



LIFE 2.0: Advent Workshop

Advent is a holy season for Christians, marking the start of the Christian year. In Advent, we wait. We wait for a baby to be born in Bethlehem, but we also prepare for the presence of Jesus Christ in our hearts and in our lives. It is a time of preparation, of patience, and of spiritually grounding ourselves for the year to come.



Key of Faith #1: Caring Conversations

One of the first steps to effective faith formation in the home is a simple willingness to talk about it! As we prepare for the birth of Jesus, we can talk about how we prepare, and what the arrival of Jesus in our lives means for us.

Here are some conversation starters for home:

- How do we prepare for Christmas, which means Jesus's arrival in our lives?
- How can we be ready for Jesus to work in our lives? How can we stay alert ("keep awake!") to God's presence in our lives?
- What is one current tradition your family has to recognize Advent and prepare for Christmas? What is one new tradition your family can start this year?



Key of Faith # 2: Rituals & Traditions

Family rituals and traditions speak to what the family values and believes. Some rituals are daily, and some are infrequent. Some are part of the church calendar, and some are in our home lives. All of the events we celebrate are from God!

A great ritual & tradition for Advent is having an Advent wreath at home. There are lots of different kinds you can have, from traditional to modern to simple: four candles on a tray. The Advent wreath helps us count the days and weeks to Christmas, a circle of evergreens shows us that God's love never ends, and we light candles (one for each Sunday of Advent) to help us remember that Jesus brings the light into the world.

Prayer for Light:

Grant us, Lord, the lamp of charity which never fails, that it may burn in us and shed its light on those around us, and that by its brightness we may have a vision of that holy City, where dwells the true and never-failing Light, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.



Key of Faith #3: Worship & Devotions

Advent is a good time to begin a practice of daily devotion, as it is a season of anticipation and preparation. Try to spend a few moments each day in contemplation of the upcoming arrival of Jesus in the world.

For children, an **Advent calendar** is a great way to mark the time in Advent, but also recognize the Bible readings and reflections of the season. The St. Peter's Advent Calendar can be kept on the fridge or table for daily access.

For adults, try participating in the **Social Justice Bible Challenge** with us this year! We will journey through these Bible passages and reflections together as a faith community. See stpetersfreehold.org/advent for more!

Another option is **#adventword**, a digital global Advent calendar. Sign up at adventword.org to receive a daily word to inspire prayer and meditation during your Advent journey this year. You can respond digitally and become part of this global, crowd-sourced calendar, anticipating the coming of Christ.



Key of Faith #4: Serving Others

Amidst the busy and consumer-driven Christmas buying season, Jesus's command to "keep awake" reminds us that it is still our job to do his work in this world. This holiday season presents many opportunities for families and individuals to engage in seeking and serving Christ in others.

Here are some ideas:

- As you make your own Christmas wish list, include gifts for those in need, from Adopt-a-Family, a giving tree, or other organizations.
- Consider making a Gift for Life from Episcopal Relief & Development, to help those around the world fight hunger, disease, and poverty.
- Bring extra items around the house to the Thrift Shop so that others might use and appreciate them.
- Remember those who live alone or who suffer sadness or depression at this time of year. Give the gift of your time and company.
- Let your children pick out a toy for another child, for Toys for Tots or another organization.
- Pinterest offers several Advent calendars featuring daily good deeds or random acts of kindness--great inspiration!