



Fear Not

ADVENT GUIDE

NEW NORTH CHURCH 2021

WHAT IS ADVENT?

He who testifies to these things says, "Yes, I am coming soon." Amen. Come, Lord Jesus.

—Revelation 22:20

Advent simply means "coming" or "arrival." For centuries the Church has rhythmically celebrated Advent on the four Sundays leading up to Christmas Day. But Advent is more than simply the preamble to Christmas festivities. You might be surprised to find out that Advent isn't really about Christmas at all; that is, it isn't about looking back at Christ's first coming so much as it is about looking forward to his second.

Advent is a time to reorient our souls toward Jesus and anxiously anticipate our King's return. The whole point of celebrating Jesus' arrival on earth as a baby is to remind ourselves he will return soon as the ruler of the universe.

This Advent we hope you'll join us in preparing our hearts for that great inevitability!

HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

This guide is organized into four weeks of devotional activities, with each week focused on one of the traditional Advent themes (Hope, Peace, Love, Joy) and our 2021 Sermon Series, "Fear Not."

Each week is split up into two sections:

1. PERSONAL STUDY

- Daily Scriptures:

Read and meditate on the related theme of the week.

- Prayer:

As the Holy Spirit leads, use the prayer as a guide to direct your personal prayers.

- Christmas Songs:

Follow our "Songs of the Season" playlist on Spotify to listen to and reflect on throughout the week.

2. FAMILY DISCIPLESHIP

- Scripture & Reflection Questions:

Read out loud and discuss the passage together.

- Prayer & Song:

Close the study with prayer and song.

- Weekly Activity:

Ideas to do with your family that reinforce the advent theme.

The guide also includes nativity cards for you to cut out and string together to create an advent garland! Gather scissors, string, and tape to cut out the shapes, string them together and hang on the wall!

We hope this guide will help you and your family deepen your experience of Christmas this year by helping to prepare for Jesus' second advent on earth.



HOPE

NOVEMBER 28 – DECEMBER 4

Personal Study

SCRIPTURE TO READ

- SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 28TH
Romans 15:12-13
- MONDAY, NOVEMBER 29TH
Jeremiah 33:14-16
- TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 30TH
1 Peter 1:3-13
- WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 1ST
1 Corinthians 1:3-9
- THURSDAY, DECEMBER 2ND
2 Corinthians 13:1-14
- FRIDAY, DECEMBER 3RD
Isaiah 35
- SATURDAY, DECEMBER 4TH
Revelation 7:9-17



REFLECTION QUESTIONS:

What are we hoping for as Christians?

- ◇ On a scale from 1 to 10, how much hope do you feel today? Why?
- ◇ How can you encourage others in the hope that Jesus brings today?
- ◇ What are you hoping God will do in your life right now?

PRAYER:

Almighty God, who through the death of your Son has destroyed sin and death, and by his resurrection has restored innocence and everlasting life, that we may be delivered from the dominion of the devil, and our mortal bodies raised up from the dead: Grant that we may confidently and wholeheartedly believe this, and finally, with your saints share in the joyful resurrection of the just; through the same Jesus Christ, your Son, our Lord.

—Martin Luther



SONGS OF THE SEASON

- ◇ Come Thou Long Expected Jesus
- ◇ Silent Night

TRADITIONS TO CONSIDER STARTING

- ◇ Set out a manger scene in your home somewhere. Consider and talk about the perspective of each of the characters you put out (even the animals!).
- ◇ Get an advent calendar (these come in many forms, including chocolate!) and spend 10 minutes each morning of advent reading a passage of Scripture and praying. You could also get advent candles and light them each day.
- ◇ Help a child in need through Help One Child's *Giving Tree* initiative (being run at New North).

FAMILY DISCIPLESHIP

HAVE ONE PERSON READ THE FOLLOWING PASSAGES OUT LOUD

- ◇ Genesis 3:8–15 or the story of “The Fall” in a children’s Bible
- ◇ Revelation 7:16–17

REFLECT ON WHAT IT MEANS TO BE RESCUED FROM SOMETHING

- ◇ What is something you might need to be rescued from?
- ◇ How would it feel to be rescued?
- ◇ Say: Jesus came to rescue us from our sins, and will come again to rescue us from every bad thing.

PRAY

- ◇ Have one family member say a prayer to thank God for sending Jesus to rescue us from our sins.

