

NAME:

ADVENT

FAMILY DEVOTIONAL GUIDE



Candle Lighting Guide

Week 1 - Advent - Hope

Today is a special day because it marks the beginning of a new season in the church year-- a season we call Advent.

What does Advent mean?

The word Advent means "coming" or "to come." Advent is a season of waiting and preparation as we get our hearts ready to celebrate the coming of Jesus Christ. At Christmas, we remember that Jesus came into the world as a baby-- the greatest gift God has ever given us.

What are some things we do to get ready for Christmas?

We might decorate our homes, put up a Christmas tree, buy gifts, bake special treats, or spend time with family and friends. But during Advent, we are invited to prepare in another way too. We prepare our hearts.

We make space to think about Jesus, reflect on His love for us, and consider how our own hearts are doing. Gathering around the Advent wreath is one way we can intentionally prepare ourselves for Christmas.

Today is the first Sunday of Advent, and we light the first purple candle.

This first candle is called the Candle of Hope.

Purple is the traditional color of Advent. It reminds us that Jesus is our coming King. It also reminds us of the darkness of a world in need of Christ's light.

Before we light our first candle, let's pray together.

Prayer

Father God, Your Son, Jesus, is Your greatest gift to us. He is a sign of Your never-ending love. During these weeks of Advent, help us open our hearts more fully to that love as we wait and prepare to celebrate His coming.

May Your blessing be upon us as we light the candles of this wreath, and may each candle turn our hearts toward Jesus.

We pray this in His name. Amen.

(Light the first candle.)

This Candle of Hope reminds us of the many years God's people waited and hoped for the promised Messiah. They trusted that God would fulfill His promise and send a Savior -- and He did. Jesus Christ came to bring salvation, light and hope to the world.

As we light this candle, we remember that we, too, are people of hope. We look forward with joy to celebrating the birth of Jesus, and we hope and pray for the day when people everywhere will know God and worship Him.

Waiting with hope is not always easy. That is why we turn to Scripture to remind us that God is faithful to His promises.

Listen to the words of the prophet Isaiah:

Isaiah 7:14 - "Therefore the Lord Himself will give you a sign: The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and will call Him Immanuel."

Isaiah 9:2 - "The people walking in darkness have seen a great light; on those living in the land of deep darkness a light has dawned."



Hundreds of years before Jesus was born, the prophet Isaiah spoke words of hope about the coming Savior.

At Christmas, we see lights all around us-- on Christmas trees, homes, and decorations. Whenever we see those lights, they can remind us of an even greater light: Jesus, the Light of the World.

Because Jesus came, we have hope. Even when life feels uncertain or dark, we can trust that God is with us, God keeps His promises, and His light continues to shine.

Closing Prayer.

Jesus, thank You for coming to earth and fulfilling the promises spoken through the prophets. Thank you for being our hope, our light and for showing us how to live. As we prepare for Christmas, help us keep our hearts focused on You. May Your light shine through us so that others may experience the hope and love You bring.

Amen.

Family Activities - Week 1

(Optional)

Table Questions for the week:

These questions are labeled table questions and can be done while eating a meal together at the table, but they can also be discussed any time! You may choose to do them throughout the week, one a day, or pick and choose what works best for your family.

1) What is something that made you smile today? What was difficult today?

2) How did you see God today? (In someone's kindness, in nature, in the joy you experienced doing something)?

3) When we lit the candle, we discussed the hope that God gives us in Jesus. What does this mean for you?

4) At Christmas we notice the days getting shorter and the darkness grows deeper at night, but we also see many Christmas lights. How does a Christmas light represent Jesus?



For all ages of children: Create a prayer chain

Key Idea: One of the ways we can get our hearts ready for Advent is through prayer.

--Materials from the kit: Red & green construction paper

--Materials you need to provide: Scissors and glue, stapler, or tape.

1) There are two colors of construction paper in your kit. You will cut both sheets into strips. The red paper will be for prayer requests, focusing on those who may need the hope of Jesus, and the green will be for things that the child is thankful for.

2) Have each child write or draw pictures of the people they would like to pray for on their red strips of paper. (One prayer request per paper strip.)

Note: In two weeks you will be giving neighbors a gift so be sure to include the names of any neighbors that you will be giving these gifts to (see Week Three - Joy guide for more information). As they write or draw, discuss the prayer requests. This is a wonderful time to see what is on their heart.

3) Have each child write, or draw, the things or people that they are thankful for on the green strips of paper (one thing or person per paper strip). As they write or draw, talk about why they are thankful for those things or people.

