



CHARLOTTE
MASON
INSTITUTE

ADVENT FOR ALL



WELCOME!



We're glad you're here.

Holidays can be challenging and hectic. So this Advent for All booklet features readings from the Bible, music, poetry, picture books, art, nature study ideas, handicrafts, recipes, and more to help us savor the season.

Our hope is that every member of the family (both young and old) will find something for them and that the various resources will help families, neighborhoods, classes, and other communities carve out spaces for joy, reverence, wonder, and expectation this season as we focus attention on the birth at Bethlehem and beyond.





Week 1



HOPE IN BEGINNINGS

"Nothing of all good things that have been made,
Picture, or world, or book, without Him came.
Nor knowledge good for man can mankind know,
But He vouchsafes it; He is all our light."

-Charlotte Mason, "The Nativity," *Parents' Review* 21, p.882



BIBLE

Enjoy reading from some of these Bible passages throughout the week.

- [Genesis 1-3](#)
- [Psalm 19](#)
- [Hebrews 1](#)



POEM

Read the poem "[The God We Hardly Knew](#)" by [Óscar Romero](#).

After reading the poem aloud, look at it. Notice its length and the length of each line. Why do you think Romero ended the lines where he did? Try rewriting the poem and changing where the line breaks fall--does this change the effect of the poem? There are no right or wrong answers here. Poems are invitations to explore.



VIEW

View the [Even the Darkness series](#) by Diane Fairfield. Pick one or two paintings in the series to study and absorb this week. Notice the colors, the light, the shapes, and the patterns. What emotions and thoughts do they evoke? What do you think it is about the colors, the materials, or the composition of the painting that contributes to its effect? Read more about the artist and her work [here](#) if interested.



MUSIC*

Silent Night has been translated into over 100 languages and is one of the most internationally famous Christmas carols. The English version is widely available, but if you already know the English version or would enjoy a challenge, try learning the song in another language (or several!), perhaps one that is meaningful to your family or region and/or a version in a language you are learning. A few options and recordings are listed below. If you choose another language, you'll want to look up a recording.

- [Po La'i E](#) (Hawaiian, lyrics [here](#))
- [Noche de paz](#) (Spanish, lyrics [here](#))
- [عيد الليل](#) (Lebanese Arabic)
- [Stille Nacht](#) (German)
- [平安夜](#) (Mandarin)

*Adapted from an Alveary lesson.



Week 1



NATURE

Try going on a winter scavenger hunt. Use [this printable](#), or make your own. (Or ditch the printable and play "I Spy" to enjoy your winter nature observations.)



CRAFT

Make a Christmas ornament. Try a [simple embroidery](#), [painted acorns](#), or a simple [wood and thread](#) construction! Learn why [Ukrainians hang spider webs](#) on their tree and consider making one for your tree!



FOOD

Christmas traditions vary considerably around the world. [Here is one](#) list of Christmas foods from across the globe; consider picking a few to try this season (Bonus: you'll be getting extra Science, Geography, and Math lessons!).



ACTIVITY

Pick a puzzle, maybe even a [Christmas-themed](#) one, to work on this week. Aim to have every class or family member participate at some point in the process. Consider listening to "[A Liturgy to Mark the Start of the Christmas Season](#)" by Douglas McKelvey as well—perhaps as you work on your puzzle!



BOOKS

Enjoy some extra read-aloud time. Here are some particular suggestions for this week:

- [The Trees of the Dancing Goats](#)
- [A Literary Christmas \(Anthology\)](#)
- [The Christmas Coat, The Family Under the Bridge](#)
- [One Wintry Night](#)
- [Father Christmas Letters](#) by Tolkien ([free audio excerpts](#))
- [The Nutcracker in Harlem](#)

See our entire book list [here](#).



Week 2



WAITING FOR PEACE

"Dare we venture to let our feeble thought attempt to search matters which the angels desired to look into? Perhaps we may, because it is the purpose of our God to reveal Himself to men, and it is only to open minds and willing hearts that such revelation is possible."

-Charlotte Mason, "The Nativity," *Parents' Review* 21 p.884



BIBLE

Enjoy reading from some of these Bible passages throughout the week.

