

# Advent at Home



# Introduction

Throughout the Old Testament, God's people waited full of hope for the Messiah. Today, we know that the Messiah has already come, that he was born over two thousand years ago in a stable in Bethlehem. But as we prepare to celebrate Jesus' birth on Christmas Day, we also excitedly wait, like God's people in the Old Testament. In fact, the four weeks leading up to Christmas are a special time for God's people to join together in anticipation of Christ's birth. This time is called Advent.

Many churches use Advent wreaths that have five candles making up a circle. The candles are lit, one candle per week, for four weeks; the fifth candle is lit on Christmas Eve. Often, a special reading is said during the lighting of each candle.

The Advent At Home eBook contains five Advent devotionals that can be read each week at home. Your family can follow each week's instructions and arrange five candles and maybe decorate them with a simple wreath. You could talk about each of the four Advent candles: hope, peace, joy, and love. On Christmas Eve, light the fifth candle to represent Christ, the light of the world.

## What You Need:

1. Four votive candles. Weekly candles represent the themes of hope, peace, joy, and love. Three of the candles can be purple, the traditional color of Advent. Use a pink candle on the third week to represent joy.
2. A white pillar candle to represent Christ, the light of the world.
3. A plate or board underneath all five candles. Place the candles in a circle on the plate or board around the white pillar candle. If safety is a concern, use battery-operated candles instead.

**We pray that this practice of participating in Advent gives your family a deep sense of anticipation for Christmas. May God bless you during this special season.**

### Credits

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Reframe Ministries is the media ministry of the Christian Reformed Church in North America.

## Advent At Home: Week 1—Hope

Choose a day and time each week when your family will light the Advent candle, for example, Sunday evening after supper. Try to be consistent.

Light the candle of the corresponding week. Hope is the first candle. In following weeks, you would also light the candles from the previous weeks.

Each week, take turns reading and lighting the candle(s). Have someone say, "This is the first week of Advent, and we light the candle of hope." Then have someone light the candle of hope.

### Dig Deeper:

- Read the devotion **Advent: A Time of Hope** or listen to the [audio here](#). To learn more about what hope means in the Bible, read [Isaiah 9:2-7](#).
- Pray the prayer at the end of the devotion together.
- Ask this question: **"In what ways can we show the hope in Jesus to others?"** Allow each family member to answer the question, and then have a conversation about what hope means to them. After the sharing time, say, "Let's find ways to show our hope in Jesus to everyone we meet this week."
- Listen to (or even sing!) a family favorite Christmas carol about hope, like "O Come All Ye Faithful."

### CASEY'S DAY







## *Advent: A Time of Hope*

<https://kidscorner.net/devotions/advent-a-time-of-hope>

### **Kids' Bible Reading: Isaiah 9:2-7**

**Today's Verse:** For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Isaiah 9:6 (NIV)

So, what are you waiting for? Is there something extra special you hope will happen someday? Are you waiting for something to happen? Maybe it's an exciting event, like a birthday or maybe you're waiting for an important package to arrive. Waiting for something can be hard. "Looking forward" means that something special hasn't arrived just yet.

The Israelites were waiting for something. During the time of Isaiah, Israel had been conquered over and over. Foreign enemies ruled over them, and they wanted so much to be free. Where did their hope come from? They believed the Messiah, a rescuer, would come and save them. With his prophecies of a Messiah, Isaiah gave hope to God's people. Isaiah and other Old Testament prophets waited with hope that someday God's Messiah would come. Could they have imagined how Jesus would one day come to defeat the powerful enemy Satan and free God's people from both sin and death?

How does Jesus give you hope? He died on the cross and paid for your sins, setting you free from Satan's power. He protects you today too. He also promises you eternal life and equips you from now on to live for him. Have you given your life to Jesus yet? So, what are you waiting for?

## *Prayer*

**God of hope,** thank you that the prophets continued to tell people that the Messiah was coming. Help us walk in hope during the weeks of Advent, as we wait and prepare for Jesus' coming. We pray in the name of Jesus, our Savior.

**Amen.**





## Advent At Home: Week 2—Peace

Continue the same day and time each week when your family will light the Advent candle, for example, Sunday evening after supper. Try to be consistent.

Light the second Advent candle: peace. This week, you would also light the candle from the previous week (hope).

Have someone say, "This is the second week of Advent. We light the candle of hope from last week. Today, we light the candle of peace." Have someone light the candle of hope and then the candle of peace.

