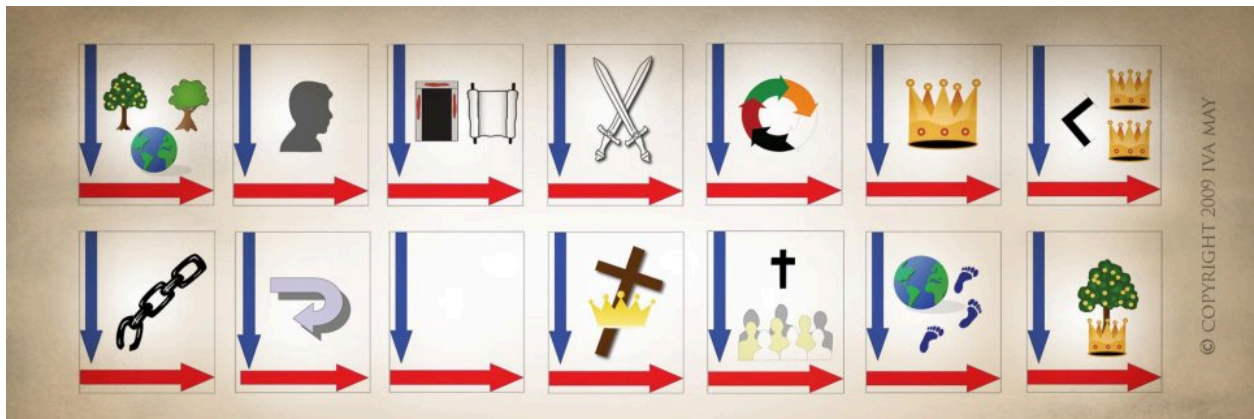


Advent Devotions

through the

Gospel Era

The birth, ministry, life, death, burial, resurrection and return of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.



Jackey Geeslin

Bible Eras (from the Story Graphic on the cover)

Creation Era

Patriarchs Era

Exodus Era

Conquest Era

Judges Era

Kingdom Era

Divided Kingdom Era

Captivity Era

Return Era

Silent Era

Gospel Era

Missions Era

Church Era

End Times Era

Story Graphic used by permission of Chronological Bible Teaching Ministries, Inc

The EVS Bible (The Holy Bible English Standard Version © 2011

Advent Devotion Jackey Geeslin ©2012;2015

December 1 Jesus- In the Beginning

John 1:1-14 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ² He was in the beginning with God. ³ All things were made through him, and without him was not any thing made that was made. ⁴ In him was life, and the life was the light of men. ⁵ The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it. ⁶ There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. ⁷ He came as a witness, to bear witness about the light, that all might believe through him. ⁸ He was not the light, but came to bear witness about the light. ⁹ The true light, which gives light to everyone, was coming into the world. ¹⁰ He was in the world, and the world was made through him, yet the world did not know him. ¹¹ He came to his own, and his own people did not receive him. ¹² But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God, ¹³ who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God. ¹⁴ And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.

Jesus "was", Jesus "is" and Jesus "is to come". He loves us so much that He came to earth to save us from our sins. He is the Promised One, the Messiah, the fulfillment of Old Testament prophecies.

Pray: Begin this Christmas season by thanking God for sending His son Jesus- His one and only son. Ask Him to help you keep your focus on what's important this season.

Kids Activity Ideas: Display/Hang your Advent Calendar and begin celebrating the birth of the Messiah- our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.....The Word became flesh!!

Sing: *This Little Light of Mine.*

Decorate votive candles to give to as gifts. (Buy sequins with holes in center pin them to the candle with small pins).

December 2 The Angel Tells Mary

Luke 1:26-38 In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a city of Galilee named Nazareth, ²⁷ to a virgin betrothed to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. And the virgin's name was Mary.

²⁸ And he came to her and said, "Greetings, O favored one, the Lord is with you!"

²⁹ But she was greatly troubled at the saying, and tried to discern what sort of greeting this might be.

