

The background is a dark, textured surface, possibly stone or wood, with vertical lines running down it. The lighting is dramatic, with a bright, glowing area in the center that fades into deep shadows. At the bottom, there is a pile of dry, brown grass or straw. The overall mood is somber and contemplative.

the Grace of God  
*appeared*



the Grace of God  
*appeared*

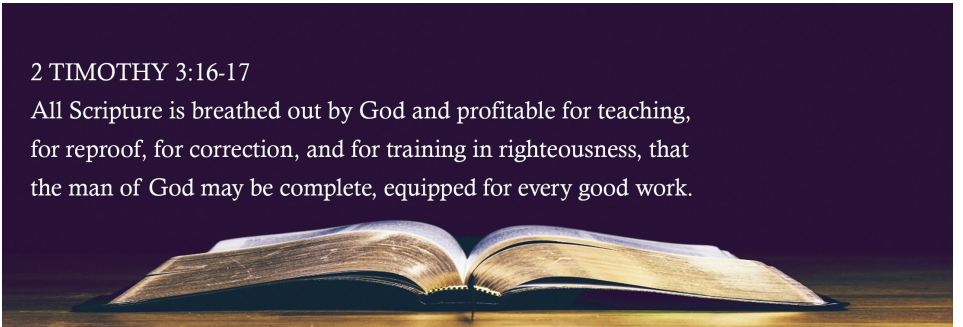
It's that time again when each of us will be making preparations for the Christmas Season. We'll decorate our homes, plan special meals, and search for the perfect gifts for our loved ones. What would happen if we prepared our hearts for Christmas with such fervor as well?

It is with this preparation in mind that we have created this Advent Worship Guide for you and your family. Our hope is that as you read the daily Scriptures you will find your way through the busyness of the holidays to the Savior - the perfect gift that was given to US!

Use this Advent Worship Guide as a framework for your personal or family devotions. Be creative! Incorporate the Advent Activities into your holiday preparation, family service & worship, and Christmas celebrations to enrich your personal walk with Christ.

## What is Advent?

Advent means "coming." The observance of the season of Advent dates back to the fourth century. Historically, Advent has been a time to focus on the prophecy, birth, and mission of Jesus, as well as His Second Coming. Advent lasts four weeks and ends on December 25<sup>th</sup> with the celebration of the birth of Jesus, the Son of God.



2 TIMOTHY 3:16-17

All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.

## SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 28 — JEREMIAH 23:5-6

"Behold, the days are coming, declares the Lord, when I will raise up for David a righteous Branch, and he shall reign as king and deal wisely, and shall execute justice and righteousness in the land. In his days Judah will be saved, and Israel will dwell securely. And this is the name by which he will be called: 'The Lord is our righteousness.'"

## LUKE 1:26-38

In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a city of Galilee named Nazareth, to a virgin betrothed to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. And the virgin's name was Mary. And he came to her and said, "Greetings, O favored one, the Lord is with you!" But she was greatly troubled at the saying, and tried to discern what sort of greeting this might be. And the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall call His name Jesus. 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, and He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of His kingdom there will be no end."

And Mary said to the angel, "How will this be, since I am a virgin?" 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. 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. For nothing will be impossible with God."

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.

## PRAYER

*Thank You, Father, for Your promises on which we can stand. Thank You that You are our righteousness through the blood of Jesus.*

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## MONDAY, NOVEMBER 29 — ISAIAH 59:2,12

Your iniquities have made a separation between you and your God, and your sins have hidden His face from you so that He does not hear. For our transgressions are multiplied before you, and our sins testify against us.

## GALATIANS 3:22

The Scripture declares that the whole world is a prisoner of sin, so that what was promised, being given through faith in Jesus Christ, might be given to those who believe.

## PRAYER

*Father, help us to push away from everything that separates us from You. Thank You for saving us through Your Son.*



## TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 30 — ROMANS 3:23-26

All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and are justified by His grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, whom God put forward as a propitiation by His blood, to be received by faith. This was to show God's righteousness, because in His divine forbearance He had passed over former sins. It was to show His righteousness at the present time, so that He might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus.

