 
ReGen	30	31 New Year's Eve	<i>New worship times start Jan 2.</i> Jan 2 - Worship 9 or 10:30, no classes Jan 9 - Worship 9 or 10:30, classes resume



WHAT IS ADVENT?

ADVENT COMES FROM A LATIN WORD MEANING “COMING” OR “ARRIVAL”.

The season of Advent has always been one of hope and expectation. From the first Sunday of Advent until Christmas Eve, we await the celebration of Jesus’ birth. But this season of anticipation doesn’t end on Christmas Day.

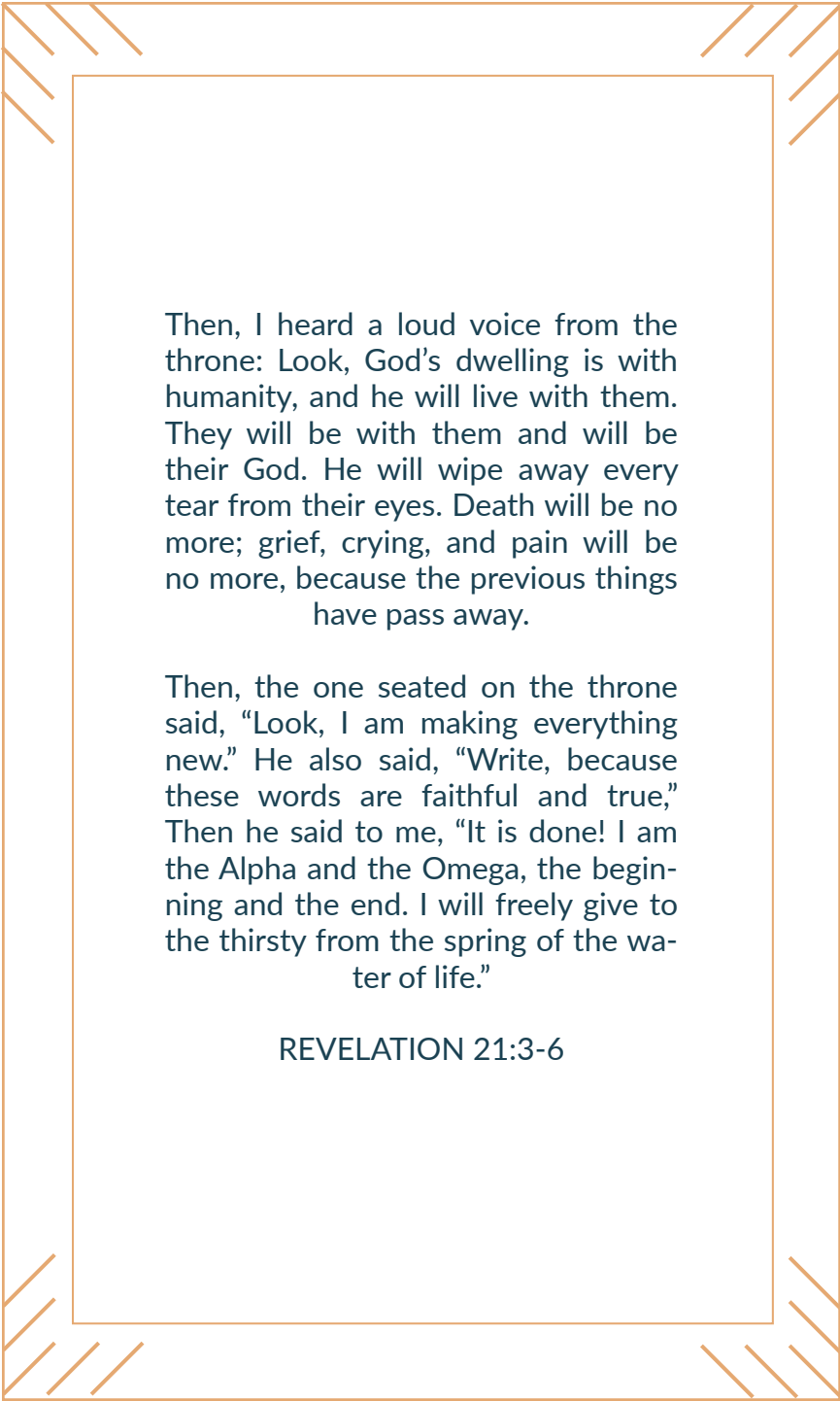
As followers of Christ, we are a people living between two advents: the coming of Jesus as a baby in Bethlehem, and His future triumphant return as the King of kings. Since the fourth century, believers across the globe have observed Advent to remember Jesus’s birth and anticipate His return.