³⁰ And the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. ³¹ And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus. ³² He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. And the Lord God will give to him the throne of his father David, ³³ and he will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end."

³⁴ And Mary said to the angel, "How will this be, since I am a virgin?"

³⁵ And the angel answered her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be called holy—the Son of God. ³⁶ And behold, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son, and this is the sixth month with her who was called barren. ³⁷ For nothing will be impossible with God."

³⁸ And Mary said, "Behold, I am the servant of the Lord; let it be to me according to your word." And the angel departed from her.

Isaiah 9:6 For to us a child is born, to us a son is given and the government shall be upon his shoulder, and his name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

Pray: That we can say as Mary did - "Lord I am your servant, may it be as You have said. Help us to obey you- what you tell us, when you tell us, and with the right heart attitude."

Kids Activity Ideas: Talk about the angel who came to Mary.

Color pictures of angels; make angels out of paper doilies, coffee filters or paper plates.

Dress up in angel costumes (dollar tree has fairy wings)

Sing: *Hark! The Herald Angels Sing.*

Sing/listen to: *Mary Did You Know?*

December 3 Jesus is Born

Luke 2:1-7 In those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be registered. ² This was the first registration when Quirinius was governor of Syria. ³ And all went to be registered, each to his own town. ⁴ And Joseph also went up from Galilee, from the town of Nazareth, to Judea, to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and lineage of David, ⁵ to be registered with Mary, his betrothed, who was with child. ⁶ And while they were there, the time came for her to give birth. ⁷ And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in swaddling cloths and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.

God knew the Inn would be full. He knew Jesus would be born in a manger.

Pray: Thank God that He knows everything and He always provides for our needs even before we know we have needs.

Kids Activity Ideas: Look for someone in need- be a blessing to them!

Make an Advent wreath (use 1 pink candle, 3 purple candles and 1 white pillar candle in the center. light 1 candle each Sunday up to the last Sunday when you light 4, then on Christmas day- light all five).

Memorize verses from Luke 2.

Sing: *Away in a Manger*.

Purchase a Nativity Set that your kids can touch! (I bought one at Lifeway on clearance- my girls love to play with all the pieces)

December 4 The Shepherds Visit Jesus

Luke 2:8-21 And in the same region there were shepherds out in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. ⁹ And an angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were filled with great fear.

¹⁰ And the angel said to them, "Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. ¹¹ For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who

is Christ the Lord. ¹² And this will be a sign for you: you will find a baby wrapped in swaddling cloths and lying in a manger.”

¹³ And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying, ¹⁴ “Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among those with whom he is pleased!”

¹⁵ When the angels went away from them into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, “Let us go over to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has made known to us.”

¹⁶ And they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby lying in a manger. ¹⁷ And when they saw it, they made known the saying that had been told them concerning this child. ¹⁸ And all who heard it wondered at what the shepherds told them. ¹⁹ But Mary treasured up all these things, pondering them in her heart. ²⁰ And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them. ²¹ And at the end of eight days, when he was circumcised, he was called Jesus, the name given by the angel before he was conceived in the womb.

The angels brought Good News!

Pray: Ask the Lord to give us boldness to share 'The Good News' with others

Kids Activity Ideas: Be intentional- Share the Good News with someone today.

Hang candy canes (shepherds staffs) on the Christmas tree, use candy canes to stir your drink and give candy canes to everyone you see today- clerks, waiters, attendants, neighbors (attach Luke 2: 10-12).

Sing: *Joy to the World* or *Angels We Have Heard on High*.

Plan to visit an outdoor live Nativity.

December 5 Simeon Meets Jesus

Luke 2:25-35 Now there was a man in Jerusalem, whose name was Simeon, and this man was righteous and devout, waiting for the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit was upon him. ²⁶ And it had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before

he had seen the Lord's Christ.²⁷ And he came in the Spirit into the temple, and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him according to the custom of the Law,²⁸ he took him up in his arms and blessed God and said,

²⁹ "Lord, now you are letting your servant depart in peace, according to your word;³⁰ for my eyes have seen your salvation³¹ that you have prepared in the presence of all peoples,³² a light for revelation to the Gentiles, and for glory to your people Israel."³³ And his father and his mother marveled at what was said about him.