4) Have older kids tape, glue or staple their chains together. For younger kids, you may need to turn the strips into a chain for them. Staple one end of each strip to the other end and then loop your 2nd chain through your first before stapling, and your 3rd through your 2nd. (See the picture on page 6.)

5) Each day during this Advent season, have each member of the family take turns picking one red chain and one green chain to pray for or give thanks for. You may choose to continue to add paper chains throughout this season, and feel free to pray for each chain multiple times, or take them down as you pray. Whatever is best for your family.



For all ages of children: Begin making the Nativity Set

Throughout the next four weeks we will be creating a nativity set one piece at a time. The nativity will consist of Mary, Joseph, Jesus and a manger.

Note: In Week 3 you will need an empty toilet paper roll.

-- Materials needed from kit: One large peg person.

--Materials you need to provide: Markers or paint

1) Read Luke 1:26-56 together. As you are reading, have your child color or paint the first peg person in their nativity-- Mary.

- 2) Discuss the scripture with your child:
- What do they notice about Mary?
 - How did Mary respond to the unexpected news that would change her life?
 - What does Mary's response tell us about what she believed about God (does she trust Him, believe He is for her good, etc.)?

--For families with children older than 3rd grade:

Watch the 5 minute video on Hope from the Bible Project (<https://bibleproject.com/explore/video/yakhal-hope>) and use the following questions for discussion:

1. What did you learn from the video?
2. Did anything surprise you?
3. What is the source of our hope as Christians?
4. In the video, it was said "Hope is a choice to wait for God to bring about a future that is as surprising as a crucified man rising from the dead." What does this statement mean? How does having hope affect how we live our daily lives?
5. Why do you think it's important to look back in order to look forward?



Bible Project Video

Candle Lighting Guide

Week 2 - Advent - Peace

Today is the second Sunday of Advent.

Do you remember why we are taking time each week to gather around our Advent wreath?

Advent is a season of waiting and preparation. During these weeks, we are preparing our hearts to celebrate the coming of Jesus Christ. Each candle we light helps us remember something important about who Jesus is and what His coming means for us.

Today, we will light two purple candles.

Before we light our candles, let's pray together.

Prayer

Father God, Your Son, Jesus, is Your greatest gift to us. He is a sign of Your never-ending love. During these weeks of Advent help us open our hearts more fully to that love as we wait and prepare to celebrate His birth.

May Your blessing be upon us as we light the candles of this wreath, and may each candle turn our hearts toward Your Son, Jesus.

We pray this in His name. Amen.

Last week, we lit the Candle of Hope. It reminded us that God is faithful to His promises and that because of Jesus, we can always have hope.

(Light the first purple candle.)



Today we light our second candle-- the Candle of Peace.

(Light the second purple candle)

Our world does not always feel peaceful. We experience disagreements, uncertainty, sadness, and suffering. Sometimes we may even feel worried or unsettled inside our own hearts.

But Jesus offers us a peace that is greater than our circumstances. During Advent, we remember that true peace comes from God. We also ask Him to help us become people who bring His peace to those around us.

When we look at the second candle, we remember the angels who appeared to the shepherds on the night Jesus was born. They announced the arrival of the Savior-- the Prince of Peace.

Listen to what the Bible tells us:

Luke 2:13-14: "Suddenly, the angel was joined by a vast host of others -- the armies of heaven-- praising God and saying, 'Glory to God in highest heaven, and peace on earth to those with whom God is pleased.'"

Long before Jesus was born, the prophet Isaiah told God's people about the One who would come:

Isaiah 9:6: "For a Child is born to us, a Son is given to us. The government will rest on His shoulders. And He will be called: Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace."

Jesus came into a world that desperately needed peace- and our world still needs His peace today.

As we look at the Candle of Peace, we remember that Jesus not only gives us peace but also calls us to share His peace with others. We can be peacemakers in our homes, friendships, schools, workplaces, church, and community.



Sometimes being a peacemaker means choosing kindness over anger, listening rather than arguing, forgiving someone who has hurt us, or reaching out to someone who feels alone.

This Advent, may the light of this candle remind us that because Jesus, the Prince of Peace, has come, we can receive His peace and carry His peace into the world around us.

Closing prayer.

Father God, thank you for sending Your Son, Jesus, the Prince of Peace. Thank you that even when the world around us feels uncertain, we can find peace in You.

Thank you for the people in our world who work to bring peace to others. Help us to become peacemakers too. Show us ways to bring kindness, forgiveness, understanding, and peace into our homes, church, workplaces, schools, and community.