### PRAYER

*Father, we seek You and only You, for You are our only hope. Thank You for Your grace and mercy and salvation through Your own Son, Jesus Christ.*

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## WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 1 — LAMENTATIONS 3:22-23

The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases; His mercies never come to an end; they are new every morning; great is Your faithfulness.

### ISAIAH 59:16

He saw that there was no man, and wondered that there was no one to intercede; then His own arm brought Him salvation, and His righteousness upheld Him.

### PRAYER

*Thank You, Father, that You are such a faithful God! Thank You for Your countless mercies!*

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## THURSDAY, DECEMBER 2 — ISAIAH 52:7-10

How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him who brings good news, who publishes peace, who brings good news of happiness, who publishes salvation, who says to Zion, "Your God reigns."

The voice of your watchmen—they lift up their voice; together they sing for joy; for eye to eye they see the return of the Lord to Zion. Break forth together into singing, you waste places of Jerusalem, for the Lord has comforted His people; He has redeemed Jerusalem. The Lord has bared His holy arm before the eyes of all the nations, and all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God.

### PRAYER

*Heavenly Father, may we be counted among those who bring Your good news of salvation through Jesus to those who don't know Him. Speak through us, do through us, go through us to share the Gospel message of eternal life.*

## FRIDAY, DECEMBER 3 — TITUS 3:4-7

But when the goodness and loving kindness of God our Savior appeared, He saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to His own mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit, whom He poured out on us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior, so that being justified by His grace we might become heirs according to the hope of eternal life.

### PRAYER

*Father, thank You for Your goodness and loving kindness! Thank You for Your Holy Spirit poured out on us to guide us and comfort us and renew us in Christ Jesus.*

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## SATURDAY, DECEMBER 4 — ACTS 4:11-12

This Jesus is the stone that was rejected by you, the builders, which has become the cornerstone. And there is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved.

### ROMANS 6:23

For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

### PRAYER

*Thank You, Father, for providing the perfect sacrificial Lamb, Your only Son, our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, to pay for our sins. Thank You for the priceless gift of Your salvation.*

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## SUNDAY, DECEMBER 5 — ISAIAH 7:14

Therefore the Lord Himself will give you a sign. Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call His name Immanuel.

### PHILIPPIANS 2:6-7

Christ Jesus, who, though He was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied Himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men.

### PRAYER

*Jesus, thank You for giving up Your glory for a time to humbly come to this earth as a human being. Thank You for sacrificing Yourself to save all who believe in You and call Your name.*

## MONDAY, DECEMBER 6 — 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. 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.

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, he took Him up in his arms and blessed God and said, "Lord, now You are letting Your servant depart in peace, according to Your word; for my eyes have seen Your salvation that You have prepared in the presence of all peoples, a light for revelation to the Gentiles, and for glory to Your people Israel."

And His father and His mother marveled at what was said about Him. 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 opposed (and a sword will pierce through your own soul also), so that thoughts from many hearts may be revealed."

### PRAYER

*Thank You, Father, for revealing Your salvation not only to Simeon but to us. Thank You for giving us Your Holy Word which is eternal and stands firm in the heavens. (from Psalm 119:89)*

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## TUESDAY, DECEMBER 7 — ISAIAH 11:1-5,10

There shall come forth a shoot from the stump of Jesse, and a Branch from his roots shall bear fruit. And the Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon Him, the Spirit of wisdom and understanding, the Spirit of counsel and might, the Spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord.

And His delight shall be in the fear of the Lord. He shall not judge by what His eyes see, or decide disputes by what His ears hear, but with righteousness He shall judge the poor, and decide with equity for the meek of the earth; and He shall strike the earth with the rod of His mouth, and with the breath of His lips He shall kill the wicked. Righteousness shall be the belt of His waist, and faithfulness the belt of His loins.

In that day the root of Jesse, who shall stand as a signal for the peoples - of Him shall the nations inquire, and His resting place shall be glorious.