- [Malachi 3:1-5](#)
- [Isaiah 9:1-7](#)
- [Jeremiah 31:1-15, 31-40 and 33:14-26](#)



POEM

Read aloud the poem [Prayer](#) by George Herbert a few times. Focus on imagining the word pictures and savoring the sounds — poems are like paintings and should be absorbed as a whole. What lines particularly confuse or delight you? Why? Sonnets often have a shift of thought in their ending sentences. Is there a shift in Herbert's poem? Where?



VIEW

View the [Belle-Verrière Window](#) in the Chartres Cathedral. Notice the colors and all the details you can. Ponder the reality that the story of Christ's coming has been painted, told, and foretold for thousands of years. Read more about the stained glass at the Chartres Cathedral [here](#) if interested.



MUSIC

Listen to a few of these pieces this week. And enjoy the entire [playlist](#) of Christmas music throughout the month.

- [O Come, O Come Emmanuel](#)
- [But Who May Abide \(Handel\)](#)
- [But Who May Abide \(Patti Austin\)](#)
- [Mary, Did You Know?](#)



Week 2



NATURE

Spend extra time outside. Consider taking a walk at night on December 14th for a chance to see the Geminid meteors, the most active meteor shower of the year. You can read more about the Geminid meteor shower [here](#).



CRAFT

Try cutting and folding [paper bag stars](#) or this [Kanzashi snowflake](#) from Japan.



FOOD

Make [Pepparkakor Cookies](#), a Swedish treat to celebrate Santa Lucia Day (December 13th). Consider sharing some cookies with a friend or neighbor.



ACTIVITY

Learn How to Say [Merry Christmas in Multiple Languages](#). Then consider reading about [Christmas traditions in Ghana](#) to learn more about how different cultures celebrate Christmas.



BOOKS

Enjoy some extra read-aloud time. Here are some particular suggestions for this week:

- [Probity Jones and the Fear Not Angel \(free audio\)](#)
- [St. Nicholas and the Nine Gold Coins](#)
- [The Miracle of Saint Nicholas](#)
- [Christmas is Coming](#)
- [Papa Panov's Special Day](#)
- [A Merry Christmas.](#)

See an entire list of some of our favorite Christmas books [here](#).



Week 3



THE COMING OF JOY

"We all have need to be trained to see, and to have our eyes opened before we can take in the joy that is meant for us in this beautiful life."

-Charlotte Mason, *Ourselves*, Book 1, p.43



BIBLE

Enjoy reading from some of these bible passages throughout the week.

- [Zechariah 9:9-17](#)
- [Luke 1](#)



POEM

Read aloud the poem [The Annunciation](#) by Elizabeth Jennings. How does the poet help you imagine what Mary might have felt after the angel came to her? Do any lines or images in the poem particularly stick out to you?



VIEW

View [The Visitation](#) by Luca della Robbia. Consider the size, lines, and structure of the sculpture. What kinds of emotions does it evoke? How? What new thoughts do you have about the story in the Bible because of the sculpture? Read the notes about the sculpture and the artist if interested.



MUSIC*

This Christmas special first aired on TV on December 24, 1951. It was the first opera composed for television, and the composer, Gian Carlo Menotti, introduced the broadcast himself. Menotti wrote over 25 operas, but this one is the most famous.

- Read about [Amahl & The Night Visitors](#)
- Watch Amahl & The Night Visitors (Original [B&W](#) OR [Remastered version](#))
- Extra resource: [Amahl & The Night Visitors](#) with watercolor illustrations.

*Adapted from an Alveary lesson.



Week 3



NATURE

Consider making and/or putting up a [bird feeder](#) and keeping a list of all the different types of birds you see (or skip the bird feeder and just start the bird list).



CRAFT

Try out a new handicraft (one suggestion: [printmaking*](#)). Or [paint a nativity](#) scene to give to a friend. Read about [gift-giving](#) traditions around the world.

*Alveary handicraft.



FOOD

Try more Christmas foods from around the world. Suggestion: pick a few different Argentinian Christmas foods from this [list](#).



ACTIVITY

Make a [gingerbread house](#). Read about the [history of gingerbread](#) and the first gingerbread house originating in Germany.



BOOKS

Enjoy some extra read-aloud time. Here are some particular suggestions for this week:

- [The Making of a Christmas Story \(audio\)](#)
- [How Far is It to Bethlehem](#)
- [The Adventure of the Blue Carbuncle](#)
- [The Christmas Miracle of Jonathan Toomey](#)
- [The Christmas Tapestry](#)
- [The Huron Carol](#)

See our entire book list [here](#).



