



What We Do in ADVENT

Teaching Plan

Teaching Tips

Ahead of introducing *What We Do in Advent* to the children, take time to familiarize yourself with the contents. Review this handout and how it correlates to the children's resource.

The resource is designed for children to interact with. Have the children follow along as you read aloud, and engage them in hands-on interaction with the resource, as suggested in the teaching steps below.

Background

The word *Advent* comes from the Latin *advenio*, which can mean arrive, arise, appear, come, develop, and ripen. In ancient Rome, *adventus* referred to an emperor's glorious return following a victory. These various meanings are significant for Christians marking Advent and the many ways Christ arrives for us. We remember that the Son of God appeared in our world, incarnate in a humble stable. We state in the Creed that we look for him to "come again in glory." We prepare for Jesus to arise in our hearts today—in the Eucharist. So in a very real way, we share in the expectation and preparation of the Messiah's first coming long ago.

It's useful to think of these various meanings when teaching Advent to children at different ages and stages. With younger children, it might be enough to help them experience the excitement of waiting for Baby Jesus. Older children can delve into Advent symbols and Biblical prophecies. Frame everything in God's love to help all ages prepare their hearts for the Savior's arrival.

Opening Prayer

Begin your lessons with prayer. Use the following or modify it each time you pray it with the group.

God our Father, thank you for sending your Son to bring us your hope, peace, joy, and love. Help us prepare for these blessings as we learn about Advent. Amen.

Teaching Steps

<p>Page(s)</p>	
<p>COVER</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Direct the children to look at the cover of their booklets. Ask, <i>How do you get ready for Christmas?</i> Explain that we will be learning about the best way we can prepare for Christmas, by marking the season of Advent. • Discuss the art. Ask, <i>Who is at the center of the pictures? (Jesus) Why do you think he is there? What do you notice about the people around him?</i> Guide the children toward observing that people are wearing modern clothes because we are waiting for the coming of Jesus in our hearts, even today.
<p>2–3</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read the first paragraph on page 2. Invite the children to share about a time in their lives when they got ready for something—a vacation, a visit from a relative, etc. Invite them to discuss how they felt, what they did, etc. • Read the second paragraph. Ask, <i>Why do we get ready for Christmas in this “deeper” way?</i> (Jesus loves us more than we can imagine and saves us; it helps us find real happiness.) • Read the first two paragraphs on page 3. Ask, <i>How do candles remind us of Jesus?</i> (Jesus is the Light of the World.) • Read the third paragraph. Ask, <i>How many weeks are in Advent?</i> (Four) <i>What are the themes we think about during each week of Advent?</i> (Hope, peace, joy, love) <i>Where can we see Advent colors?</i> (Candles, church altar, priests’ vestments) • Candle Corner. Read about the first week of Advent. Invite the children to think about people who need love and mercy right now. Talk about ways you can share love and mercy with them. • Stickers. After completing each page, have the children turn to the sticker insert and find the corresponding sticker to place.

