

Celebrating Advent for Families!

Ideas to celebrate the Advent season with your family

Advent Calendars & Ornaments

- ★ The Christmas Promise Advent Calendar Alison Mitchell and Illustrated by Catalina Echeverri
- ★ Nativity Advent Calendar 2023 Kids, Christmas Story Nativity Playset for Ages 1-3
- ★ Waiting for Christmas: Advent Calendar Activity Book for Kids
- ★ Jesse's Tree ornaments
pipandjpaper.com/products/jesse-tree-advent-cards-ornaments-bundle
- ★ The Savior's Story Advent Cards for Kids
shop.wellwateredwomen.com/collections/the-saviors-story-advent-collection/products/well-watered-kids-the-saviors-story-advent-cards
- ★ Jesse Tree Ornaments with Advent book gift set
amazon.com/Inspired-Traditions-Jesse-Tree-Ornaments/dp/B01LZTG89S

Family Activities

Look over the list [maybe with your children, depending on their ages] and pick out the ones that fit your family the best this year!

Countdown to Christmas

Make a paper chain, alternating red and green colors [for the days leading to Christmas]. On each strip of paper [before putting it together], write people's names to pray for and then each day when you take off a piece of the chain, pray for the person!



Nativity Activity [especially for young children]...focusing on Kindness!

As you are setting up a nativity scene, set aside a little basket of hay or confetti. Each time you notice your little one showing kindness or saying kind words, let them put a piece of straw into the manger for baby Jesus. They will get very excited about being kind, grin. Then, enjoy looking at all the hay to make the manger cozy as you get closer to Christmas and celebrating the kindness in your home as you get ready for Christmas day!



Christmas Cards

Collect Christmas cards, punch holes in them [and put the Christmas cards on a ring] to save them!



Christmas Card Prayers!

Keep Christmas cards in a special basket or on a ring, then ask each child to pray for the people who sent the card to your family! Continue throughout the year to bless your friends and family by praying through the Christmas cards!



Make your own Advent calendar idea!

Here's what one LEFC family does:

I've done an Advent calendar for the past 6 years that has little brown baggies for each day. Inside each baggie is a very simple verse. Each day the kids look forward to opening the baggie, reading the verse, and doing the activity/act of service. It just makes the month super fun and anticipatory.

★ Verse ideas here: happyhomefairy.com/bible-verse-advent-countdown-kids-free-printable/





Pajamas and Christmas Lights Drive!

Plan an evening to go on a family drive [kids in pajamas makes it extra fun] to enjoy Christmas lights together that remind us of that first Christmas night when Christ was born!



Visit a LIVE Nativity!

★ woodcrestretreat.org/events/journey



Bedtime Stories

Wrap up 25 Christmas books, and then beginning December 1st, have one child select & unwrap one of the books for you to read each night. (Save the books to reuse from year to year. An inexpensive way to collect the books is to check out after Christmas sales, garage sales, library book sales, etc.)



Christmas Angel

Have everyone in your family put their names in a bowl or basket, then have everyone take turns drawing out one name. Whichever name you pulled out, you are that person's "Christmas Angel". Your job is to do nice things for them, without them knowing who is doing them. (Make their bed while they are brushing their teeth, leave a piece of candy on their pillow at night, etc.) Select one night before Christmas to reveal your identities.





Wooden Advent House

Buy a decorative wooden advent house sold at local chain stores during the Christmas season. Place a piece of candy (or an object with a note about an activity for that day) in each of the 25 little compartments. Suggestions for objects/notes: a little game piece with a note “Move this piece to (your address)” & then have friends over for board games, a piece of popcorn with a note: “Pop Over to watch a Christmas movie tonight”, or a marshmallow with note: “Let’s get hot chocolate after church today”.



Christmas Night Light

During the month of December, change your child’s night-light bulb to red or green.



Final Exams Gift Box

Pack up a Final Exams/Christmas box for your college student. Include homemade Christmas cookies & candy to keep their energy up, a Christmas movie for some chill time, a little Christmas decoration for their desk to cheer them up during their long hours of study, and a “gift wish list” sheet (with a self-addressed stamped envelope) to mail back to you.