A SEASON TO REMEMBER THE FIRST ADVENT

During Advent, we remember that Jesus came as the fulfillment of Old Testament promises, the answer to the prayers of generations who anticipated the promised Messiah. We celebrate not only His birth, but also the life He was born to live.

A SEASON TO ANTICIPATE THE SECOND ADVENT

We also anticipate Jesus’s promised return, when He will one day come again, bringing with Him the fullness of His kingdom. On that future day, every tear will be wiped away, and the eternal willing place of God will be with His people.



Then, I heard a loud voice from the throne: Look, God's dwelling is with humanity, and he will live with them. They will be with them and will be their God. He will wipe away every tear from their eyes. Death will be no more; grief, crying, and pain will be no more, because the previous things have pass away.

Then, the one seated on the throne said, "Look, I am making everything new." He also said, "Write, because these words are faithful and true," Then he said to me, "It is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. I will freely give to the thirsty from the spring of the water of life."

REVELATION 21:3-6

THE FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT

HOPE

NOVEMBER 28 - DECEMBER 4

DO NOT FEAR

hope is here

*The Lord is near all who call out to him,
all who call out to him with integrity.*

Psalm 145:18

This is the confidence we have before him: If we ask anything according to his will, he hears us.

1 John 5:14

Recognizing that we serve a God who hears us should produce great hope. At the edge of your darkest days, He hears you. In the normal routine of day in and day out, He hears you. Riding high with great celebration, He hears you. There is not a single moment God does not hear you.

How do we know?

Because He sent Jesus. In the first coming of Jesus we see the proof of a God who hears. He heard the brokenness of humanity when sin entered the garden. He already had a plan to provide a way out of that brokenness through Jesus.

This leads to great hope! Hope that no matter what, the God of the universe is leveraged toward showing humanity the way out of brokenness through Jesus. We have hope not only because Jesus came into the world to pay for our sins, but because He will come again and make all things right.

Praise God! We get to serve an almighty God who hears each person right where we are.

What does it mean to you that God hears you?

How does hope grow out of recognizing God hears you?

What do you need to surrender to the Lord today and trust that He hears you and cares for you?

FAMILY ADVENT

Set aside 15-20 minutes this week to talk about the hope that we can experience through knowing that God sees and hears us in every moment.

You'll need:

wreath • five candles • matches • Bible

Main Thought for Family Time

No matter what we face, we can have hope that we serve a God who sees and hears us.

Family Activity

Choose two family members to complete a task together. (You pick: Maybe hang a stocking, pour a cup of hot chocolate, put icing on a Christmas cookie...whatever you come up with that might make it fun for your family.)

Designate one person as the instruction giver and the other person as the person who does what they are instructed to do.

Here are the rules:

1. The person giving instructions can only whisper. If they get above a whisper then the task is over.
2. The person receiving instructions can only do exactly what they think they have been told by the instruction giver.
3. The person giving instructions must stay an arms length away from the person they are giving instructions to.

4. Everybody else is to be as loud as possible trying to distract the receiver from being able to hear the instruction giver. They must also stay an arms length away from the person who is receiving instructions.

5. The instruction receiver must close their eyes.

After the Task

Ask the person giving the instructions:

Did you feel like you were heard?

Did it seem like the task would be easy or impossible with all the loud distractions?

What did it feel like to not be able to be heard?

Ask everyone:

Have you ever had a time you felt like you were not heard?

What did it feel like to not be heard?

Key Scripture

Luke 1:5-25

- Look at verses 11- 13. What do these verses say about the Lord's response to Zechariah? (He heard Zechariah)
- What do the verses at the beginning of this devotional say about God hearing us? (Psalm 145:18 & 1 John 5:14)
- How does knowing God hears us bring about hope? (No matter what we face, we know He is with us, He cares, and He hears us so we can trust Him in any circumstance.)

Lighting the Advent Candle

After talking about the passage, turn the lights out and have one member of the family light the first Advent candle. As they are lighting the candle let them know this candle represents "hope". The coming of Jesus is proof that God can be trusted and the promise of Jesus' return is reason for great hope. Have someone read the following verses:

Romans 5:2-5 We have also obtained access through him by faith, into this grace in which we stand, and we boast in the hope of the glory of God. 3 And not only that, but we also boast in our afflictions, because we know that affliction produces endurance, 4 endurance produces proven character, and proven character produces hope. 5 This hope will not disappoint us, because God's love has been poured out in our hearts through the Holy Spirit who was given to us.

