



REZKIDS FAMILY

DEVOTIONAL RESOURCE

Advent 2013



THE COLLECTS OF ADVENT

First Sunday of Advent

Almighty God, give us grace to cast away the works of darkness, and put on the armor of light, now in the time of this mortal life in which your Son Jesus Christ came to visit us in great humility; that in the last day, when he shall come again in his glorious majesty to judge both the living and the dead, we may rise to the life immortal; through him who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

Second Sunday of Advent

Merciful God, who sent your messengers the prophets to preach repentance and prepare the way for our salvation; Give us grace to heed their warnings and forsake our sins, that we may greet with joy the coming of Jesus Christ our Redeemer; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

Third Sunday of Advent

Stir up your power, O Lord, and with great might come among us; and, because we are sorely hindered by our sins, let your bountiful grace and mercy speedily help and deliver us; through Jesus Christ our Lord, to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit, be honor and glory, now and forever. Amen.

Fourth Sunday of Advent

Purify our conscience, Almighty God, by your daily visitation, that your Son Jesus Christ, at his coming, may find in us a mansion prepared for himself; who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

RezKids Family Devotional Resource
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A NOTE FROM AMY

Dear Rez Families,

Greetings of Peace and Joy!

Advent is my favorite time of year! As a child my favorite Christmas tradition was getting our tree. We'd pile into the mini-van and head out to our favorite nursery. While my parents picked the tree, my siblings and I traipsed through the snow, playing an epic game of hide and seek involving acres of hiding places so obscure only our dog could find us. I remember so clearly what it felt like to wait to be found. I would crouch in absolute silence for what seemed like hours. I didn't get bored or want to be doing something more entertaining, I was thrilled to wait.

As a child, you don't have to be taught that Advent is for waiting. You are waiting for Christmas, waiting for presents, waiting to play with cousins, waiting for all of the cherished family traditions. And yet, as families we are harried, rushed and anything but serene. How do we balance "getting through the holidays" and waiting for the Light of Christ?

This year I am taking two steps to prepare my heart for Christ. The first thing is taking a hard look at our family calendar. For every party, every shopping trip, every event, I'm asking myself if we also have a time for prayer, a time for family worship, a time for serving others. If it doesn't make it onto my calendar, it won't happen, so I am being intentional to reserve time for reflection. Secondly, my family is creating a space for worship and waiting. It will be simple, yet set apart. My hope is

that this cozy corner of our home will remind me I should be waiting for God, not my Amazon shipments!

This Devotional Resource is intended to help your family wait this Advent. We've included a liturgy that centers around the Light of Christ while incorporating readings from Isaiah and Luke. The activities are easy ways to create new traditions and enjoy each other. In the new section, Living Compassionately, we will explore how your family can engage in loving, serving, and praying for the Lost and Least in our midst.

May God bless you as you wait in peace, joy and love for the light of Christ.



Blessings and joy,

Amy Patton
Children's Pastor

FAMILY WORSHIP

Setting aside time for the Word, prayer and fellowship are essential for your family's life together. Worshiping together knits you together as a family and together with Christ.

Family Advent Liturgy

The following liturgy provides a simple structure to worship this Advent. Have one family member be the leader each time and the rest of the family responds.

Materials Needed:

- One large bowl of beans, rice, salt or sand.
- One large family candle placed in the center of the bowl.
- One small bowl and one small candle for each person.

Leader The people walking in darkness have seen a great light; on those living in the land of the shadow of death a light has dawned.

Leader lights the family candle.

Leader Jesus the Light of the world.

Family Jesus the Light of the world.

Leader The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned, every one, to his own way.

Family All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned, every one, to his own way.

Leader We have all sinned.

Family We have all sinned.

Go around in a circle and have each person scoop up some sand and say, 'I have sinned.'

Leader Lord, grant us your light, that being rid of the darkness of our hearts, we may come to the true light which is Christ.

Family Jesus, the Light of the world come to me.