### PRAYER

*Thank You, Father, for Your promise of salvation and peace through Jesus Christ.*



## WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 8 — JEREMIAH 31:31-34

“Behold, the days are coming, declares the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah, not like the covenant that I made with their fathers on the day when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt, my covenant that they broke, though I was their husband, declares the Lord. For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, declares the Lord: I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts. And I will be their God, and they shall be my people. And no longer shall each one teach his neighbor and each his brother, saying, ‘Know the Lord,’ for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest, declares the Lord. For I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more.”

## ISAIAH 1:18

“Come now, let us reason together,”  
says the Lord.

“Though your sins are like scarlet,  
they shall be as white as snow;  
though they are red as crimson,  
they shall be like wool.”

## PRAYER

*Lord, thank You for Your great love for us. Thank You that You provided salvation for us. Thank You, Jesus, that through the shedding of Your blood we are washed clean and made white as snow.*

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## THURSDAY, DECEMBER 9 — LUKE 1:39-45

In those days Mary arose and went with haste into the hill country, to a town in Judah, and she entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth. And when Elizabeth heard the greeting of Mary, the baby leaped in her womb. And Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit, and she exclaimed with a loud cry, “Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb! And why is this granted to me that the mother of my Lord should come to me? For behold, when the sound of your greeting came to my ears, the baby in my womb leaped for joy. And blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfillment of what was spoken to her from the Lord.”

## PRAYER

*We praise You, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. How good it is to sing praises to You, our God! How pleasant and fitting to praise You! (from Psalm 147:1)*

## FRIDAY, DECEMBER 10 — LUKE 1:46-56

And Mary said,

“My soul magnifies the Lord,

and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior,

for He has looked on the humble estate of His servant.

For behold, from now on all generations will call me blessed;

for He who is mighty has done great things for me,

and holy is His name.

And His mercy is for those who fear Him from generation to generation.

He has shown strength with His arm;

He has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts;

He has brought down the mighty from their thrones

and exalted those of humble estate;

He has filled the hungry with good things,

and the rich He has sent away empty.

He has helped His servant Israel, in remembrance of His mercy,

as He spoke to our fathers, to Abraham and to His offspring forever.”

And Mary remained with her about three months and returned to her home.

### PRAYER

*Thank You, Father, for the gift of faith. Lord, You are my strength and my shield; my heart trusts in You, and You help me. My heart leaps for joy, and with my song I praise You. (from Psalm 28:7)*

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## SATURDAY, DECEMBER 11 — MATTHEW 1:18-25A

Now the birth of Jesus Christ took place in this way. When His mother Mary had been betrothed to Joseph, before they came together she was found to be with child from the Holy Spirit. And her husband Joseph, being a just man and unwilling to put her to shame, resolved to divorce her quietly. But as he considered these things, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, “Joseph, son of David, do not fear to take Mary as your wife, for that which is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. She will bear a son, and you shall call His name Jesus, for He will save His people from their sins.” All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet:

“Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall call His name Immanuel” (which means, God with us). When Joseph woke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him: he took his wife, but knew her not until she had given birth to a son. And he called His name Jesus.

### PRAYER

*We praise You, Jesus, our Immanuel—that mysterious but very precious name—God incarnate among us, and so God reconcilable to us, at peace with us! We praise You, Jesus, our Savior!*





## SUNDAY, DECEMBER 12 — MICAH 5:2, 4

But you, O Bethlehem Ephrathah,  
who are too little to be among the clans of Judah,  
from you shall come forth for me one who is to be ruler in Israel,  
whose coming forth is from of old, from ancient days.  
And he shall stand and shepherd his flock in the strength of the Lord,  
in the majesty of the name of the Lord his God.  
And they shall dwell secure, for now he shall be great  
to the ends of the earth.  
And he shall be their peace.

### PRAYER

*Lord Jesus, we praise You for You are the Good Shepherd who gives us eternal life so we will never perish. Thank You that we are Yours and no one will snatch us out of Your hand.*

*(from John 10)*

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## MONDAY, DECEMBER 13 — ISAIAH 9:2, 6-7

The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light;  
those who dwelt in a land of deep darkness, on them has light shone.  
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.

