

Children & Family Ministry Ideas for Advent

Advent is the season in the church when we get our hearts ready for the mystery of Christmas. During these four weeks, we journey with the holy family to the city of Bethlehem and the manger that holds the Christ child, the promised king. It is a time to turn inward and to focus on our relationships with God and neighbor. We ask, "God, how are you calling me to change? How can I prepare my heart and home for your promised coming?"

These questions invite people into a time of self-reflection as they seek to deepen their faith and strengthen their relationships with God and neighbor. Advent is the perfect time for families of all shapes and sizes to pause and reflect on their faith and to develop new spiritual practices and remember old ones that help them connect to the holy.

Listed below are children and family ministry ideas for the season of Advent. This list was generated via conversation by children's ministry leaders in the Rio Texas Conference. Thanks to all for your contributions! Have something you want to add or share? E-mail: tcampen@riotexas.org

- Intergenerational Activities:
 - [#pictureadvent](#)- an advent photo challenge with daily devotional and other ministry resources.
- Families at Home
 - [Family Newsletter with faith formation activities to do together](#)
 - [Provide an Advent Calendar](#) (inviting families to do something together everyday before Christmas.
 - Invite families to work through the book, [Christmas is Coming, but waiting is hard](#)
 - [#pictureadvent](#)- an advent photo challenge with daily devotional and other ministry resources.
- Advent Event for Families: Activities can include
 - making an Advent wreath
 - making a Jesse tree
 - making Christmas ornaments
 - making Christmas Cards
 - [Check out this pinterest collection for ideas](#)
- Teaching about Advent and Family leadership in Worship:
 - using children's sermon to talk to congregation about advent and the time for getting ready
 - Build nativity over 4 weeks- bring in a different piece of the nativity each week. You might choose to have it wrapped and then unwrap it during the children's sermon as you talk about what the piece symbolizes
 - Moving Nativity- place nativity pieces at the back of the worship space. Each week move the pieces closer with Mary and Joseph arriving one Sunday, Shepherds arriving the next, and the Kings arriving after Christmas on Epiphany Sunday
 - [Invite families to light the advent wreath each week](#)- reading the liturgy/prayer for the day.
 - [Godly Play:Volume 3](#) offers a 4 week story on the meaning of advent. This is a great way to teach persons of all ages about this special season.
- Kid friendly service on Christmas Eve: Worship might include
 - Acting out Nativity Story: There are many churches who incorporate this type of storytelling experience in their Christmas Eve services. Want to know more? Contact tcampen@riotexas.org. I will connect you with persons offering this type of service
 - Live Nativity: Not for the faint of heart- think sheep, donkeys, and a cow- however many churches make this an annual tradition. it is a fun and memorable experience for the entire community to witness. Your church might choose to create a live nativity, or you might invite families to visit a local live nativity together. If you are doing a live nativity this year let us know! E-mail tcampen@riotexas.org
- Resources for Advent- **visit cokesbury for books, activities, programs, gifts and more**