Prayer

Thank you Lord, that you hear us in any situation. We praise you for the hope and comfort it brings to know you hear and care. Lord, may we see and hear others in such a way that it conveys the true hope that only Jesus Christ brings.

Weekly Focus

This week be intentional to reflect God's character by hearing others. Take the time, in the midst of the chaotic season, to actually hear someone and see them so that they might come to know Jesus.

Serve

Three ways you can serve others this week:

1. Make a tasty treat and take it to a neighbor's house. Ask them how they are doing and truly listen. Talk about as a family what it looks like to truly hear someone else. Then affirm with your family that God hears each of them perfectly.
2. Have each family member write an encouraging note to someone outside your family. Either mail these letters or deliver them as a family as a way of showing someone else that you see them and you hear them.
3. Sign up to serve with Merry Christmas with Love next week. Go to fbg.church and click on upcoming events at the top and click Merry Christmas with Love to access all the opportunities you have to serve together next week. Be intentional about being a part of Merry Christmas with Love to serve our community.

THE SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT

JOY

DECEMBER 5 - DECEMBER 11

DO NOT FEAR

joy is here

Those who look to him are radiant with joy; their faces will never be ashamed. Psalm 34:5

Though you have not seen him, you love him; though not seeing him now, you believe in him, and you rejoice with inexpressible and glorious joy, because you are receiving the goal of your faith, the salvation of your souls. 1 Peter 1:8-9

Anyone who entered into the presence of God's glory immediately was full of fear. Moses in Exodus 3:6; Isaiah in Isaiah 6:5; and the shepherds in Luke 2:9. For when they got a glimpse of the glory of God, immediately the realization of their inadequacy sank in along with the absolute superiority of God.

Yet, what we see in the story of the shepherds in Luke 2 is that by the end, they are glorifying and praising God and seem to no longer have fear. What changed? How did they move from being terrified of God's glory at the beginning to celebrating, praising, and glorifying the Lord with great joy in the end?

The key was Jesus. Before they encountered Jesus, there was no joy or hope before the glory of God. They would be left exposed in their sin with the realization that they could not stand before God. But God, in His great mercy, desired to receive glory through providing a way for people to be made right with Him. When Jesus came, the shepherds gained clarity that God was not intent on wanting to destroy them, He was intent on wanting them to know Him. So much so, that He sent His Son to provide the payment so anyone could stand in the presence and glory of God and be joyful instead of afraid.

How do you view God's glory? Why?

The shepherds, in their joy, could not help but tell others about what God had done. How can you cultivate joy this week?

How can you help others move towards the joy of God's glory?

FAMILY ADVENT

Set aside 15-20 minutes this week to talk about the hope that we can experience through knowing that God sees and hears us in every moment.

You'll need:

apple cider or cranberry juice • fresh or dried apple, cranberry, lemon or orange slices (choose 3) • cinnamon sticks • cloves • rosemary

Main Thought for Family Time

Because of Jesus we can have great joy in God's strength and glory.

Family Activity

Fill your home with the smells of Christmas. Fill a pot two-thirds full of apple or cranberry juice. Add your other ingredients, bring to a boil, and then let simmer. Add more liquid as needed.

After the Task

Play a game in your home with the Christmas smells. Each time you catch a waft of the simmering potpourri, say something aloud that brings you joy this Christmas season, and then thank God for His provision and kindness.



Joy to the World

Joy to the world! the Lord is come;
Let earth receive her King;
Let every heart prepare him room,
And heaven and nature sing,
And heaven and nature sing,
And heaven, and heaven, and nature sing.

Joy to the world! the Saviour reigns;
Let men their songs employ;
While fields and floods, rocks, hills, and plains
Repeat the sounding joy,
Repeat the sounding joy,
Repeat, repeat the sounding joy.

No more let sins and sorrows grow,
Nor thorns infest the ground;
He comes to make His blessings flow
Far as the curse is found,
Far as the curse is found,
Far as, far as, the curse is found.

He rules the world with truth and grace,
And makes the nations prove
The glories of His righteousness,
And wonders of His love,
And wonders of His love,
And wonders, wonders, of His love.

Key Scripture

Luke 2-8.20

- How did the shepherds respond at first to the glory of God? (v. 9)
- What does this passage say about God's glory or glorifying the Lord? (vv. 9, 14, 20)
- By the end of the story how had the shepherd's attitude changed about God's glory after seeing Jesus? (v.20-They were no longer afraid of God's glory they were openly celebrating and giving God glory with great joy. Jesus changed their experience with God's power and glory. This is great news!)
- How can your family celebrate Jesus with great joy this week?