Of the increase of His government and of peace there will be no end, on the throne of David and over His kingdom, to establish it and to uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time forth and forevermore.

The zeal of the Lord of hosts will do this.

### PSALM 118:27

The Lord is God, and He has made His light shine upon us.

### PRAYER

*Thank You, Father, that Jesus being born and given to us is the great foundation of our hope and fountain of our joy. Thank You for giving us Your Son!*



## TUESDAY, DECEMBER 14 — JOHN 1:6-13

There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. He came as a witness, to bear witness about the light, that all might believe through Him. He was not the light, but came to bear witness about the light. The true light, which gives light to everyone, was coming into the world. He was in the world, and the world was made through Him, yet the world did not know Him. He came to His own, and His own people did not receive Him. But to all who did receive Him, who believed in His name, He gave the right to become children of God, who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God.

### PRAYER

*Thank You, Father, that we who have received Christ Jesus as our Savior are Your children through faith. (from Galatians 3:26)*

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## WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 15 — ISAIAH 42:16

And I will lead the blind in a way that they do not know, in paths that they have not known I will guide them. I will turn the darkness before them into light, the rough places into level ground. These are the things I do, and I do not forsake them.

### 1 JOHN 1:5B

God is light, and in Him is no darkness at all.

### PRAYER

*Thank You, Father, for not leaving us in darkness. Thank You for Your light and love and mercy that You pour on us.*

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## THURSDAY, DECEMBER 16 — JOHN 12:46

Jesus said: "I have come into the world as a light, so that whoever believes in Me may not remain in darkness."

### 1 JOHN 4:9-10

This is how God showed His love among us: He sent His one and only Son into the world that we might live through Him. This is love: not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins.

### PRAYER

*Thank You, Father, that through Your Son You pardon and deliver us from our sins.*

## FRIDAY, DECEMBER 17 — JOHN 8:12

Again Jesus spoke to them, saying, "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows Me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life."

### 1 TIMOTHY 2:5-6

For there is one God, and there is one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, who gave Himself as a ransom for all, which is the testimony given at the proper time.

#### PRAYER

*Jesus, we praise You, Light of the World! Thank You that when we follow You, we are led out of the darkness of our sin into the light of eternal life!*

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## SATURDAY, DECEMBER 18 — JOHN 1:14, 16-18

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.

For from His fullness we have all received, grace upon grace. For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.

No one has ever seen God; the only God, who is at the Father's side, He has made Him known.

### EPHESIANS 2:8

For by grace You have been saved through faith. And this is not of your own doing; it is the gift of God.

#### PRAYER

*Lord Jesus, we praise You, for You are the Word of God and the Grace of God to all who believe and call on Your name.*

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## SUNDAY, DECEMBER 19 — JOHN 14:6

Jesus said, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me."

### MATTHEW 11:28-30

"Come to Me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you, and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For My yoke is easy, and My burden is light."

#### PRAYER

*Thank You, Jesus, for the assurance of salvation and rest in You.*

## MONDAY, DECEMBER 20 — GALATIANS 4:4-7

But when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth His Son, born of woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons. And because you are sons, God has sent the Spirit of His Son into our hearts, crying, "Abba! Father!" So you are no longer a slave, but a son, and if a son, then an heir through God.

### PRAYER

*Thank You, Father, that we who call on the name of Jesus are Your sons and daughters forever, heirs of You and fellow heirs with Christ. (from Romans 8:17)*

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## TUESDAY, DECEMBER 21 — 1 JOHN 4:14

And we have seen and testify that the Father has sent His Son to be the Savior of the world.

### ROMANS 10:9

If you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved.

### PRAYER

*Jesus, may we share this Good News with others so they can call on Your name and be saved.*

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## WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 22 — JOHN 1:1-4

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through Him, and without Him was not anything made that was made. In Him was life, and the life was the light of men. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.