May Your peace fill our hearts and shine through our lives.

In Jesus' name, Amen.

Family Activities - Week 2

(Optional)

Table Questions for the week:

These questions are labeled table questions and can be done while eating a meal together at the table, but they can also be discussed any time! You may choose to do them throughout the week, one a day, or pick and choose what works best for your family.

1) What is something that made you smile today? What was difficult today?

2) How did you see God today? (In someone's kindness, in nature, in the joy you experienced doing something).

3) When we lit the candle, we discussed the peace that Jesus brings us. What does that mean to you?

4) What are ways that you can seek to bring peace this week?

For all ages of children: Decorate Peace Dove Keychain

Key Idea: Jesus is our Prince of Peace

--Materials needed from kit: Wooden dove keychain

--Materials you need to provide: Markers or paint

1) Use the wooden dove cut outs to do this project. Begin by having each child color in their dove using markers or paint with colors or pictures that remind them of Jesus, our Prince of Peace. Remind your children that they can choose to color in both sides of the dove. As they are coloring, ask them why they chose those colors, symbols or images. A great question is, "Can you tell me about (and point to something they have colored or drawn that you'd love to hear more about)...".

2) When the dove has dried (if you're using paint), have the child write the word peace on both sides.

3) As your children are writing, ask them how they can show Jesus' peace at home, at church, and at school.

4) Clip the dove on your tree, backpack, or place it around the house in an area where you will see it many times a day. Each time you read the word peace, or see the dove, remind yourself that Jesus is the Prince of Peace.



For all ages of children:
Continue making the Nativity Set

We will continue creating the nativity set this week.

-- Materials needed from the kit:
One large peg person.

-- Materials you need to provide: Markers or paint

1) Read Matthew 1:18-25. As you are reading, have your child color or paint the second peg person in their nativity-- Joseph.

2) Discuss the scripture with your child:

- What do they notice about Joseph?
- How did Joseph respond to the unexpected news that would change his life?
- What does Joseph's response tell us about what he believes about God (does he trust Him, believe He is for his good, etc)?

For families with children older than 3rd grade:

Watch the 4 minute video on Peace from the Bible Project (<https://bibleproject.com/explore/video/shalom-peace>) and use these questions for discussion:



Bible Project Video

1. What did you learn from the video?

2. Did anything surprise you?

3. What is shalom?

4. How is Jesus our peace? How does this knowledge affect how we live?

5. In the video, it was said “So peace takes a lot of work because it is not just the absence of conflict. True peace requires taking what is broken and restoring it to wholeness, whether it is in our lives, relationships or world.” What are some ways that we can work at bringing peace to our lives, relationships and world?

Candle Lighting Guide

Week 3 - Advent - Joy

Today is the third Sunday of Advent.

Do you remember why we are taking time each week to gather around our Advent wreath?

Advent is a season of waiting and preparation. During these weeks, we are preparing our hearts to celebrate the coming of Jesus Christ. Each candle we light helps us remember something important about who Jesus is and what His coming means for us.

This is the third week of Advent. Can you guess how many candles we will light today? Three!

Before we light our candles, let's pray together!

Prayer

Father God, Your Son Jesus, is Your greatest gift to us. He is a sign of Your never ending love. During these weeks of Advent, help us open our hearts more fully to that love as we wait and prepare to celebrate His coming.

May Your blessing be upon us as we light the candles of this wreath, and may each candle turn our hearts toward Jesus.

We pray this in His name. Amen.

On the first Sunday of Advent, we lit the Candle of Hope. It reminds us that God is faithful to His promises and that we wait with the hope as we prepare to celebrate the birth of Jesus.

(Light the first purple candle.)

On the second Sunday of Advent, we lit the Candle of Peace. It reminds us that Jesus is the Prince of Peace and that He calls us to receive His peace and share it with others.

(Light the second purple candle.)

Today, on the third Sunday of Advent, we light the Candle of Joy.

(Light the pink candle.)

You may notice that this candle is different from the first two. Instead of purple, it is pink.

The pink candle marks a joyful moment in our Advent journey. Christmas is getting closer! Its brighter color reminds us to rejoice because the Savior we have been waiting for is coming.

We have joy because we remember God's incredible gift of Jesus to the world.

But the joy we celebrate during Advent is about more than simply feeling happy. Happiness can change depending on what is happening around us. The joy we receive from God is deeper. We can have joy because we know that God loves us, is with us and keeps His promises -- even when our circumstances are difficult or uncertain.