ACTIVITY

- ◇ Parents, make plans for a fun Christmas activity. It could be something like decorating cookies, making gingerbread houses, or watching a Christmas movie. At the end of your family Advent time, tell your kids that you are going to do something that they will love, to celebrate advent, but don’t tell them what you will be doing, or when you will be doing it. As the week goes on, give them hints about what you might be doing to celebrate, letting their anticipation and excitement grow. Use this as an opportunity to remind them of the anticipation God’s people felt as they waited for Jesus, and the anticipation we now feel waiting for Jesus to return.



PEACE

DECEMBER 5 – 11

Personal Study

SCRIPTURE TO READ

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 5TH
Isaiah 11:1-10

MONDAY, DECEMBER 6TH
Luke 2:1-20

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 7TH
1 Peter 1:3-13

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 8TH
Micah 4:1-5

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 9TH
John 1:1-18

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 10TH
Isaiah 9:1-7

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 11TH
Isaiah 2:1-5

SONGS OF THE SEASON

- ◇ O Come,
O Come Emmanuel
- ◇ Hark! The Herald
Angels Sing
- ◇ It Came Upon a
Midnight Clear
- ◇ I Heard the Bells on Christmas Day



TRADITIONS TO CONSIDER STARTING

- ◇ Find an outreach program that serves the poor and go serve! If you don't know where to start, consider looking at New North's local outreach partners City Impact or Mobilize Love.
- ◇ Spend a day baking Christmas cookies and delivering them to neighbors or other people. Think especially about people who might be lonely or need extra love this season.
- ◇ Pick out an ornament that represents your year and hang it on the tree.



REFLECTION QUESTIONS:

- ◇ What was Mary's reaction to the news about Jesus? Why do you think she reacted that way?
- ◇ Based on these passages, how has Jesus brought God's peace? What will it look like when that peace is fully realized upon his return?
- ◇ On a scale from 1 to 10, how much peace do you feel today? Why?
- ◇ Where are you most desiring to see God's peace? (it could be in your relationship with God, a personal anxiety, a broken relationship, societal strife or something else).
- ◇ How can you grab hold of the peace that Jesus promises to you today?
- ◇ Jesus said, "Blessed are the peacemakers for they will be called children of God."

How can you be a peacemaker today?

PRAYER:

Fortify me with the grace of Your Holy Spirit and give Your peace to my soul that I may be free from all needless anxiety, solicitude, and worry. Help me to desire always that which is pleasing and acceptable to You so that Your will may be my will.

—St. Frances Xavier Cabrini

FAMILY DISCIPLESHIP

HAVE ONE PERSON READ THE FOLLOWING PASSAGES OUT LOUD

- ◇ Luke 2:1–20 or the story of Jesus' birth in a children's Bible
- ◇ Revelation 7:16–17

REFLECT ON THE SIGNIFICANCE OF JESUS' BIRTH

- ◇ What is your favorite part of the story about Jesus' birth?
- ◇ How do you think Mary and Joseph felt when they had no place to stay? Do you think God knew they felt this way?
- ◇ Is this how you would expect God's promised rescuer to come?

PRAY

- ◇ Have one family member say a prayer to thank God for sending Jesus to be born as a baby who would save us from our sins.

ACTIVITY

- ◇ Make a nativity scene together as a family, and talk about the different aspects of the story of Jesus' birth as you create the set.



LOVE

DECEMBER 12 – 18

Personal Study

SCRIPTURE TO READ

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 12TH
Revelation 21:1-5

MONDAY, DECEMBER 13TH
1 John 4:7-21

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 14TH
Psalm 89:1-4

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 15TH
John 3:16-19

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 16TH
Matthew 1:18-25

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 17TH
Colossians 3:1-17

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 18TH
Revelation 22



REFLECTION QUESTIONS:

- ◇ How do you think Joseph felt when he heard about Jesus?
- ◇ Based on these passages, how is God's love for his people evident in his promises to them? What kinds of things does God promise his people?
- ◇ How have you experienced God's love in your life this year, this week, and/or in the last 24 hours?
- ◇ How does God's love for you, revealed in Jesus' first coming and his promise to return and make all things new again, change how you will approach the new year that is upon us?

How can
you love others like
Jesus loved you today?

PRAYER:

O Lord my God; Teach my heart this day where and how to see you; Where and how to find you. You have made me and remade me; And you have bestowed on me all the good things I Possess; And still I do not know you. I have not yet done that for which I was made. Teach me to seek you; For I cannot seek you unless you teach me; Or find you unless you show yourself to me; Let me seek you in my desire; Let me desire you in my seeking; Let me find you by loving you; Let me love you when I find you.