### Dig Deeper:

- Read the devotion **Advent: A Time of Peace** or listen to the audio [here](#). To learn more about what peace means in the Bible, read [Luke 1:26-38](#); [Luke 1:46-56](#); [John 16:33](#).
- Pray the prayer at the end of the devotion together.
- Ask this question: "**In what ways can we show the peace of Christ to others?**" Allow each family member to answer the question, and then have a conversation about what peace means to them. After the sharing time, say, "Let's find ways to show the peace in Jesus to everyone we meet this week."
- Listen to (or even sing!) a family favorite Christmas carol about peace, like "Hark the Herald Angels Sing."

### CASEY'S DAY





## *Advent: A Time of Peace*

<https://kidscorner.net/devotions/advent-a-time-of-peace>

**Kids' Bible Reading: Luke 1:26-38; Luke 1:46-56; John 16:33**

**Today's Verse:** "I am the Lord's servant," Mary answered. "May your word to me be fulfilled." Luke 1:38 (NIV)

Are there any big changes coming in your life? Have you been expecting these changes? Sometimes we see big changes coming, and they change our whole lives: perhaps it's a move to a new city, the birth of a sibling, or waiting to start the next grade. When a big change happens, we can feel both excited and anxious.

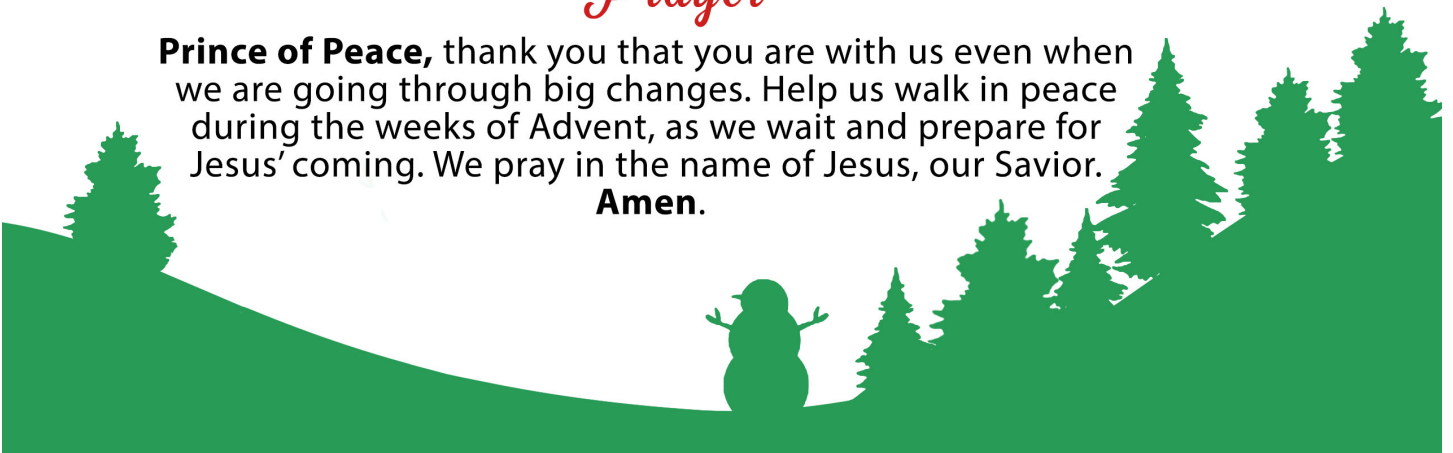
Mary, a young teenager, was engaged to Joseph when, all of sudden, the angel Gabriel appeared and told her that she would be the mother of the Son of God! How do you think she reacted to this incredible news? Was she excited? Did she worry what Joseph would think? Did she feel anxious about becoming a mother so unexpectedly? Jesus' coming would dramatically change her life forever.

Look at the end of Mary's astonishing conversation with an angel! Mary felt at peace and beautifully responded, "I am the Lord's servant. May it be to me as you have said." This was great faith! In trust, Mary gave everything that she was and everything she wanted to be to the Lord. She obeyed the word of God spoken to her. By answering that she was the Lord's servant, she had peace about God making big changes to the plans she'd made for her life. Over two thousand years later, we still are amazed by that peace.

Mary heard the angel say, "Nothing is impossible with God." Believe and trust that God has a plan for you too. Whatever you face, God is with you. God is faithful and will protect you. When we feel anxious about changes that are happening, we can pray for peace. And God, who knows us really well, will calm our anxiety and give us his peace.

