

# Resources for the home during the Advent/Christmas/Epiphany Season

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The church year has a rhythm of seasons. Advent marks the beginning of this cycle and is a time of preparation. It is a time we remember all the ways that God has come to us and will come to us. It's a time of waiting, expectancy, and contemplation. On December 25th we celebrate the great feast of Jesus' birth. May your family find joy and hope as you anticipate the coming of our Savior.

This year, more than ever, we are spending more time at home with our families. Make a commitment this year to have family devotions and retell the story of Jesus birth.

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## Advent

On the first Sunday of Advent (November 29<sup>th</sup> this year), set up an Advent wreath in a place where your family gathers. Many people make it the center piece for their table. Light the wreath each night at dinner or every Sunday (One candle for each week of Advent). Read Advent prayers and sing an Advent hymn. See the dinner prayers included in this packet. More ideas for prayers, readings, activities, and songs can be found on the internet or in Christian bookstores. Also enjoy opening the Advent Calendar each morning!

If you have a crèche, put it in a place that is accessible to children. Try putting the shepherds, Mary and Joseph and Wise men in different places around the house. Have them move closer each day as if they are getting closer to Bethlehem. Some people like to wait until Christmas morning to put their baby Jesus in the manger.

## Christmas Eve

Gather round the Christmas tree to read the Christmas Story and sing a few Christmas carols. Read from a picture book or Bible. Attend worship as a family.



## Christmas Day



Get out the baby Jesus figure, place him in the manger, and say a family prayer, before opening presents. It is a great way to start the day, putting the emphasis on the birth Jesus. God gave us the best gift, His Son! Attend the Christmas Day Service at church if you didn't get there last night. It is a calm, prayerful, liturgy.

(It's not over yet. Turn the page for more ideas.)

### The 12 Days of Christmas

Christmas lasts for 12 days **beginning on December 26** and lasting until Epiphany on January 6. Enjoy gatherings of family and friends (outside this year or on Zoom!). Read short segments of the Christmas story and sing carols together.

### Epiphany

January 6, the festival of Epiphany, celebrates the revelation of Christ as Savior of the whole world. This was made known through the coming of the wise men. Some families wait to move the Wise men figures to the crèche on this day.