### PRAYER

*We praise You, Jesus, the Word made flesh.*

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## THURSDAY, DECEMBER 23 — LUKE 2:1-7

In those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be registered. This was the first registration when Quirinius was governor of Syria. And all went to be registered, each to his own town. 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, to be registered with Mary, his betrothed, who was with child. And while they were there, the time came for her to give birth. 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.

### PRAYER

*Thank You, Father, for Your plan, Your provision, and Your protection.*

## FRIDAY, DECEMBER 24 — LUKE 2:8-21

And in the same region there were shepherds out in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. 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. 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. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. And this will be a sign for you: you will find a baby wrapped in swaddling cloths and lying in a manger." And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying,

"Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among those with whom He is pleased!"

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." And they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby lying in a manger. And when they saw it, they made known the saying that had been told them concerning this child. And all who heard it wondered at what the shepherds told them. But Mary treasured up all these things, pondering them in her heart. And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them. 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.

### PRAYER

*We praise You, Father, Son and Holy Spirit.! How good it is to sing praises to You, our God!  
How pleasant and fitting to praise You! (from Psalm 147:1)*

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## SATURDAY, DECEMBER 25 — JOHN 3:16

For God so loved the world, that He gave His only Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life.

### PRAYER

*Thank You Holy Father, Holy Son, and Holy Spirit for Your love and mercy and salvation!  
Help us to share this Good News with the world!*



*May you have a wonderful and blessed Christmas.*

# Advent Activities

- ◆ **Adopt a missionary.** Correspond with a missionary during the advent season and continue throughout the new year. Go to [www.christcov.org](http://www.christcov.org) and look under the "Missions" tab for missionary bios.
- ◆ **Make Advent a focus of one of your small group meetings.** Get together at someone's home. Share the Advent story and dessert. Pray for each other during the Advent season.
- ◆ **Use the Advent story as the focus for a Christmas party.** Go caroling in your neighborhood or to senior adults from our church. Finish the evening with dessert and the Advent story.
- ◆ **For younger children:** have a different focus each week such as: the Prophets during the first week of Advent, the Angels during the second week, the Shepherds during the third week, and the Magi during the last week.
- ◆ **Worship with an Advent wreath.** One beautiful tradition is that of lighting the candles of an Advent Christmas wreath. Place four purple or pink candles, and one white candle, within an evergreen wreath. Begin four weeks before Christmas. Light one purple or pink candle each week as you read the suggested Bible readings for that day. Light the white candle on Christmas Eve or Day as you pray and thank God for the birth of Jesus.



- ◆ **Use a nativity scene.** Make or purchase a nativity set. Select a set that is non-breakable so young fingers can touch and move the characters. Allow children to move the figures while you read Luke 2:1-20.

- ◆ **Worship through giving.** Have children decorate a jar or container to put pocket change in throughout the Advent Season. Give this money as a part of the PCA Ministerial Relief Fund Christmas Offering.



- ◆ **Worship through serving.** Many local charities provide opportunities for you to assist a needy family during the holiday season. Several Mission Agencies Christ Covenant supports are: Mission of Hope ([www.missionofhope.org](http://www.missionofhope.org)); Choices Resource Center, Knox Area Rescue Mission, and Crossroads Chapel at Watt Road.



- ◆ **Sing or play Christmas music.** Sing around your Christmas tree. Sing as a part of family worship. Sing while you do the dishes together or as you get ready for bed.

- ◆ **Build your own family traditions.** Advent is a great time to help children build holiday traditions. Here are some ideas: set aside a day for everyone to help decorate your home for the Advent/Christmas season; schedule a movie night to watch your favorite holiday movies.
- ◆ **On Christmas Day before presenting gifts to one another, read the Christmas story found in Luke 2:1-20 and have a time of prayer, thanking God for sending us the greatest Gift of all.** Impress upon your family the significance of giving and receiving gifts at this joyous occasion. Make it a celebration but keep the focus on Christ!

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Christ Covenant PCA  
12915 Kingston Pike  
Knoxville, TN 37934  
865-671-1885



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