Leader lights each person's candle. When each candle is lit, sing together. Song suggestions: O Come, O Come Emmanuel; This Little Light of Mine; Wait for the Lord.

Leader This is the Word of the Lord

Family Thanks, thanks, thanks, thanks be to God.
(sung)

Read an Advent Scripture (passages provided on pages 6-9).

Leader Thanks be to God for the reading of his Word.

Family Thank you, God. Thank you, God.

Leader Merciful God, who sent your messengers the prophets to preach repentance and prepare the way for our salvation: Give us grace to heed their warnings and forsake our sins, that we may greet with joy the coming of Jesus Christ our Redeemer; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Family Amen.

Family *Sing Together:* Jesus, name above all names
Beautiful Savior, glorious Lord,
Emmanuel, God is with us,
Blessed Redeemer, Living Word

Leader The Lord be with you.

Family And also with you.

Leader Let us pray.

Family Our Father who art in heaven,
Hallowed be thy name,
Thy kingdom come, thy will be done,
On earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our trespasses,
As we forgive those who trespass against us.
Lead us not into temptation,
But deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom, and the power and the glory, forever and ever. *Amen.*

Leader May he whose second coming in power and great glory we await, make us steadfast in faith, joyful in hope, and constant in love.

Family Amen.

Leader Let us bless the Lord.

Family Thanks be to God.

Scripture Readings

Choose a passage to read together as a family during the Advent Family Liturgy. All readings are from the New International Version (NIV).

Isaiah 9:2-7

The people walking in darkness
have seen a great light;
on those living in the land of deep
darkness
a light has dawned.
³ You have enlarged the nation
and increased their joy;
they rejoice before you
as people rejoice at the harvest,
as warriors rejoice
when dividing the plunder.
⁴ For as in the day of Midian's defeat,
you have shattered
the yoke that burdens them,
the bar across their shoulders,
the rod of their oppressor.
⁵ Every warrior's boot used in battle
and every garment rolled in blood
will be destined for burning,
will be fuel for the fire.
⁶ For to us a child is born,
to us a son is given,
and the government will be on his
shoulders.
And he will be called
Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God,
Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.
⁷ Of the greatness of his government and
peace
there will be no end.
He will reign on David's throne
and over his kingdom,
establishing and upholding it
with justice and righteousness
from that time on and forever.
The zeal of the LORD Almighty
will accomplish this.

Isaiah 11:1-9

A shoot will come up from the stump of
Jesse;
from his roots a Branch will bear fruit.
² The Spirit of the LORD will rest on him—
the Spirit of wisdom and of
understanding,
the Spirit of counsel and of might,
the Spirit of the knowledge and fear of
the LORD—
³ and he will delight in the fear of
the LORD.
He will not judge by what he sees with his
eyes,
or decide by what he hears with his
ears;
⁴ but with righteousness he will judge the
needy,
with justice he will give decisions for
the poor of the earth.
He will strike the earth with the rod of his
mouth;
with the breath of his lips he will slay
the wicked.
⁵ Righteousness will be his belt
and faithfulness the sash around his
waist.
⁶ The wolf will live with the lamb,
the leopard will lie down with the goat,
the calf and the lion and the
yearling together;
and a little child will lead them.
⁷ The cow will feed with the bear,
their young will lie down together,
and the lion will eat straw like the ox.
⁸ The infant will play near the cobra's den,
and the young child will put its hand
into the viper's nest.
⁹ They will neither harm nor destroy
on all my holy mountain,
for the earth will be filled with the
knowledge of the LORD
as the waters cover the sea.

Isaiah 40:1-11

Comfort, comfort my people,
says your God.

² Speak tenderly to Jerusalem,
and proclaim to her
that her hard service has been
completed,
that her sin has been paid for,
that she has received from the LORD's
hand

double for all her sins.

³ A voice of one calling:

"In the wilderness prepare
the way for the LORD;
make straight in the desert
a highway for our God.