When we look at the third candle, we remember God's promise to send a Savior. We also remember a young woman named Mary, who trusted God's promise even when she did not know exactly what the future would hold.

Listen to Mary's words:

Luke 1:46-47: Mary said, "Oh, how my soul praises the Lord. How my spirit rejoices in God my Savior!"

Mary's words remind us that we can seek God's joy even in times of uncertainty.

Then on the night Jesus was born, God shared the joyful news of His arrival with a group of shepherds.

Listen to what the Bible tells us:

Luke 2:8-11: “There were shepherds staying in the fields nearby, guarding their flocks of sheep. Suddenly, an angel of the Lord appeared among them, and the radiance of the Lord’s glory surrounded them. They were terrified, but the angel reassured them. ‘Don’t be afraid!’ he said. ‘I bring you good news that will bring great joy to all people. The Savior-- yes, the Messiah, the Lord-- has been born today in Bethlehem, the city of David!’”

The angel did not announce good news for just a few people. He announced, “great joy to all people.” Jesus came for the whole world -- and that is a reason to rejoice!

As we look at the Candle of Joy, we remember that our joy is found in Jesus. And just as the angels shared the joyful news of His birth, we can share His joy with the people around us.

We can bring joy through kindness, encouragement, generosity, gratitude and the way we love others.

This Advent, may the light of this candle remind us that Jesus is our joy-- and His good news is worth celebrating and sharing.

Closing Prayer

Lord, today we rejoice!

We rejoice because You kept Your promise and sent Your Son, Jesus, to be our Savior. Thank you for the joy we have because You love us and are always with us.

Fill our hearts and our days with Your joy. When life feels difficult or uncertain, remind us that our deepest joy is found in You.

Help us live in such a way that our words and actions share
Your joy with others. May the people around us see the joy of
Jesus shining through our lives.

In Jesus' name, Amen.

Family Activities - Week 3

(Optional)

Table Questions for the week:

These questions are labeled table questions and can be done while eating a meal together at the table, but they can also be discussed any time! You may choose to do them throughout the week, one a day, or pick and choose what works best for your family.

- 1) What is something that made you smile today? What was difficult today?
- 2) How did you see God today? (In someone's kindness, in nature, in the joy you experienced doing something)?
- 3) When we lit the candle, we discussed the joy that Mary and the shepherds felt when they heard about Jesus. What are some ways that you can choose joy this week, even when it feels hard?
- 4) What are ways that you can bring joy to others this week?

For all ages of children: Make Celebration Cookies to Give to Neighbors

Key idea: We celebrate God's gift of Jesus with Joy

-- Materials from the Kit: Cookie package

-- Materials you need to provide: butter, egg, water, paper plate/gift box or bag to give the cookies away.

1) Bake the Snickerdoodle cookies as directed. As you bake, discuss how food can represent celebrations. What types of food do you use in your family for celebrating? What are your favorite foods to celebrate with? Name some of the most memorable celebrations you've had. Remind your child that Jesus is full of joy knowing they have those memories! These cookies represent to us that we are celebrating the joy that we have that Jesus was born--He is God with us, Immanuel.

2) When the cookies have cooled, place them on the plate or in a bag/box. You may want to encourage your child to make a gift tag or card and write something they appreciate about their neighbor, or how Jesus brings us joy.

3) Pray for the neighbor(s) you are delivering these celebration cookies to.

For all ages of children: Continue making the Nativity Set

This week we will be making the manger for baby Jesus.

-- Materials Needed from Kit: none provided.

--Materials not included: Empty toilet paper roll, glue or tape.

1) Read Luke 2:1-14

2) When you are finished reading, have your child (or do it for your child) cut an empty toilet paper roll in half, then cut it in half the other way (see picture). Glue the two halves together to create a manger for the baby Jesus you will create next week.



3) Discuss the scripture with your child:

- What do they notice about the shepherds?
- How did the shepherds respond to the news given to them by the angels?
- What do they notice about the angels?
- What do the angel's words tell us about God?

For families with children older than 3rd grade:

Watch the 5 minute video on Joy from the Bible Project (<https://bibleproject.com/explore/video/chara-joy>) and use the following questions for discussion:



Bible Project Video

- 1) What are some sources of joy for you?
- 2) In the video, it was said, "Joy is an attitude God's people adopt, not because of happy circumstances but because of their hope in God's love and promise." What does this statement mean? How does it affect how we live?
- 3) After watching the video, how would you define Christian joy in the Bible?
- 4) How can you develop an attitude of joy?