Lighting the Advent Candle

After talking about the passage, turn the lights out and have one member of the family light the first and second Advent candles. As they are lighting the second candle let them know this candle represents "joy". Jesus bridges the gap between the fear of God's glory and having great joy in God's glory. So it is joyful to celebrate the coming of Jesus since He provides a way for us to enjoy the glory and presence of God. Have someone read the following verses: Jude 24-25

Now to him who is able to protect you from stumbling and to make you stand in the presence of his glory, without blemish and with great joy, 25 to the only God our Savior, through Jesus Christ our Lord, be glory, majesty, power, and authority before all time, now and forever. Amen.

Wrap up your time by reminding your family that because of Jesus they can have great joy in the presence of God's great strength. Have someone pray with the following emphasis and then blow out the candles:

Prayer

Have one family member thank the Lord for sending Jesus so we might have great joy in celebrating the glory and strength of God. Ask the Lord to give you hearts of joy as you interact with people this week.

Weekly Focus

Find ways to celebrate with your family and as you do, remind them that you get to celebrate every day the joy of knowing Jesus and coming into the presence of a powerful God who loves you.

Serve

Three ways you can serve and encourage others:

1. Sign up to serve with Merry Christmas with Love this week. Go to fbg.church and click on upcoming events at the top and click Merry Christmas with Love to access all the opportunities going on throughout the week.
2. Make up fun Christmas decoration awards (Most decorated/Brightest house/Favorite house etc). Drive around as a family and when you see a house that fits one of your awards, go knock on the door and give it to them as a way of encouragement.
3. Find someone who needs help putting up their Christmas decorations and offer to help them as a family.

THE THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT

LOVE

DECEMBER 12 - DECEMBER 18

DO NOT FEAR

love is here

But God proves his own love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

Romans 5:8

Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good; his faithful love endures forever.

Psalms 107:1

Have you ever had someone's favor? Think about what it felt like to have that person's favor.

In Luke 1 Mary is greeted by an angel with a statement about her being a favored woman. This statement actually gave her fear as she was uncertain what it actually meant. Was it good to be noticed by the Lord? The angel tells her directly not to fear and reaffirms she has found favor with God. The angel then goes on to tell her what is going to happen.

This raises some questions. Was Mary better than everybody else? Is that why she was favored? How do we see that God actually favored her? If we go back to the story of the shepherds in Luke 2:13-14, we will see what the angels tell the shepherds about humanity.

“Suddenly there was a multitude of the heavenly host with the angel, praising God and saying: Glory to God in the highest heaven, and peace on earth to people he favors!”

So the Lord favors all people, not just Mary. Because of this favor God showed His great love to humanity through the gift of Jesus. How do we see God's favor on Mary and on humanity? The expression of God's love through presence is in Jesus Christ. Immanuel-God with us.

What does it look like to have the favor of God?

How does the favor and love of God impact your daily life? If you truly believed God favors and loves you, how would you live your life differently?

FAMILY ADVENT

Set aside 15-20 minutes this week to talk about the hope that we can experience through knowing that God sees and hears us in every moment.

You'll need:

wreath • five candles • matches • Bible

Main Thought for Family Time

God showed His great love and favor for you by sending Jesus.

Family Activity

This activity will take a bit of planning. Come up with an idea of something fun to do together as a family this week. (Go to the park/go to their favorite place/family movie night...etc.) Choose something that is focused on being together and the kids will be excited about.

When you know what you are going to do, do not tell your kids, but call a family meeting. Let the family know a few hours in advance that there will be a family meeting that night. You'll need to brush up your acting skills, to set it up so the kids don't know if it is good or bad.

That family meeting time will be when you will read the Scriptures and do your Advent wreath/candles.

At the start of the family meeting ask your family this question:

How are you feeling about us calling this family meeting?

Let them talk about uncertainty and/or nervousness for a moment. Then, similar to the angel in the story of Mary in Luke 1, tell your kids "Do not fear! You are favored and we love you and we want to spend time with you. So we wanted to get together to tell you what we're going to do together!"

Now it's time to share with them the fun activity you *actually* have planned.

Go right into the reflection and Scripture reading after this.