## *Prayer*

**Prince of Peace,** thank you that you are with us even when we are going through big changes. Help us walk in peace during the weeks of Advent, as we wait and prepare for Jesus' coming. We pray in the name of Jesus, our Savior.  
**Amen.**





## *Advent At Home: Week 3—Joy*

Continue the same day and time each week when your family will light the Advent candle, for example, Sunday evening after supper. Try to be consistent.

Light the third Advent candle: joy. The pink candle represents joy. This week, you would also light the candles from the previous weeks (hope and peace).

Have someone say, “This is the third week of Advent. We light the candles of hope and of peace from the last two weeks. Today, we light the candle of joy.” Have someone light the candles of hope, peace, and lastly joy.

### *Dig Deeper:*

- Read the devotion **Advent: A Time of Joy** or listen to the [audio here](#). To learn more about what joy means in the Bible, read [Luke 2:8-20](#); [John 15:10-12](#).
- Pray the prayer at the end of the devotion together.
- Ask this question: “**In what ways can we show the joy of the Lord to others?**” Allow each family member to answer the question, and then have a conversation about what hope means to them. After the sharing time, say, “Let’s find ways to show our joy in Jesus to everyone we meet this week.”
- Listen to (or even sing!) a family favorite Christmas carol about joy, like “Joy to the World.”

### CASEY'S DAY







## *Advent: A Time of Joy*

<https://kidscorner.net/devotions/advent-a-time-of-joy>

### **Kids' Bible Reading: Luke 2:8-20; John 15:10-12**

**Today's Verse:** But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause 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 (NIV)

When was the last time God did an extraordinary thing in your life? Are you waiting for God to do something amazing?

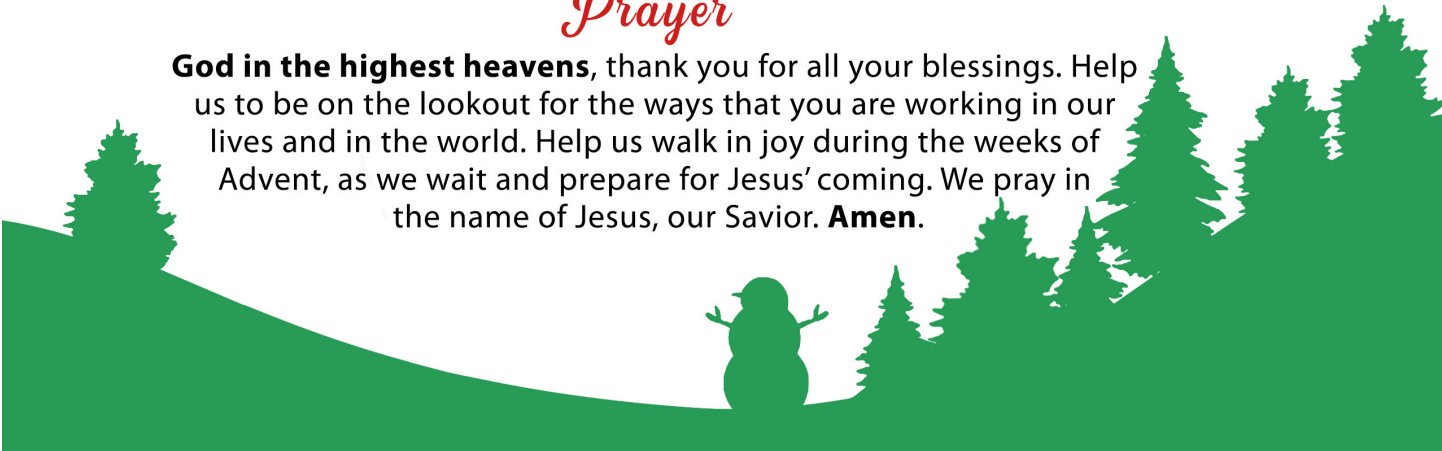
In the reading today, the shepherds probably couldn't wait for morning to come. Night was a dangerous time for sheep. They might wander off in the darkness, and more predators hunt at night. So these low-paid workers eagerly waited for the early morning sun to make things easier for them. Instead, they experienced something totally unexpected and really big: first, an angel appeared and announced to them joyful news about a new-born Savior, and then a sky full of angels praised God. Overwhelmed with joy, they ran to meet this wonderful baby, and then they spread the word, glorifying and praising God. God had changed everything!