³⁴ And Simeon blessed them and said to Mary his mother, "Behold, this child is appointed for the fall and rising of many in Israel, and for a sign that is opposed³⁵ (and a sword will pierce through your own soul also), so that thoughts from many hearts may be revealed."

Simeon was looking forward to the day when he would see Jesus. He obeyed the prompting of the Holy Spirit.

Pray: The Lord will open the eyes of those around us to see your salvation. Pray for a lost friend or relative.

Kids Activity Ideas: Light a candle to remind us Jesus is the light of the world.

Decorate a votive candle with sequins and stars, and then attach the verse from John 8:12 "Jesus is the Light of the World". Give one to every guest who visits your home.

Sing/listen to: *Open the Eyes of My Heart Lord*.

December 6 Anna Sees Jesus

Luke 2:36-40 And there was a prophetess, Anna, the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was advanced in years, having lived with her husband seven years from when she was a virgin,³⁷ and then as a widow until she was eighty-four. She did not depart from the temple, worshiping with fasting and prayer night and day.³⁸ And coming up at that very hour she began to give thanks to God and to speak of him to all who were waiting for the redemption of Jerusalem.³⁹ And when they had performed everything according to the Law of the Lord, they returned into Galilee, to their own town of Nazareth.⁴⁰ And the child grew and became strong, filled with wisdom. And the favor of God was upon him.

Anna was a widow- she loved Jesus! She saw baby Jesus when he came to the temple.

Pray: Pray for the widows in your church

Kids Activity Ideas: Visit the widows in your church. Make a card or take them one of the crafts you've made.

Make snowflakes and garland- decorate your bedroom

December 7 The Magi Visit Jesus

Matthew 2:1-12 Now after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, behold, wise men from the east came to Jerusalem, ² saying, "Where is he who has been born king of the Jews? For we saw his star when it rose and have come to worship him." ³ When Herod the king heard this, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him; ⁴ and assembling all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Christ was to be born. ⁵ They told him, "In Bethlehem of Judea, for so it is written by the prophet:

⁶ "And you, O Bethlehem, in the land of Judah,
are by no means least among the rulers of Judah;
for from you shall come a ruler
who will shepherd my people Israel."

⁷ Then Herod summoned the wise men secretly and ascertained from them what time the star had appeared. ⁸ And he sent them to Bethlehem, saying, "Go and search diligently for the child, and when you have found him, bring me word, that I too may come and worship him." ⁹ After listening to the king, they went on their way. And behold, the star that they had seen when it rose went before them until it came to rest over the place where the child was. ¹⁰ When they saw the star, they rejoiced exceedingly with great joy. ¹¹ And going into the house they saw the child with Mary his mother, and they fell down and worshiped him. Then, opening their treasures, they offered him gifts, gold and frankincense and myrrh. ¹² And being warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they departed to their own country by another way.

The wise men brought treasures to Jesus- gifts of gold, incense and myrrh. What will you give Jesus- your heart, your money, your time?

Pray: Pray about giving to eternal things- investing in the Kingdom dream, not the American dream. Pray about making your gift to missions your largest gift of all.

Kids Activity Ideas: Read about the missionary Lottie Moon.

Write letters to missionaries from your church. Send care packages to them.

Look for ways to help those in need. Adopt a family in need for Christmas.

Teach your children the importance of giving.