Key Scripture

Luke 1:26-38; 46-55

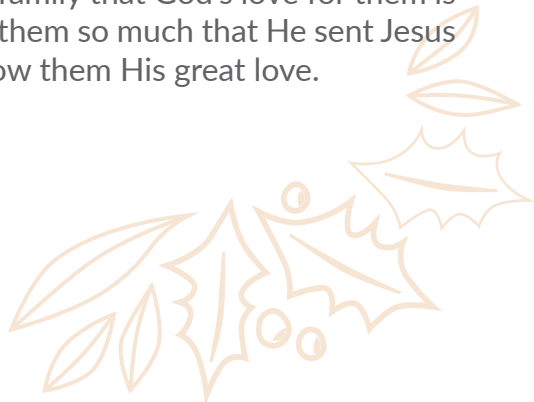
- Why did the angel tell Mary she did not need to be afraid?
- How has God shown you His love and favor? (one way was in sending Jesus)

Lighting the Advent Candle

After talking about the passage, turn the lights out and have one member of the family light the first, second, and third Advent candles. As they are lighting the third candle let them know this candle represents “love”. We are all loved and given great favor by God as seen in God’s gift of sending Jesus. Have someone read the following verse: John 3:16

For God loved the world in this way: He gave his one and only Son, so that everyone who believes in him will not perish but have eternal life.

As you wrap up, remind your family that God’s love for them is so deep. He loves and favors them so much that He sent Jesus to come into the world to show them His great love.



Prayer

Have one family member thank the Lord for His love that He gives to us. Thank the Lord for showing His love by sending Jesus to come, live and die for us. Ask the Lord to help you love others this week the way He has loved you.

Weekly Focus

This week be intentional to try and love others the way God has loved you. Even when it is hard, seek to love them and then be grateful to the Lord for His love for you.

Serve

Three ways you can serve others this week:

1. Buy a present for someone you wouldn't normally buy one for and deliver it to them as a family just to tell them you love them.
2. Find a way to serve a family member in a way they do not expect it. (Make their bed, vacuum their room, do their laundry etc...) Then tell them you did it because you love them.
3. Knock on a neighbors door and ask if they need help with anything and tell them your family would love to help them simply to show them you care about them.

CHRISTMAS MORNING CINAMMON ROLLS

Ingredients

Dough:

- 1 cup warm whole milk
- 1/3 cup granulated sugar
- 6 tablespoons unsalted butter, melted
- 1 teaspoon kosher salt
- One .25-ounce package active dry yeast
- 2 large eggs
- 4 cups all-purpose flour, plus more for dusting
- Vegetable oil, for the bowl

Filling:

- 6 tablespoons unsalted butter, softened, plus more for the baking dish
- 3/4 cup light brown sugar
- 2 tablespoons ground cinnamon
- 1 cup chopped toasted pecans, optional
- 1/2 cup raisins, optional

Icing:

- 2 cups confectioners' sugar
- 2 tablespoons unsalted butter, melted
- 1/2 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 4 tablespoons milk, plus more as needed

Directions

For the dough: Combine the milk, granulated sugar, butter, salt and yeast in the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the hook attachment and stir to combine well. Add the eggs and stir until well mixed. Add the flour and mix on medium-high speed until the dough is smooth and elastic, about 4 minutes. Transfer the dough to a large, lightly oiled bowl and cover with plastic wrap or a clean kitchen towel. Let stand in a warm, draft-free place until doubled in size, 1 1/2 to 2 hours.

Punch the dough down and lightly flour a work surface. Lay the dough out and pat or roll the dough out into an 18-by-12-inch rectangle.

For the filling: Butter a 13-by-9-inch glass baking dish. Spread the softened butter evenly all over the dough, leaving a 1/2-inch border, then sprinkle evenly with the brown sugar and cinnamon. Sprinkle with the pecans and raisins if using. Starting with a short end, roll up the dough and press and crimp the edges to seal. Cut the dough into 12 slices and arrange them in the buttered baking dish. If you want to bake them the same day, cover with plastic wrap and let stand until doubled in size, about 1 hour. Otherwise, refrigerate overnight; take out of the refrigerator and let sit at room temperature for 1 hour before baking. Preheat the oven to 375 degrees F. Bake the cinnamon rolls until puffed and golden brown all over, about 25 minutes.

For the icing: Put the confectioners' sugar in a medium bowl. Whisk in the melted butter, vanilla and 4 tablespoons of milk; whisk until smooth. Add additional milk, about 1 teaspoon at a time, if needed to achieve a thick but spreadable consistency. Spread the icing over the warm cinnamon rolls. Serve warm.