⁴ Every valley shall be raised up,
every mountain and hill made low;
the rough ground shall become level,
the rugged places a plain.

⁵ And the glory of the LORD will be
revealed,
and all people will see it together.
For the mouth of the LORD has spoken."

⁶ A voice says, "Cry out."

And I said, "What shall I cry?"

"All people are like grass,
and all their faithfulness is like the
flowers of the field.

⁷ The grass withers and the flowers fall,
because the breath of
the LORD blows on them.

Surely the people are grass.

⁸ The grass withers and the flowers fall,
but the word of our God
endures forever."

⁹ You who bring good news to Zion,
go up on a high mountain.

You who bring good news to Jerusalem,
lift up your voice with a shout,
lift it up, do not be afraid;
say to the towns of Judah,
"Here is your God!"

¹⁰ See, the Sovereign LORD comes with
power,
and he rules with a mighty arm.
See, his reward is with him,

and his recompense accompanies him.

¹¹ He tends his flock like a shepherd:

He gathers the lambs in his arms
and carries them close to his heart;
he gently leads those that have young.

Isaiah 53:1-7

Who has believed our message
and to whom has the arm of
the LORD been revealed?

² He grew up before him like a tender
shoot,

and like a root out of dry ground.

He had no beauty or majesty to attract us
to him,

nothing in his appearance that we
should desire him.

³ He was despised and rejected by
mankind,

a man of suffering, and familiar with
pain.

Like one from whom people hide their
faces

he was despised, and we held him in
low esteem.

⁴ Surely he took up our pain

and bore our suffering,

yet we considered him punished by God,
stricken by him, and afflicted.

⁵ But he was pierced for our
transgressions,

he was crushed for our iniquities;
the punishment that brought us
peace was on him,

and by his wounds we are healed.

⁶ We all, like sheep, have gone astray,
each of us has turned to our own way;
and the LORD has laid on him
the iniquity of us all.

⁷ He was oppressed and afflicted,
yet he did not open his mouth;
he was led like a lamb to the slaughter,
and as a sheep before its shearers is
silent,

so he did not open his mouth.

Luke 1:26-38

²⁶ In the sixth month of Elizabeth's pregnancy, God sent the angel Gabriel to Nazareth, a town in Galilee, ²⁷ to a virgin pledged to be married to a man named Joseph, a descendant of David. The virgin's name was Mary. ²⁸ The angel went to her and said, "Greetings, you who are highly favored! The Lord is with you."

²⁹ Mary was greatly troubled at his words and wondered what kind of greeting this might be. ³⁰ But the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary; you have found favor with God. ³¹ You will conceive and give birth to a son, and you are to call him Jesus. ³² He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his father David, ³³ and he will reign over Jacob's descendants forever; his kingdom will never end."

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

³⁵ The angel answered, "The Holy Spirit will come on you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So the holy one to be born will be called the Son of God. ³⁶ Even Elizabeth your relative is going to have a child in her old age, and she who was said to be unable to conceive is in her sixth month. ³⁷ For no word from God will ever fail."

³⁸ "I am the Lord's servant," Mary answered. "May your word to me be fulfilled." Then the angel left her.

Luke 1:39-56

³⁹ At that time Mary got ready and hurried to a town in the hill country of Judea, ⁴⁰ where she entered Zechariah's home and greeted Elizabeth. ⁴¹ When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the baby leaped in her womb, and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit. ⁴² In a loud voice she exclaimed: "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the child you will bear! ⁴³ But why am I so favored, that the mother of my Lord should come to me? ⁴⁴ As soon as the sound of your greeting reached my ears, the baby in my womb leaped for joy. ⁴⁵ Blessed is she who has believed that the Lord would fulfill his promises to her!"

⁴⁶ And Mary said:

"My soul glorifies the Lord

⁴⁷ and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior,

⁴⁸ for he has been mindful

of the humble state of his servant.

From now on all generations will call me blessed,

⁴⁹ for the Mighty One has done great things for me— holy is his name.