December 8 Jesus is Twelve

Luke 2:41-52 Now his parents went to Jerusalem every year at the Feast of the Passover.⁴² And when he was twelve years old, they went up according to custom.⁴³ And when the feast was ended, as they were returning, the boy Jesus stayed behind in Jerusalem. His parents did not know it,⁴⁴ but supposing him to be in the group they went a day's journey, but then they began to search for him among their relatives and acquaintances,⁴⁵ and when they did not find him, they returned to Jerusalem, searching for him.⁴⁶ After three days they found him in the temple, sitting among the teachers, listening to them and asking them questions.⁴⁷ And all who heard him were amazed at his understanding and his answers.⁴⁸ And when his parents saw him, they were astonished. And his mother said to him, "Son, why have you treated us so? Behold, your father and I have been searching for you in great distress."⁴⁹ And he said to them, "Why were you looking for me? Did you not know that I must be in my Father's house?"⁵⁰ And they did not understand the saying that he spoke to them.⁵¹ And he went down with them and came to Nazareth and was submissive to them. And his mother treasured up all these things in her heart.⁵² And Jesus increased in wisdom and in stature and in favor with God and man.

Jesus obeyed His parents. He grew in favor with God and man.

Pray: Thank the Lord for parents. Pray God's blessing over your child's life. Thank the Lord for your parents (their grandparents)

Kids Activity Ideas: Do something special for grandparents today (cards, pictures...). Visit them and honor them.

Take a surprise trip- Right at bedtime- with Kids in PJ's- load up in the car and take a trip to see all the lights and decorations in your neighborhood.

December 9 Jesus- The Lamb of God is Baptized

John 1:29-31 The next day he saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, "Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!"³⁰ This is he of whom I said, 'After me comes a man who ranks before me, because he was before me.'³¹ I myself did not know him, but for this purpose I came baptizing with water, that he might be revealed to Israel."

Luke 3:21-22 Now when all the people were baptized, and when Jesus also had been baptized and was praying, the heavens were opened,²² and the Holy Spirit descended on him in bodily form, like a dove; and a voice came from heaven, "You are my beloved Son; with you I am well pleased."

Pray: Thank God for sending Jesus – The Lamb of God – who takes away our sins!

Kids Activity Ideas: Read *The Crippled Lamb* by Max Lucado (it's in DVD too!)

Dec 10 Jesus Proclaims the Good News

Luke 4:14-22 And Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit to Galilee, and a report about him went out through all the surrounding country.¹⁵ And he taught in their synagogues, being glorified by all.¹⁶ And he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up. And as was his custom, he went to the synagogue on the Sabbath day, and he stood up to read.¹⁷ And the scroll of the prophet Isaiah was given to him. He unrolled the scroll and found the place where it was written,

¹⁸ "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me,
because he has anointed me
to proclaim good news to the poor.

He has sent me to proclaim liberty to the captives
and recovering of sight to the blind,
to set at liberty those who are oppressed,

¹⁹ to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor."

²⁰ And he rolled up the scroll and gave it back to the attendant and sat down. And the eyes of all in the synagogue were fixed on him. ²¹ And he began to say to them, "Today this Scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing." ²² And all spoke well of him and marveled at the gracious words that were coming from his mouth. And they said, "Is not this Joseph's son?"

Jesus fulfilled all prophesy about His first coming.

Pray: Thank God that everything He says comes true- He makes known the end from the beginning.

Kids Activity Ideas: Think of ways to spread the "Good News"- tell others about Jesus!

Make Christmas cards about Jesus for your neighbors and mailman. Hand out candy or cookies with a Bible verse.

December 11 Jesus Prays, Calls and Heals

Jesus Prays

Luke 4:42-43 And when it was day, he departed and went into a desolate place. And the people sought him and came to him, and would have kept him from leaving them, ⁴³ but he said to them, "I must preach the good news of the kingdom of God to the other towns as well; for I was sent for this purpose."

Luke 5:15-16 But now even more the report about him went abroad, and great crowds gathered to hear him and to be healed of their infirmities. ¹⁶ But he would withdraw to desolate places and pray.