Christmas Trivia

Make a calendar using a large piece of felt and 24 little pockets. Cut up last year’s Christmas cards into squares that will fit into your little pockets. On the blank side, write a Christmas trivia question. (Google “Christmas trivia questions” for ideas on movies, traditions, etc.) After dinner each night, have the kids pull a question. When they answer it correctly, they receive the little treat inside the pocket.





Jesse Tree

Set up a special little Christmas tree on Dec 1. Each day until Christmas, have your children create an ornament & hang it on the tree. The ornaments should be representations of Old Testament events—from Creation to the Birth of Jesus. (Ornament suggestions: a star, burning bush, ladder, dove, tree with an apple, crown, shepherd's crook, manger, etc.) As the children hang the ornament on the tree, read the corresponding verse of Scripture.



Puzzle Time

On December 1, set up a card table with a holiday jigsaw puzzle — with the goal of completing the puzzle by Christmas. It's a relaxing way to sit and chat with family members or friends during holiday season.



Prayer Chain

Cut strips of colored construction paper (about 1" x 6"), then write the name of a person or family whom you would like to pray for during December. Glue the links together and hang the chain on your tree. Starting December 1st, take one link off and pray for the names on the paper.



A Christmas Kiss

Lay a long strip of clear cellophane wrapping about 4" wide on the table and place a Hershey's Kiss every couple of inches down the center. Fold over the cellophane to wrap the kisses and tie a ribbon between each kiss. Hang the kisses somewhere in your house and each day starting December 1st, your child can trade a kiss on the cheek for a Kiss. As the 25 kisses disappear, your kids will have a visual Christmas Day countdown.





Gift Wish Bottle

Buy a Christmas cookie jar or decorate a large plastic container to hold everyone's wishes. On December 1st, everyone in the family is invited to write down their Christmas wishes (this can be activities or gifts) and drop them into the container. Starting December 7th, parents can access the jar to start shopping or planning outings.



Advent Prayer Boxes

Buy one of the advent boxes sold at the big box stores before Christmas. Instead of putting candy in each box, place the names of people or situations your family can pray for each night before dinner.



Advent Coloring Book

Print out coloring pages and attach quotations of the Christmas story from Luke & Matthew. Each day December 1st-24th have the kids color one page and read it with them. On the 25th, put all the pages into a little folder and then read the 'book' as a family on Christmas morning.



Advent Candle Centerpiece

Place an advent candle on the kitchen table for a centerpiece. Let the candle provide the only light for the dinner meal. Before dinner have one family member read from Isaiah 9:2-7 or other appropriate verses.



Why the Decorations?

At the beginning of the Christmas season read "The ADVENTure of Christmas" to the kids so they can understand the original meanings of our Christmas traditions and how they were intended to remind people of God's miraculous gift. This book teaches children how hanging lights on the house, wrapping gifts, and decorating the tree are related to Jesus' birth.





Make Your Own Advent Wreath



One of the most treasured traditions of the Advent season is the Advent wreath. You can make this wreath with your children out of live or plastic evergreen branches by fastening them into a circle with green twisty ties or lightweight wire. Then place four candleholders and tapered candles within the greenery. Three of the candles should be purple, and the fourth, rose-colored.

The wreath's evergreen branches represent God's faithfulness; they remain green during all seasons. The four tapered candles symbolize the world's long wait for the birth of the promised Christ child.

On the first day of Advent, light one of the purple candles. You can light it during dinner and blow out the flame when dinner is over. Every night during the first week of Advent, light the same candle. The next purple candle is lit throughout the second week of Advent, along with the first. The rose-colored candle is lit during the third week, along with the first two, and the last purple candle adds its light to the wreath during the fourth week.

Although traditional Advent wreaths have just four colored candles, many Christian families now place a thick, white candle in the center of the wreath's circle. It serves as a reminder that Christ is central to the holiday season. This candle is lit on Christmas Day.



Do you have a favorite tradition or idea to celebrate Advent that's not on this list? Feel free to send in your idea/s so we can add it to the list! Send to Julia at brown@lefc.net