⁵⁰ His mercy extends to those who fear him, from generation to generation.

⁵¹ He has performed mighty deeds with his arm;

he has scattered those who are proud in their inmost thoughts.

⁵² He has brought down rulers from their thrones but has lifted up the humble.

⁵³ He has filled the hungry with good things

but has sent the rich away empty.

⁵⁴ He has helped his servant Israel, remembering to be merciful

⁵⁵ to Abraham and his descendants forever,

just as he promised our ancestors."

⁵⁶ Mary stayed with Elizabeth for about three months and then returned home.

Luke 1:67-80

⁶⁷ His father Zechariah was filled with the Holy Spirit and prophesied:

⁶⁸ “Praise be to the Lord, the God of Israel, because he has come to his people and redeemed them.

⁶⁹ He has raised up a horn of salvation for us

in the house of his servant David

⁷⁰ (as he said through his holy prophets of long ago),

⁷¹ salvation from our enemies

and from the hand of all who hate us—

⁷² to show mercy to our ancestors

and to remember his holy covenant,

⁷³ the oath he swore to our father

Abraham:

⁷⁴ to rescue us from the hand of our enemies,

and to enable us to serve him without fear

⁷⁵ in holiness and righteousness before him all our days.

⁷⁶ And you, my child, will be called a prophet of the Most High;

for you will go on before the Lord to prepare the way for him,

⁷⁷ to give his people the knowledge of salvation

through the forgiveness of their sins,

⁷⁸ because of the tender mercy of our God,

by which the rising sun will come to us from heaven

⁷⁹ to shine on those living in darkness

and in the shadow of death,

to guide our feet into the path of peace.”

⁸⁰ And the child grew and became strong in spirit; and he lived in the wilderness until he appeared publicly to Israel.

Matthew 1:18-2

¹⁸ This is how the birth of Jesus the Messiah came about: His mother Mary was pledged to be married to Joseph, but before they came together, she was found to be pregnant through the Holy Spirit. ¹⁹ Because Joseph her husband was faithful to the law, and yet did not want to expose her to public disgrace, he had in mind to divorce her quietly.

²⁰ But after he had considered this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, “Joseph son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary home as your wife, because what is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit.” ²¹ She will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins.”

²² All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had said through the prophet: ²³ “The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel” (which means “God with us”).

²⁴ When Joseph woke up, he did what the angel of the Lord had commanded him and took Mary home as his wife.

Advent Activities

Jesse Tree

The Jesse tree tells God's story from creation through Jesus' birth. It reminds us of God's goodness as we wait for Christmas! Get a small tree, some branches, or create one with poster board. Then create, find, or buy these ornaments from the list below to put on your tree. You can put them on throughout Advent or all at once. Read the Scripture that goes with each ornament when you put it on your Jesse tree. Isaiah 11:1 gives the origin of the Jesse tree.

Apple – Adam and Eve, Genesis 3:1-15

Ark – Noah, Genesis 6

Lamb – Isaac, Genesis 22:1-19

Knife – Abraham, Genesis 22:1-19

Ladder – Jacob, Genesis 28:1-22

Coat – Joseph, Genesis 27:1-4

Burning Bush – Moses, Exodus 2

Harp – David, I Samuel 16:14-23

Crown – Solomon, I Kings 1:22-48

Whale – Jonah, Jonah 1-2

Dove – Elisha, II Kings 5:1-27

Rose – Isaiah, Isaiah 35:1-2

Heart – Ruth, Ruth 1:15-18

Wheel – Ezekiel, Ezekiel 1:15-21

Lion – Daniel, Daniel 6:1-24

Lily – Mary, Luke 1:26-28

Hammer – Joseph, Matthew 1:18-24

Chi Rho (An X with a P through the middle of it) – Jesus, Luke 2:1-20

Advent Calendar Chain

Make a paper chain with 25 links. On each link write something to do as a family. Ideas might include baking cookies together, going ice skating, buying the Christmas tree, serving a neighbor in need, singing a Christmas carol, playing a game, etc. Take turns letting each family member break the next link off the chain and read the day's activity.