Jesus Calls the Disciples

Luke 6:12-15 In these days he went out to the mountain to pray, and all night he continued in prayer to God. ¹³ And when day came, he called his disciples and chose from them twelve, whom he named apostles: ¹⁴ Simon, whom he named Peter, and Andrew his brother, and James and John, and Philip, and Bartholomew, ¹⁵ and Matthew, and Thomas, and James the son of Alphaeus, and Simon who was called the Zealot,

Jesus Heals the Sick

Luke 6:17-19 And he came down with them and stood on a level place, with a great crowd of his disciples and a great multitude of people from all Judea and Jerusalem and the seacoast of Tyre and Sidon,¹⁸ who came to hear him and to be healed of their diseases. And those who were troubled with unclean spirits were cured.¹⁹ And all the crowd sought to touch him, for power came out from him and healed them all.

Pray: Pray for your pastor and your church staff as they lead, serve, preach and teach.

Kids Activity Ideas: Write your pastor and/or staff a thank you note for all they do.

December 12 Jesus and John the Baptist

Luke 6:18-21 Who (they) came to hear him and to be healed of their diseases. And those who were troubled with unclean spirits were cured.¹⁹ And all the crowd sought to touch him, for power came out from him and healed them all.

²⁰ And he lifted up his eyes on his disciples, and said:

“Blessed are you who are poor, for yours is the kingdom of God.

²¹ “Blessed are you who are hungry now, for you shall be satisfied.

“Blessed are you who weep now, for you shall laugh.

Jesus heals us, He cleanses us from sin, He changes us, He gives us hope.

Pray: Pray that we will tell others what we have seen and heard- Jesus changes lives! Pray for those you know who are sick.

Kids Activity Ideas: Visit the nursing homes, elderly, home-bound or sick. Make and send cards. Go Christmas caroling.

December 13 Jesus Loves the Little Children

Luke 18:15-17 Now they were bringing even infants to him that he might touch them. And when the disciples saw it, they rebuked them. ¹⁶ But Jesus called them to him, saying, "Let the children come to me, and do not hinder them, for to such belongs the kingdom of God. ¹⁷ Truly, I say to you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God like a child shall not enter it."

Jesus loves the children

Pray: Ask the Lord to give us childlike faith as we come to Him.

Kids Activity Ideas: sing: Jesus Loves the Little Children. Host a "Happy Birthday Jesus" party. Invite all the children in your neighborhood. Make Jesus a birthday cake and sing happy birthday Jesus! (3 layers of Black-sin, Red-blood and Green-everlasting life with White frosting)

December 14 Jesus Enters Jerusalem

Matthew 21:6-11 The disciples went and did as Jesus had directed them. ⁷ They brought the donkey and the colt and put on them their cloaks, and he sat on them. ⁸ Most of the crowd spread their cloaks on the road, and others cut branches from the trees and spread them on the road. ⁹ And the crowds that went before him and that followed him were shouting, "Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest!" ¹⁰ And when he entered Jerusalem, the whole city was stirred up, saying, "Who is this?" ¹¹ And the crowds said, "This is the prophet Jesus, from Nazareth of Galilee."

The crowds praised and worshiped Jesus

Pray: Praise Him, Worship Him! He is King Jesus!!

Kids Activity Ideas: Sing or listen to *Hosanna* by Hillsong or *Sing Hosanna* kids song. Make a Kings Crown ornament out of yellow/gold paper and sequins. Hang on your tree. Review/discuss your favorite names of God (we use the 100 Names of God book)

December 15 Peter Declares That Jesus Is the Messiah

Matthew 16:13-16 Now when Jesus came into the district of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, "Who do people say that the Son of Man is?" ¹⁴ And they said, "Some say John the Baptist, others say Elijah, and others Jeremiah or one of the prophets." ¹⁵ He said to them, "But who do you say that I am?" ¹⁶ Simon Peter replied, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God."

Who do you say that Jesus is? He is not just a good man, a preacher or teacher. He is the Messiah, the Son of the living God!

Pray: Pray that we will truly understand and acknowledge who Jesus is; that we will surrender to Him as personal Lord and Savior.

Kids Activity Ideas: Make Christmas cards- decorate with glitter.

Decorate your room if you haven't already.

Decorate your Tree- use and discuss the meaning of Christmas symbols (cross, nativity, star, shepherds cane).