Maybe God did something really big in your life, like answer a prayer in a huge way. Maybe you were going through a really tough time and an unexpected blessing came just at the right moment. When we can point to something amazing God did, we're awe-struck and filled with praise for God.

But maybe that hasn't been your experience. Maybe when someone asks you about your day, you respond with, "Nothing special." And yet, God is at work, even when we don't always see it. We don't always expect God to show up and bless us, but we should, because that's what God does. Maybe it's a small thing, like a friend saying something kind when you really need it. Maybe it's a beautiful early morning sunrise. What has God done today that brought you joy? What makes you want to glorify and praise him? Look for God's blessings and anticipate that he will do something. He always does!

### *Prayer*

**God in the highest heavens,** thank you for all your blessings. Help us to be on the lookout for the ways that you are working in our lives and in the world. Help us walk in joy during the weeks of Advent, as we wait and prepare for Jesus' coming. We pray in the name of Jesus, our Savior. **Amen.**



## Advent At Home: Week 4—Love

Continue the same day and time each week when your family will light the Advent candle, for example, Sunday evening after supper. Try to be consistent.

Light the fourth Advent candle: love. This week, you would also light the candles from the previous weeks (hope, peace, and joy).

Have someone say, "This is the fourth week of Advent. We light the candles of hope, peace, and joy from the weeks before. Today, we light the candle of love." Have someone light the candles of hope, peace, joy, and lastly love.

### Dig Deeper:

- Read the devotion **Advent: A Time of Love** or listen to the [audio here](#). To learn more about what love means in the Bible, read [John 3:16](#) and [Luke 2:8-20](#).
- Pray the prayer at the end of the devotion together.
- Ask this question: "**In what ways can we show God's love to others?**" Allow each family member to answer the question, and then have a conversation about what hope means to them. After the sharing time, say, "Let's find ways to show our love in Jesus to everyone we meet this week."
- Listen to (or even sing!) a family favorite Christmas carol about love, like "Away in a Manger."

### CASEY'S DAY





## *Advent: A Time of Love*

<https://kidscorner.net/devotions/advent-a-time-of-love>

**Kids' Bible Reading:** **Luke 1:5-25; Luke 1:26-38;**  
**Matthew 1:18-25; Luke 2:8-20; Matthew 2:13-15**

**Today's Verse:** While Joseph was thinking about this, an angel from the Lord came to him in a dream. The angel said, "Joseph, the baby that Mary will have is from the Holy Spirit. Go ahead and marry her. Then after her baby is born, name him Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins." Matthew 1:20-21 (CEV)

Angels are cool. Did you ever wonder about angels?

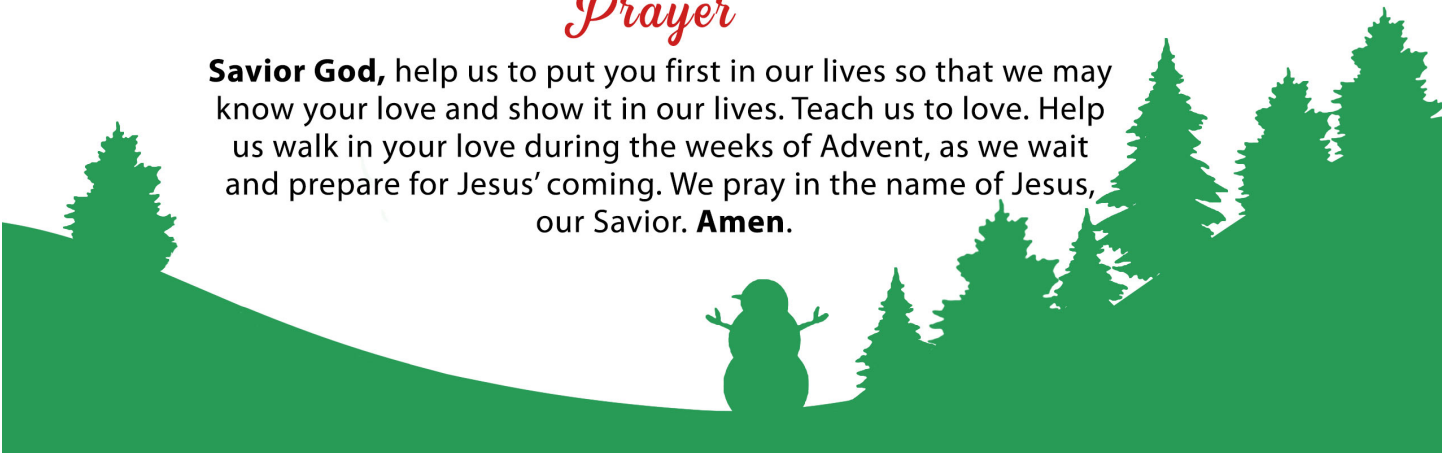
As you read the Christmas story, listen to the angels. Each time an angel speaks, notice that the angel describes Jesus and tells how God will change the world. The angel Gabriel told Zechariah that his son John would "get people ready for the Lord." Gabriel described Jesus to Mary as "the Son of God Most High." Joseph heard from an angel in a dream that Jesus "will save his people from their sins." To the shepherds in the fields, the angel described the baby as their Savior, so the shepherds couldn't wait to go and meet him.