THE FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT

PEACE

DECEMBER 19 - DECEMBER 23

DO NOT FEAR

peace is here

He came and proclaimed the good news of peace to you who were far away and peace to those who were near.

Ephesians 2:17

“Peace I leave with you. My peace I give to you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Don’t let your heart be troubled or fearful.

John 14:27

Peace is incredibly allusive. Everybody wants it, but in reality we view it like a unicorn-something that sounds nice, but is not real.

Take a minute to reflect back over the past year. Think about some of the circumstances you found yourself in and the chaotic moments of 2021. How peaceful has this year been?

In the passage for this week (Matthew 1:18-25), Joseph finds himself in an impossible situation. His soon-to-be wife tells him she is pregnant but the baby is from God. From what little we see of Joseph he seems like a good guy who wants to do the right thing. This moment would be anything but peaceful. Can you imagine the inner turmoil he would be walking through in this moment?

But Joseph had a choice. He could believe what the Lord had told him through the angel or he could believe what felt most logical to him in the moment. How easy it is to chase peace by looking at the circumstances around us and trying to fix each one.

If I can just get this new job....we’ll have financial peace.

If we can just get our kids on track...we won’t have to worry.

If I can save a little more for retirement...I won’t have to stress about the future.

If I can... and you fill in the blank.

The problem is that getting circumstances perfect will always

be the allusive unicorn. We do not count on the circumstances to find peace. We depend on the One walking with us in the midst of the chaos for peace. Joseph believed and trusted the Lord and peace came in the midst of the circumstances and not by the lack of difficult circumstances.

What does real peace look like?

How has God provided the way to lasting peace?

Why is the peace God offers so much better than anything we could grab a hold of here on earth?





FAMILY ADVENT

Set aside 15-20 minutes this week to talk about the hope that we can experience through knowing that God sees and hears us in every moment.

You'll need:

wreath • five candles • matches • Bible

Main Thought for Family Time

We can have true peace no matter what the circumstances are around us because of Jesus.

Family Activity

For this activity you will want to choose one kiddo to go through the gauntlet and one adult to go through it with them a second or third time. Here's how it works:

- 1. Have everyone get in two rows facing each other about arms length apart.*
- 2. Everyone who is in the row gets either a pillow or some snowballs (wrapped up socks).*
- 3. The kid who is going to go through the gauntlet will wait for an adult to say go. When they are told to go, they will crawl on all fours slowly through the gauntlet of the family members standing in two rows .*
- 4. While this kid crawls through, the others with the pillows/snowballs will hit them with the pillows and snowballs (gently!). Let it be pretty chaotic. The kid getting hit should feel like it is chaos.*
- 5. Have them do this a couple of times. If kids want to trade out, that's great.*
- 6. Then, have one adult go through the gauntlet with the kid. If*

the adult can, have them get on all fours and have the kid on all fours under/in between the adult completely protected by the adult as they go through together. (If the adult cannot get on all fours, have them bear hug the kid and walk through the gauntlet. It will still generally have the same impact.)

7. *The goal is for the adult to take most of the chaos and hits while the kid feels protected in the midst of it.*

When you've had some fun with this and are done, ask the reflection questions.

After the Task

What was different when you went through the gauntlet without/with the protection of the adult?

What was the same both times?

Was it possible for you to feel pretty peaceful in the middle of the chaos?

Share with your kids that God offers us peace not by giving us easy circumstances but by walking with us through every circumstance. Let's read about how God gave Joseph peace in the midst of very hard circumstances.

Key Scripture

Matthew 1:18-25

- What did the angel tell Joseph not to be afraid about?
- Joseph was told to do something hard that he did not understand, but he did it. Have you ever been told by your parents to do something hard that you didn't understand? What was it?
- Joseph immediately obeyed. Joseph had peace to trust God and obey Him. Is it easy or hard to trust your parents when they tell you to do something you don't understand? Why?

Lighting the Advent Candle

After talking about the passage, turn the lights out and have one member of the family light the first, second, third, and fourth Advent candles. As they are lighting the fourth candle let them know this candle represents "peace". God sent Jesus into the world to bring about true peace. Even when we don't understand all that God is doing, we have the opportunity to experience peace through Jesus. Have someone read the following verse: John 16:33

I have told you these things so that in me you may have peace. You will have suffering in this world. Be courageous! I have conquered the world."

Wrap up your time by reminding your family that the peace God offers is bigger than any circumstance. So whether we understand what is going on, or we don't, God has still provided a way of peace through Jesus.