Week 4



LOVE DESCENDS

"Behold, I make all things new,' dawns upon us; we get new ideas as to the relative worth of things; new vigour, new joy, new hope are ours."

-Charlotte Mason, *Towards a Philosophy of Education*, p.338



BIBLE

Enjoy reading from some of these Bible passages throughout the week.

- [Matthew 1: 1-17](#)
- [John 1:1-14](#)



POEM

Read these poems this week.

- [To Live in the Mercy of God by Denise Levertov](#)
- [Christina Rosetti's Christmas poems](#) (read as many as you like—she wrote multiple!)



VIEW

Look at [Angels Appearing Before Shepherds](#) by Henry Ossawa Tanner. Notice the colors, the lines, and the shapes of the painting. How many characters can you find? Why do you think Tanner chose the colors and textures he did? What would you say is the mood of the painting? Does the painting make you think differently about the story in the Bible?



MUSIC

Listen to these pieces this week. Or continue enjoying the [playlist](#) of Christmas music from last week.

- [Hallelujah Chorus \(flashmob video\)](#)
- [Mary Had a Baby](#)
- [Morning Mood](#)



NATURE

Take a morning or evening walk as a family or class. Look for something you haven't noticed before in your surroundings. Observe the trees especially. Stand under one and look up. Collect some pine needles to make an [ornament](#).



Week 4



CRAFT

Consider organizing a [neighborhood caroling](#) evening. [Bookbind](#)* the song sheets and enjoy an evening of singing. This [Mexican hot chocolate recipe](#) would make the perfect treat to share.

*Alveary handicraft.



FOOD

Try out new Christmas foods. This week's suggestions:

- [Kahk Cookies](#)
- [Cheese Cookies](#)
- [Scandinavian Gløgg](#)
- Or something from [this collection](#) of Spanish holiday dishes



ACTIVITY

Many cultures celebrate Christmas with [traditional dances](#). Consider learning one with your family!



BOOKS

Celebrate Iceland's [Jolabokafloð](#) ("Christmas Book Flood") with a night of reading (and consider gifting a book to someone else!):

- [Christmas Around the Fire](#)
- [Favorite Poems for Christmas](#)
- [Dream Soul](#)
- [The Mitten](#)
- [Silent Night](#)
- [The Story of the Other Wise Man](#)
- [The Gift of the Magi \(audio\)](#)

See our entire book list [here](#).



Ending the Year



THE KING IS COME

"The old, old story has all its first freshness as we tell it to the eager listeners; as we listen to it ourselves with their vivid interest it becomes as real and fresh to us as it is to them. Hard thoughts drop away like scales from our eyes; we are young once more with the children's young life, which, we are mysteriously made aware, is the life eternal. What a mystery it is!"

~Charlotte Mason, *Parents and Children*, p 281



BIBLE

Enjoy reading from some of these Bible passages throughout the week.

- [Luke 2](#)
- [Matthew 1:18-25](#)
- [Matthew 2](#)
- [Revelation 22](#)



POEM

Read the [Journey of the Magi](#) by T.S. Eliot this week. Try reading it to someone without telling them the title of the poem. Can they identify what the poem is about?



VIEW

[Nativity](#) by Carol Aust and Rembrandt's [Nativity](#). Discuss the different ways each artist has depicted the biblical story. What is the mood in each piece, and what about the work do you think creates that feeling? A Californian artist born in 1958, Aust's piece is created with acrylic paint on canvas. Rembrandt's piece is an etching dated to 1654.



MUSIC

Listen to these pieces this week. Or continue enjoying the [playlist](#) of Christmas music from last week.

- [My Burrito Sabanero](#)
- [O Holy Night](#)



Ending the Year



ACTIVITY

Reflect. Write a few lines about this Advent and Christmas season. Where have you seen beauty afresh? How does Advent look both backward and forward?



BOOKS

Re-read a favorite Christmas book or select one from the [list](#) that you haven't had a chance to read yet.

“It is a great thing to be owned,
and Jesus Christ owns us.
He is our **Chief**, whom we delight to honour and serve;
and He is our **Saviour**, who delivers us,
our **Friend** who cherishes us,
our **King** who blesses us with His dominion.”

~Charlotte Mason, *Ourselves*, Book 2, p.201-22

Merry Christmas!



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