Make a Jesse Tree (symbolic ornaments representing prophecies, ancestors or Names of Jesus)

December 16 Jesus Teaches in the Temple

Luke 21:37-38 And every day he was teaching in the temple, but at night he went out and lodged on the mount called Olivet. ³⁸ And early in the morning all the people came to him in the temple to hear him.

Matthew 21:14-16 And the blind and the lame came to him in the temple, and he healed them. ¹⁵ But when the chief priests and the scribes saw the wonderful things that he did, and the children crying out in the temple, "Hosanna to the Son of David!" they were indignant, ¹⁶ and they said to him, "Do you hear what these are saying?" And Jesus said to them, "Yes; have you never read,

"'Out of the mouth of infants and nursing babies
you have prepared praise'?"

The people came early in the morning to hear Jesus teach in the temple.

Pray: Pray that we will spend time with the Lord everyday reading His Word and praying to Him.

Thank the Lord for your church family and the freedom to worship regularly with them.

Kids Activity Ideas: Don't get too busy to attend church! Teach your children the importance of being part of the local church. Volunteer to serve at your church this holiday season. Make or purchase small gifts for their Sunday School teachers/small group leaders

December 17 Jesus is Betrayed

Luke 22:47-52 While he was still speaking, there came a crowd, and the man called Judas, one of the twelve, was leading them. He drew near to Jesus to kiss him, ⁴⁸ but Jesus said to him, "Judas, would you betray the Son of Man with a kiss?" ⁴⁹ And when those who were around him saw what would follow, they said, "Lord, shall we strike with the sword?" ⁵⁰ And one of them struck the servant[a] of the high priest and cut off his right ear. ⁵¹ But Jesus said, "No more of this!" And he touched his ear and healed him. ⁵² Then Jesus said to the chief priests and officers of the temple and elders, who had come out against him, "Have you come out as against a robber, with swords and clubs?"

Pray: Ask the Lord to help us to be quick to forgive and slow to anger

Kids Activity Ideas: Ice cream Sundae night or make cookies- use Red and Green sprinkles

December 18 Jesus is Arrested

Luke 23:20-25 Pilate addressed them once more, desiring to release Jesus, ²¹ but they kept shouting, "Crucify, crucify him!" ²² A third time he said to them, "Why, what evil has he done? I have found in him no guilt deserving death. I will therefore punish and release him." ²³ But they were urgent, demanding with loud cries that he should be crucified. And their voices prevailed. ²⁴ So Pilate decided that their demand should be granted. ²⁵ He released the man

who had been thrown into prison for insurrection and murder, for whom they asked, but he delivered Jesus over to their will.

Jesus was innocent. He had committed no crime, no sin. He could've called the angels to save Him, But He didn't - He died in our place

Pray: Thank you Jesus for dying in my place, for my sins.

Kids Activity Ideas: If your church has a jail ministry- ask how you might get involved this season. Our church also supports Prison Ministry Fellowship's Angle Tree each year- we buy a gift for the inmate's child. Contact www.angeltree.org for more info.

December 19 Jesus Dies for Our Sin

Luke 23: 44-49 It was now about the sixth hour, and there was darkness over the whole land until the ninth hour, ⁴⁵ while the sun's light failed. And the curtain of the temple was torn in two. ⁴⁶ Then Jesus, calling out with a loud voice, said, "Father, into your hands I commit my spirit!" And having said this he breathed his last. ⁴⁷ Now when the centurion saw what had taken place, he praised God, saying, "Certainly this man was innocent!" ⁴⁸ And all the crowds that had assembled for this spectacle, when they saw what had taken place, returned home beating their breasts. ⁴⁹ And all his acquaintances and the women who had followed him from Galilee stood at a distance watching these things.

Pray: Thank the Lord that the veil has been torn and we have full access to God the Father through the blood of Jesus! He who knew no sin became sin that we might become the righteousness of God.

Kids Activity Ideas: use 2 large nails and wire them together in the shape of a cross- hang the ornament on your tree to remember His nail-pierced hands.