Prayer

Have one family member thank the Lord for sending Jesus to provide the way for true peace. Ask the Lord to help you live as people of peace in the midst of the chaos of the season and life.

Weekly Focus

No matter what you face this week, focus on the peace that comes from knowing Jesus has overcome all the difficulties of this world.

Serve

Three ways you can serve others this week:

1. Visit someone who does not have family to be with at Christmas. Spend time with them and pray with them. Potentially invite them to spend Christmas with your family.
2. Have your family write notes of encouragement to someone who is having a hard time.
3. As a family, cook a meal and take it to another family.



LOOKING FOR MORE?

The hope and goal for Christian parents in raising their children is to point them to the gospel of Jesus continually in hopes that God will save them. This can seem like an overwhelming task at times. Where do we start? What do we do? How do we point our children to Jesus in the everyday rhythm of life?

To help answer these questions, parents can consider two areas of life during the Advent season as they think about leading their families.

TIME-Create intentional time in the rhythm of your family's life to think about, talk about, and live out the gospel.


MOMENTS-Capture and leverage moments in the course of everyday life for the purpose of gospel-centered conversations.

In an effort to help families focus on time and moments during the Advent season, we have provided some additional activities in both of these areas. Let these ideas be a starting point for you and your family. Take some time to think through and come up with your own ways you can be intentional as a family during this Advent season.

Activities to help you create intentional time:

- Make a set of Christmas ornaments to remind you of Jesus' birth.
- If each person in your family has specific ornaments that are theirs, as you put them on the tree ask everyone to share which one they treasure most and why. (Ties well with week 1)
- Make an Advent wreath together and talk about what each candle represents:

HOPE
JOY
LOVE
PEACE
CHRIST (in the middle)



- Over dinner, talk about promises that you have made to people and promises people have made to you. Talk about the promises God has made to His children and why we can trust Him. Draw out the promise that God would send His Son, and He did. Then talk about that God has promised to send His Son again and since He has kept all of His promises, we look forward in hope to Jesus' second coming.

- Set aside time and ask your kids who they would like to be generous to that day. Let them come up with the plan and then as a family carry out their plan of generosity. As you go and as you head home talk about the Lord's generosity toward them in sending Jesus.

- As a family look through the options to help as a part of Merry Christmas with Love and choose some ways to get involved. <https://www.fbg.church/mcwl/> Talk about your being generous because the Lord has been so much more generous by sending Jesus.

- Sponsor a child on the island of Sulawesi with our church family. Contact our Mobilization Pastor, Chad Warren, at CWarren@fbg.church for more details.

- Bake cookies and while you wait talk about what it means to wait for Jesus' return. Ask them how they feel about waiting and how great the cookies will taste when they're done. Reiterate how much better it will be for those who believe in Jesus when He returns.

- Have your kids come up with awards they want to give out as you go look at Christmas decorations. (Best lights, best snowman, prettiest decorations...etc...whatever they come up with). Have them make a craft award (a paper plate decorated like a medal). Then go driving around looking at the decorations and have the kid's pick who gets their award. If they are willing, go with your kids up to the door, knock and have your kid present their award. As you get back in the car, talk with your kids about how God loves that person and He sent Jesus to the world so they would have a chance to believe in Him. Pray together for that person, that they would either come to believe in Jesus Christ or if they already do believe that they would love and serve Him.

IDEAS TO CAPTURE TEACHABLE MOMENTS

- As you put lights on the Christmas tree, turn off all the other lights in the room and talk about how the light pushes out the darkness. Talk about how Jesus is the light of the world (John 8:12) and His coming has provided a way of escape from the darkness.
- As your kids talk about how excited they are about Christmas getting closer. Ask them why they are excited and what they are anticipating the most. Remind them that we can also live in great anticipation of Jesus' second coming.
- Have a kid-friendly nativity set your kids can play with. As they play, retell the Christmas narrative and ask them about what it means that Jesus came into the world.
- If you are planning to travel over the holidays, talk about how you are intentionally planning, preparing and packing for your Christmas vacation. Ask your kids what are some things you can do to intentionally be preparing for Jesus' second coming.

Ask the Lord to help keep your eyes open for teachable moments this Advent season.



RECOMMENDED RESOURCES

Below are several resources that can supplement and bless your time of reflection, study and worship during the Advent season.