Christmas Carols

Choose one Christmas Carol to sing every night until everyone knows all of the words. It might take your family 1 night or 1 week to learn a Christmas Carol. After you learn one carol, choose another one to sing each night. By the end of Advent (and over the years) your family will have quite the repertoire!

Building the Nativity

Are you travelling for Christmas? Do you have relatives who are travelling? Mary and Joseph had to travel before they reached Bethlehem and the shepherds travelled to the stable where they found the Holy Family. Does your family have a nativity scene to build? Construct the scene piece by piece over multiple nights, ending with the appearance of the infant Jesus on Christmas Eve. Each night, place that night's character hidden in special box. Select one child to open the box and take the character on the journey to Bethlehem.

The Feast of Saint Nicolas

December 6

Saint Nicolas was a bishop from Asia Minor whose role in Christian History impacts both Advent and the whole church year. Tradition has credited him as one of the signers of the Nicene Creed which we recite every Sunday. Many of the stories surrounding his life are rooted in his generosity and charity. In his most famous story, he heard about a poor man whose three daughters were about to be sold into slavery. Before they could be sold, Saint Nicolas threw three bags of money through their window; his anonymous actions saved the girls from slavery. It is this generosity that has led the whole church to remember him through the centuries.

In celebration of this godly man, children throughout the world will set their boots outside their doors before they go to bed on December 5th. In the night, parents will drop small gifts into the slumbering children's boots.

Christmas Stories

These are a few favorite Christmas stories to read with your children this year. They include classics, different culture's stories and beautiful illustrations.

A Certain Small Shepherd by Rebecca Caudill
A Child's Christmas in Whales by Dylan Thomas
A Christmas Gift for Mama by Lauren Thompson
A Christmas Tapestry by Patricia Polacco
A Cobtwon Christmas by Julia Van Nutt
A Small Miracle by Peter Collington
A Tree for Peter by Kate Seredy
An Orange for Frankie by Patricia Polacco
Back to the Manger by Margaret Philbrick
Christmas Day in the Morning by Pearl S. Buck
Grandfather's Christmas Tree by Keith Strand
Irene Jennie and the Christmas Masquerade by Irene Smalls
Jotham's Journey by Arnold Ytreeide (a trilogy of chapter books)
Letters from Father Christmas by J.R.R. Tolkien
Mary's First Christmas by Walter Wangerin, Jr.
Papa Panov's Special Day by Ruben Saillens (adapted from Leo Tolstoy)
Saint Fancis and the Christmas Donkey by Robert Byrd
The Advent Book by Jack & Kathy Stockman
The Christmas Miracle of Jonathan Toomey by Susan Wojciechowski
The Christmas Treasury by Jan Brett
The Dolls' Christmas by Tasha Tudor
The First Christmas by the National Gallery, London
The Lion in the Box by Marguerite de Angeli
The Night of Las Posadas by Tomie dePaola
The Real Santa Claus by Marianna Mayer
The Third Gift by Linda Sue Park
The Tree of the Dancing Goats by Patricia Polacco
Too Many Tamales by Gary Soto
Uncle Vovo's Tree by Patricia Polacco
Young Mary of Nazareth by Marianna Mayer

FAMILY LIFE IN THE CHURCH

Living Compassionately

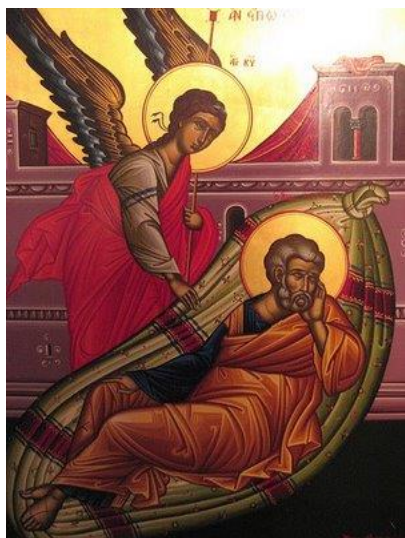
The compassion ministries at Church of the Resurrection seek to serve and build relationships with the Lost and the Least in our community. In this section, you and your family can read a biblical reflection focusing on one of the compassion ministries and learn about ways you and your family can get involved.