—St. Anselm

SONGS OF THE SEASON



- ◇ O Come Let Us Adore Him
- ◇ Away in a Manger
- ◇ O Little Town of Bethlehem

TRADITIONS TO CONSIDER STARTING

- ◇ Invite a neighbor over to decorate cookies or drink hot chocolate. Focus especially on people who might be lonely or need extra love this Christmas.
- ◇ Make a list of ten things that you loved about the last year.
- ◇ Make a list of three people who had a positive impact on your life this year and write them a thank you card.

FAMILY DISCIPLESHIP

HAVE ONE PERSON READ THE FOLLOWING PASSAGES OUT LOUD

- ◇ Matthew 1:18-25
- ◇ Revelation 7:16-17

REFLECT ON THE LOVE THAT JESUS HAS FOR US

- ◇ How do you think Joseph felt when Mary told him about Jesus?
- ◇ Who is one person that really loves you? Who is one person whom you really love? Did you know that Jesus loves you even more?
- ◇ How did Jesus show his love to us? How does knowing that Jesus is going to come back help you believe that he loves you?
- ◇ What are some ways we could show Jesus that we love him back?

PRAY

- ◇ Have one family member say a prayer to thank God for loving us by sending us Jesus and promising that Jesus will return one day.

ACTIVITY

- ◇ Read 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 together and talk about what Jesus' return will be like, look like, and sound like. Then draw or paint a picture of what you think Jesus' return might be like.



JOY

DECEMBER 19 – 25

Personal Study

SCRIPTURE TO READ

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 12TH
Isaiah 9:1-7

MONDAY, DECEMBER 13TH
1 Corinthians 15:20-28, 50-58

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 14TH
Zephaniah 3:14-20

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 15TH
Isaiah 52:7-9

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 16TH
Matthew 2:10-11

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 17TH
Isaiah 61

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 18TH
John 6:35-40

SONGS OF THE SEASON



- ◇ Joy to the World
- ◇ Angels We Have Heard On High
- ◇ I Heard the Bells on Christmas Day

TRADITIONS TO CONSIDER STARTING

- ◇ Bake Jesus a birthday cake and celebrate!
- ◇ Pray for the people in each Christmas card you received this year. Consider doing this with your family, friends, or roommates.
- ◇ Give family, friends, or roommates “coupons” in their stockings.
- ◇ Read the Christmas story from Luke 2:1–20 either on Christmas Eve or on Christmas morning.
- ◇ Join our New North family for a candlelight service on Christmas Eve at 2:00pm, 3:30pm or 5:00pm at our SF Campus.



REFLECTION QUESTIONS:

- ◇ What emotions do you think the shepherds felt when the angel appeared to them?
- ◇ Based on these passages. What is the cause of joy for God's people?
- ◇ On a scale from 1 to 10, how joyful have you been this year? How could you harness the joy of God's
- salvation and the joy of your inheritance with Christ more fully in the coming weeks and months?
- ◇ What do you have to be joyful for right now personally?
- ◇ How can you share the joy that Jesus brings with others today?

PRAYER:

Lord, you alone are my portion and my cup; you make my lot secure. The boundary lines have fallen for me in pleasant places; surely I have a delightful inheritance. I will praise the Lord, who counsels me; even at night my heart instructs me. I keep my eyes always on the Lord. With Him at my right hand, I will not be shaken. Therefore my heart is glad and my tongue rejoices; my body also will rest secure, because you will not abandon me to the realm of the dead, nor will you let your faithful one see decay. You make known to me the path of life; you will fill me with joy in your presence, with eternal pleasures at your right hand.

—Psalm 16:5–11

FAMILY DISCIPLESHIP

HAVE ONE PERSON READ THE FOLLOWING PASSAGES OUT LOUD

- ◇ Matthew 2
- ◇ The story of the angel appearing to the shepherds in a children's bible

REFLECT ON THE LOVE THAT JESUS HAS FOR US

- ◇ What do you think it would have been like for the shepherds when the angels appeared to them? What about when they saw baby Jesus?
- ◇ What is something that makes you really happy?
- ◇ How do you think we should feel that Jesus has come? Why?

PRAY

- ◇ Have one family member say a prayer to thank God for giving us joy by sending Jesus to save us.

ACTIVITY

- ◇ Go out for a drive or a walk searching for great displays of Christmas lights. Tell your kids that the excitement, awe, and joy that they inspire remind us of the joy that Jesus brings has brought us, and that these feelings will be even stronger when Jesus comes back one day.

Fear Not

new north

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