Suggested Advent Books

Jotham's Journey
Bartholomew's Passage
Tabitha's Travels
all by Arnold Ytreeide

The Advent Book
by Jack and Kathy Stockman

The Advent Jesse Tree
by Dean Lambert Smith

Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus: Experiencing the Peace and
Promise of Christmas
edited by Nancy Guthrie

Treasuring Christ in Our Traditions
by Noel Piper

Advent Foretold
by Wanda Sanseri

ADDITIONAL SCRIPTURE FOR STUDY AND REFLECTION

Then a shoot will grow from the stump of Jesse,
and a branch from his roots will bear fruit.
The Spirit of the Lord will rest on Him—
a Spirit of wisdom and understanding,
a Spirit of counsel and strength,
a Spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord.
His delight will be in the fear of the Lord.
He will not judge
by what He sees with His eyes,
He will not execute justice
by what He hears with His ears,
but He will judge the poor righteously
and execute justice for the oppressed of the land.
He will strike the land
with discipline from His mouth,
and He will kill the wicked
with a command from His lips.
Righteousness will be a belt around His loins;
faithfulness will be a belt around His waist. Isaiah 11:1-5

The birth of Jesus Christ came about this way: After His mother Mary had been engaged to Joseph, it was discovered before they came together that she was pregnant by the Holy Spirit. So her husband Joseph, being a righteous man, and not wanting to disgrace her publicly, decided to divorce her secretly. But after he had considered these things, an angel of the Lord suddenly appeared to him in a dream, saying, "Joseph, son of David, don't be afraid to take Mary as your wife, because what has been conceived in her is by the Holy Spirit. She will give birth to a son, and you are to name Him Jesus, because He will save His people from their sins." Now all this took place to fulfill what was spoken by the Lord through the prophet:
See, the virgin will become pregnant and give birth to a son,

and they will name Him Immanuel, which is translated “God is with us.” When Joseph got up from sleeping, he did as the Lord’s angel had commanded him. He married her but did not know her intimately until she gave birth to a son. And he named Him Jesus. Matthew 1:18-25

In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning. All things were created through Him, and apart from Him not one thing was created that has been created. Life was in Him and that life was the light of men. That light shines in the darkness, yet the darkness did not overcome it. The Word became flesh and took up residence among us. We observed His glory, the glory as the One and Only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth. John 1:1-5, 14

He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. For everything was created by Him, in heaven and on earth, the visible and the invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things have been created through Him and for Him. He is before all things, and by Him all things hold together. He is also the head of the body, the church; He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, so that He might come to have first place in everything. For God was pleased to have all His fullness dwell in Him, and through Him to reconcile everything to Himself by making peace through the blood of His cross—whether things on earth or things in heaven. Once you were alienated and hostile in your minds because of your evil actions. But now He has reconciled you by His physical body through His death, to present you holy, faultless, and blameless before Him. Colossians 1:15-22

If then there is any encouragement in Christ, if any consolation of love, if any fellowship with the Spirit, if any affection and mercy, fulfill my joy by thinking the same way, having the same love, sharing the same feelings, focusing on one goal. Do

nothing out of rivalry or conceit, but in humility consider others as more important than yourselves. Everyone should look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others. Make your own attitude that of Christ Jesus, who, existing in the form of God, did not consider equality with God as something to be used for His own advantage. Instead He emptied Himself by assuming the form of a slave, taking on the likeness of men. And when He had come as a man in His external form, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death—even to death on a cross. For this reason God highly exalted Him and gave Him the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee will bow—of those who are in heaven and on earth and under the earth—and every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

Philippians 2:1-11

Long ago God spoke to the fathers by the prophets at different times and in different ways. In these last days, He has spoken to us by His Son. God has appointed Him heir of all things and made the universe through Him. The Son is the radiance of God's glory and the exact expression of His nature, sustaining all things by His powerful word. After making purification for sins, He sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high. So He became higher in rank than the angels, just as the name He inherited is superior to theirs. Hebrews 1:1-4

Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea no longer existed. I also saw the Holy City, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared like a bride adorned for her husband. Then I heard a loud voice from the throne: Look! God's dwelling is with humanity, and He will live with them. They will be His people, and God Himself will be with them and be their God. He will wipe away every tear from their

eyes. Death will no longer exist; grief, crying, and pain will exist no longer, because the previous things have passed away. Then the One seated on the throne said, "Look! I am making everything new." He also said, "Write, because these words are faithful and true." Revelation 21:1-5

Both the Spirit and the bride say, "Come!" Anyone who hears should say, "Come!" And the one who is thirsty should come. Whoever desires should take the living water as a gift. Revelation 22:17

He who testifies about these things says, "Yes, I am coming quickly." Amen! Come, Lord Jesus! Revelation 22:20