Candle Lighting Guide

Week 4 - Advent - Faith & Love

Today is the fourth Sunday of Advent.

For four weeks, we have been gathering around our Advent wreath. Do you remember why?

Advent is a season of waiting and preparation. During these weeks, we are preparing our hearts to celebrate the coming of Jesus Christ. Each candle we light helps us remember something important about who Jesus is and what His coming means for us.

This is the fourth week of Advent, which means we will light four candles today!

Before we light our candles, let's pray together.

Prayer

Father God, Your Son, Jesus, is Your greatest gift to us. He is a sign of Your never-ending love. During these weeks of Advent, help us open our hearts more fully to that love as we wait and prepare to celebrate His coming.

May Your blessing be upon us as we light the candles of this wreath, and may each candle turn our hearts toward Jesus.

We pray this in His name. Amen.

On the first Sunday of Advent, we lit the Candle of Hope. It reminds us that God is faithful to His promises and that we wait with hope as we prepare to celebrate the birth of Jesus.

(Light the first purple candle.)

On the second Sunday of Advent, we lit the Candle of Peace. It reminds us that Jesus is the Prince of Peace and that He calls us to receive His peace and share it with others.

(Light the second purple candle.)

On the third Sunday of Advent, we lit the Candle of Joy. It reminds us of the angels' announcement of "good news that will bring great joy to all people."

(Light the pink candle.)

Today, on the fourth Sunday of Advent, we light the Candle of Faith & Love.

(Light the third purple candle.)

Christmas is almost here!

Throughout Advent, we have remembered God's promises and prepared our hearts to celebrate His greatest gift—Jesus.

Today, we remember that Jesus came to show us just how deeply God loves us. God's love for the world is the reason He sent His Son. At Christmas, love came near to us in the person of Jesus Christ.

We also remember the gift of faith. Faith means trusting God and believing that He is faithful, even when we cannot see or understand everything He is doing.

Mary and Joseph give us beautiful examples of this kind of faith.

Mary was asked to trust God with a plan she could never have imagined. Joseph was also asked to believe that God was doing something extraordinary.

Listen to what the Bible tells us:

Matthew 1:18 “Mary, was engaged to be married to Joseph. But before the marriage took place, while she was still a virgin, she became pregnant through the power of the Holy Spirit.”

In **Matthew 1:20** an angel told Joseph: “The child within her was conceived by the Holy Spirit. And she will have a son, and you are to name Him Jesus, for He will save His people from their sins.”

John 3:16- “For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life.”

Father God, thank you for Your Son, Jesus, and for loving us so deeply that You sent Him into the world for us. Thank you for the gift of faith and for reminding us that we can always trust in You.

Fill our hearts with Your love and help us share that love with others. Teach us to love our families, our friends, our classmates, and the people we meet each day. May our words and actions help others experience the love of Jesus through us.

In Jesus' name, Amen.

Family Activities - Week 4

(Optional)

Table Questions for the week:

These questions are labeled table questions and can be done while eating a meal together at the table, but they can also be discussed any time! You may choose to do them throughout the week, one a day, or pick and choose what works best for your family.

- 1) What is something that made you smile today? What was difficult today?
- 2) How did you see God today? (In someone's kindness, in nature, in the joy you experienced doing something)?
- 3) When we lit the candle, we discussed the gift of love that God gave us in Jesus. In what ways does Jesus show you His love? How should we live knowing the different ways that Jesus shows His love to us?
- 4) What are ways that you can show others Jesus' love this week?

For all ages of children: Make Suncatchers to Give to Others

Key Idea: God showed His love for us by sending Jesus, His Son.

--Materials needed from the kit: suncatcher activity with tissue paper.

--Materials you need to provide: Scissors, gift wrapping for the suncatcher.

- 1) Use the suncatcher instructions to make the suncatcher with tissue paper. This suncatcher is going to be a gift for someone who you would like to remind that God shows His love for us by sending His son. The suncatcher represents how God's love shines through the birth, life, death and resurrection of His son, Jesus.

2) Encourage your child to create a gift tag or card for the person they are giving the suncatcher to. Your child may want to remind the person that when the sun is shining through this cross they can remember God's love for them that shines through Jesus.

3) Wrap the suncatcher and pray for the person you are giving it to.



For all ages of children:
Continue making the Nativity Set

This week we will be finishing our nativity set with the baby Jesus.