Start a "blessings basket" ...have kids name some of their blessings, write on slips of paper and put into a basket, each day take one from the basket and pray over it. We have so much to be thankful for!

December 20 Jesus is Buried

Luke 23:50-52 Now there was a man named Joseph, from the Jewish town of Arimathea. He was a member of the council, a good and righteous man,⁵¹ who had not consented to their decision and action; and he was looking for the kingdom of God.⁵² This man went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus.

Pray: Pray thanking God that He is in control even when we don't see it or understand it. Even when we are afraid and things seem hopeless- He is working things out according to His plan!

Kids Activity Ideas: Talk with your kids about how they feel when things don't "seem to make sense". We can trust God is always in control. He has a good and perfect plan even when we don't understand it.

Display your manger scene. Make your own manger scene out of play dough, use a shoe box with rocks, straw or dry grass as the stable.

Sing: *Silent Night*.

Gather all your Christmas cards, hole-punch the corner and string together with ribbon or metal ring. Add a red bow. Use these as prayer cards (we keep them our all year and try to prayer for one person each day)

December 21 Jesus Has Risen!!

Luke 24:1-8 But on the first day of the week, at early dawn, they went to the tomb, taking the spices they had prepared.² And they found the stone rolled away from the tomb,³ but when they went in they did not find the body of the Lord Jesus.⁴ While they were perplexed about this, behold, two men stood by them in dazzling apparel.⁵ And as they were frightened and bowed their faces to the ground, the men said to them, "Why do you seek the living among the dead?"⁶ He is not here, but has risen. Remember how he told you, while he was still in Galilee,⁷ that the Son of Man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men and be crucified and on the third day rise."⁸ And they remembered his words,

Pray: Thank the Lord for defeating sin and death- He has risen! We have hope because of His resurrection power.

Kids Activity Ideas: If your kids are older, you might want to take them with you to visit the grave-site of your loved one. Talk about death, our resurrection hope and eternal life. Take poinsettias- The star shape reminds us of the Star of Bethlehem and the red color reminds us of the blood He shed for us.

Make placemats out of old Christmas cards and pictures. We had our laminated and they have lasted for years.

Dec 22 Jesus Appears to the Disciples

Luke 24:36-53 As they were talking about these things, Jesus himself stood among them, and said to them, "Peace to you!"³⁷ But they were startled and frightened and thought they saw a spirit.³⁸ And he said to them, "Why are you troubled, and why do doubts arise in your hearts?"³⁹ See my hands and my feet, that it is I myself. Touch me, and see. For a spirit does not have flesh and bones as you see that I have."⁴⁰ And when he had said this, he showed them his hands and his feet.⁴¹ And while they still disbelieved for joy and were marveling, he said to them, "Have you anything here to eat?"⁴² They gave him a piece of broiled fish,⁴³ and he took it and ate before them.⁴⁴ Then he said to them, "These are my words that I spoke to you while I was still with you, that everything written about me in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled."⁴⁵ Then he opened their minds to understand the Scriptures,⁴⁶ and said to them, "Thus it is written, that the Christ should suffer and on the third day rise from the dead,⁴⁷ and that repentance and forgiveness of sins should be proclaimed in his name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem.⁴⁸ You are witnesses of these things.⁴⁹ And behold, I am sending the promise of my Father upon you. But stay in the city until you are clothed with power from on high."⁵⁰ Then he led them out as far as Bethany, and lifting up his hands he blessed them.⁵¹ While he blessed them, he parted from them and was carried up into heaven.⁵² And they worshiped him and returned to Jerusalem with great joy,⁵³ and were continually in the temple blessing God.

Pray: Ask the Lord to open our hearts and minds that we may understand the Scriptures. Lord, forgive us when we doubt. Increase our faith and help us to trust you more.

Kids Activity Ideas: Make and decorate banners with the letters F-A-I-T-H.

Movie night and slumber party by the Christmas tree.

December 23 Jesus is Coming Again!