Much later, Jesus himself proclaimed the full meaning of the angels' announcements saying, "God loved the people of this world so much that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who has faith in him will have eternal life and never really die" (John 3:16). All the angels' messages showed God's unending love. Through the angels, God revealed his plan, introduced his Son, and showed his love for his people.

Take time today to enjoy the love that God offers. Let's remember to love others as God loved us when he gave us his most precious gift.

## *Prayer*

**Savior God,** help us to put you first in our lives so that we may know your love and show it in our lives. Teach us to love. Help us walk in your love during the weeks of Advent, as we wait and prepare for Jesus' coming. We pray in the name of Jesus, our Savior. **Amen.**







## *Advent At Home: Christmas Eve—The Christ Candle*

On Christmas Eve, bring your family together for one last candle lighting. Be consistent with the time of day, like after supper.

Light the white pillar candle that represents Christ, the light of the world, on Christmas Eve. Light the candles from the previous weeks also (hope, peace, joy, and love).

Have someone say, "Tonight is Christmas Eve. We celebrate Christ coming to the world, and we light the Christ candle. We also light the candles of hope, peace, joy, and love." Have someone light the candles of hope, peace, joy, love, and lastly the Christ candle.

### *Dig Deeper:*

- Read the devotion **Christmas: Celebrating Christ in the World** or listen to the [audio here](#). To learn more about what it means to celebrate Christ in the world, read [John 1:1-18](#) and [Ephesians 3:20-21](#).
- Pray the prayer at the end of the devotion together.
- Ask this question: "**In what ways can we show how Jesus has changed everything by coming to the world?**" Allow each family member to answer the question, and then have a conversation about what Jesus means to them. After the sharing time, say, "Let's find ways to show how Jesus has changed everything to everyone we meet this week."
- Listen to (or even sing!) a family favorite Christmas carol like "Silent Night."

## CASEY'S DAY





## *Christmas: Jesus Has Changed Everything!*

<https://kidscorner.net/devotions/christmas-jesus-has-changed-everything>

**Kids' Bible Reading: John 1:1-18; Ephesians 3:20-21**

**Today's Verse:** The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth. John 1:14 (NIV)

Advent is about waiting for the Messiah to come. Do you ever wonder if Jesus eagerly awaited his appointed time to arrive? Did our rescuer see the hurt in the world and long to save us?

"In the beginning was the Word..." John begins his gospel's telling of the Christmas story in a different way. Jesus is God's Word, and he existed before time began. Since Jesus was with the Father right from the start, that means Jesus saw Adam and Eve turn their backs on God. He watched the Israelites worship the golden calf, Baal, and other false gods. He witnessed the kings of Judah make many bad choices and fall further away from God. He waited for the time when he would come to earth as Immanuel (which means "God with us").

When Jesus came, the world didn't recognize him; they did not really understand who the Messiah was. They were expecting a mighty warrior, a king who would defeat the Romans. Instead, they got a baby in a manger. They were expecting violence, battles, and death. Instead, God gave his people an unexpected gift that was far better than they could have ever hoped or imagined. Jesus brought them hope, peace, joy, and God's unending love.

During these four past weeks, we waited patiently to celebrate Jesus' birth. Jesus gives us **hope** in God's promises for us today and for eternity. He gives us **peace** because we know he will never leave us. We have **joy** because he has defeated sin and saved us. God **loved** us so much that he sent Jesus down to earth to become a human and live with people just like us. In everything we do, let's show how Jesus' unexpected arrival has changed everything.

### *Prayer*

**Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen.**

**(Ephesians 3:20-21)**

*Now to him who is able  
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is at work within us, to him  
be glory in the church and  
in Christ Jesus throughout  
all generations, for ever  
and ever!*

*Amen.*

*(Ephesians 3:20-21)*







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