-- Materials Needed from Kit: small peg person

-- Materials you need to provide: Markers or paint

1) Read Luke 2:16-20. As you are reading, have your child color or paint the baby Jesus.

2) Discuss the scripture with your child: what do they think the shepherds said to Mary and Joseph (you may need to reread last week's passage). How did Mary respond? What did the shepherds do when they left baby Jesus? Imagine you were there with baby Jesus, what smells, sights, sounds would you hear? How would you feel?

For families with children older than 3rd grade:

Watch the 5 minute video on Love from the Bible Project (<https://bibleproject.com/explore/video/agape-love>) and use the following questions for discussion:



Bible Project Video

1) What is the kind of love Jesus showed us?

2) In the video, it was said “Jesus said the ultimate standard of authentic love is how well you treat the person that you can’t stand, or in His words, ‘You shall love your enemy and do good to them expecting nothing in return’” (Luke 6:35). What does this mean for your life?

3) Is there an action God is asking you to take this week to demonstrate His love to others?

Christmas Day Candle Lighting & Reading

Today is Christmas!

The day we have been waiting for and preparing our hearts for is finally here. Throughout Advent, we have waited with expectation, remembered God's promises, and prepared ourselves for the coming of Jesus.

Today, our waiting is over.

Today, we celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ!

During the four weeks of Advent, we lit four candles. Each one helped us remember something important about God's promises and the gift He has given us in Jesus.

First, we lit the Candle of Hope. It reminded us that God is faithful to His promises and that because of Jesus, we can always have hope.

(Light the first purple candle.)

Next, we lit the Candle of Peace. It reminded us that Jesus is the Prince of Peace and that He calls us to receive His peace and share it with others.

(Light the second purple candle.)

Then, we lit the Candle of Joy. It reminded us of the angels' announcement of "good news that will bring great joy to all people."

(Light the pink candle.)

On the fourth Sunday of Advent, we lit the Candle of Faith & Love. It reminded us that we can trust God and that He loves us so deeply that He sent His Son into the world for us.

(Light the fourth purple candle.)

Today, on Christmas, we light one final candle—the Christ Candle.

The white candle in the center of our Advent wreath represents Jesus Christ. White reminds us of His purity, holiness, and light.

For four weeks, we have waited to light this candle. Today, our waiting has ended.

Jesus has come!

(Place the white candle in the center and light it).

Listen to the joyful announcement from the Gospel of Luke:

Luke 2:11 “The Savior—yes, the Messiah, the Lord—has been born today in Bethlehem, the city of David!”

The Savior God promised had finally arrived.

When we look at the light of the Christ Candle, we remember that Jesus is the Light of the World. His light shines into our darkness and leads us to life.

Jesus tells us:

John 8:12 “I am the light of the world. If you follow Me, you won’t have to walk in darkness, because you will have the light that leads to life.”

Throughout Advent, we have remembered hope, peace, joy, faith, and love. Today, we celebrate that all of these gifts are found in Jesus.

God sent Jesus to bring hope to the hopeless, peace to troubled hearts, joy to His people, faith to those who trust Him, and love to the whole world.

And that good news was not meant for only a few people.

Far away from Bethlehem, wise men saw a star in the sky. They followed its light because they knew that something extraordinary had happened. Their journey reminds us that Jesus did not come for only one family, one town, or one group of people. Jesus came for the world.

Listen to what the Bible tells us:

Matthew 2:1-2 “Jesus was born in Bethlehem in Judea, during the reign of King Herod. About that time some wise men from eastern lands arrived in Jerusalem, asking, ‘Where is the newborn king of the Jews? We saw His star as it rose, and we have come to worship Him.’”

The wise men followed the star until it led them to Jesus.

Matthew 2:10-11 “When they saw the star, they were filled with joy! They entered the house and saw the child with His mother, Mary, and they bowed down and worshiped Him. Then they opened their treasure chests and gave Him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh.”

God used a star to guide the wise men to Jesus. God has guided us to the true meaning of Christmas during our waiting season of Advent. God has come into the world in Jesus Christ to be with us so that we will experience God’s hope, joy, love, faith and peace.

Closing Prayer

Father God, thank you for the greatest gift of all—Your Son, Jesus. Thank You for sending Jesus into the world for all people.

On this Christmas Day, fill our hearts with joy as we remember and celebrate the birth of our Savior. Help us to remember each day how deeply You love and care for us.

Teach us to share that same love and care with our families, our friends, and everyone we meet. May the love of Jesus shine through our words and actions, not only at Christmas, but every day of the year.

In Jesus’ name, Amen.