1 Thessalonians 4:16 For the Lord himself will descend from heaven with a cry of command, with the voice of an archangel, and with the sound of the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first.

John 14:1-6 "Let not your hearts be troubled. Believe in God; believe also in me. ² In my Father's house are many rooms. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you? ³ And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, that where I am you may be also. ⁴ And you know the way to where I am going." ⁵ Thomas said to him, "Lord, we do not know where you are going. How can we know the way?" ⁶ Jesus said to him, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.

Jesus has gone to prepare for us a place in heaven. He will return and take us with Him

Pray: That we will live in expectation of hearing the trumpet call of God. Be Ready!

Kids Activity Ideas: Finish baking.

Buy party blowers- blow them and make lots of noise. Talk about what it will be like that Day when the archangel blows the trumpet. We will go to heaven to live forever with Jesus!

December 24 A New Heaven, A New Earth and the Tree of Life

Revelation 21:1-7 Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more. ² And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. ³ And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "Behold, the dwelling place of God is with man. He will dwell with them, and they will be his people, and God himself will be with them as their God. ⁴ He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no

more, neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away.”

⁵ And he who was seated on the throne said, “Behold, I am making all things new.” Also he said, “Write this down, for these words are trustworthy and true.” ⁶ And he said to me, “It is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. To the thirsty I will give from the spring of the water of life without payment. ⁷ The one who conquers will have this heritage, and I will be his God and he will be my son

Revelation 22:13-14 I am the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end.” ¹⁴ Blessed are those who wash their robes, so that they may have the right to the tree of life and that they may enter the city by the gates.

Pray: Thank our Lord; He is the Alpha and Omega; He is the Beginning and the End

Kids Activity Ideas: Using the ABC's, from A to Z- relate to Christmas- from beginning to end (A- angels, B- baby Jesus, C- candles/Christ, D- Donkey Jesus rides into Jerusalem, E- Everlasting Life, and so on..)

December 25 The Throne of God and the Lamb

So far we've learned that Jesus was in the beginning. He is the Word. He was born in a manger in Bethlehem. The Word became flesh and made His dwelling among us. The angels and wise men came to see Him. Simeon and Anna live in expectation of meeting Him. He grew as a young boy – in wisdom and in favor with God and man. He began his ministry, He was baptized, He was preaching and teaching in the temple. He healed the sick, raised the dead and proclaimed the Good News! He loves the little children. He prays to the Father. Eventually He was betrayed, arrested, crucified and buried, but the grave could not hold Him! He's alive! He has risen and is seated at the right hand of God the Father. He is on His throne. Worthy is the Lamb!

Revelation 7:9-12 After this I looked, and behold, a great multitude that no one could number, from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed in white robes, with palm branches in their hands, ¹⁰ and crying out with a loud voice, “Salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!” ¹¹ And all the angels were standing around the throne and around the elders and the

four living creatures, and they fell on their faces before the throne and worshiped God, ¹² saying, "Amen! Blessing and glory and wisdom and thanksgiving and honor and power and might be to our God forever and ever! Amen."

Rev 4:8 And the four living creatures, each of them with six wings, are full of eyes all around and within, and day and night they never cease to say,

"Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord God Almighty,
who was and is and is to come!"

Pray: Praise Him! He alone is worthy of all our praise. Thank Him for coming to earth as the babe in a manger, for defeating sin and death, and rising again. Thank Him that He will return as our Warrior and King. **Happy Birthday King Jesus!**

Kids Activity Ideas: Dress up in Manger scene costumes and tell or read the Christmas Story in Luke 2.

Sing Christmas songs

Be sure to light all five candles in the advent wreath today.

Celebrate with a Happy Birthday Jesus cake and sing *Happy Birthday*

At the dinner table choose discussion questions- these are good for the older kids and adults. (Write on slips of paper and have each person at the table pick one and answer..."Tell your favorite Christmas memory", "What is the most meaningful gift you've received?", "What is your favorite memory of a grandparent or a loved one who's gone on to be with Jesus" or "What will you give Jesus this Christmas?"