Anticipate

Have you ever found yourself in an unexpected situation? What happened and what did you do? Were you with other people? How did they react? Looking back on it, what would you have done differently looking back on it?

Matthew 1:18-25

¹⁸Now 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. ¹⁹And her husband Joseph, being a just man and unwilling to



put her to shame, resolved to divorce her quietly.²⁰ 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. ²¹She will bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins.” ²²All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet:

²³“Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall call his name Immanuel”

(Which means, God with us). ²⁴When Joseph woke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him: he took his wife, ²⁵but knew her not until she had given birth to a son. And he called his name Jesus.

Going Deeper

One can only imagine how hurt Joseph must have felt when he found out that his fiancée, Mary, was pregnant with a baby that wasn’t his. Perhaps he was angry or jealous, but what might have been worse was the reaction of their community—the finger pointing and the public shame. It would have been easy for Joseph to publicly disown her, but he decided to “quietly divorce” her so she is not totally disgraced. Either way, he was planning to walk away from Mary and her baby. But God sent an angel to tell Joseph a very important message: This baby is not a mistake; this baby is the Messiah. You must stay with Mary and be a father to this child. Don’t worry if other people make fun of you or Mary. Even though it was hard for Joseph, he chose to walk alongside Mary. He even married her. Joseph knew that God’s plan for his life, Mary’s life and most of all, for this precious baby’s life were bigger than he could imagine. So he decided to trust and obey the Lord.

There are women today who, like Mary, become unexpectedly pregnant. They might be scared and lonely. Sadly, sometimes they might think that killing their baby is their only option. Mary and Joseph were scared, but they trusted that God had special plans for their baby, which of course was the baby Jesus, the Savior! As Christians, we believe that every life is a gift from God and that He has a special plan for the life of every child. We can be like Joseph and choose to walk alongside pregnant

women who might be afraid and alone. We can help mothers see that their babies are blessings from God, even if the baby is unexpected. We can also help her take care of her baby before and after he is born.

Explore

- How do you think Mary felt when she found out she was pregnant? How do you think her family and friends reacted?
- Do you think it was hard for Joseph to obey the angel? What are some things he might have heard from his family and friends?
- How can we act like Joseph and help take care of pregnant women and their babies?
- What would you say to a woman who was pregnant and afraid to have her baby?

Concrete Connection

- Partner with the Sanctity of Life Ministry and collect coins in a baby bottle to raise money for CareNet, an organization that helps expectant mothers and their babies.
- Pray for mothers everywhere to not be afraid and to choose life for their babies.



Christmas Traditions at Resurrection

Join us on Sunday, December 15th as Rez transforms into Christmas Village. We will sing and dance our way through the Christmas trees in celebration of Christ's birth, but we will also learn about the missionaries we support. From 5-6:30 the festival will pause so the whole church can participate in the Christmas Pageant. The festival runs from 10 am to 8 pm and is a great opportunity for family and friends to experience the life of Resurrection



Join Us as we Celebrate!

As snow begins to blanket the Lincoln Marsh next door, we're filling our church with holiday warmth—things like family, neighbors, carols, food, and giving to others. We'd love for you to drop by and celebrate these Resurrection family Christmas traditions with us this year!



Christmas Village: 12/15 from **10AM to 8PM**
Give gifts that benefit others in need in Wheaton and the world.



Christmas Festival: 12/15 at **5PM**
Family friendly evening of carols with choir, orchestra, and a theatrical Christmas story



Christmas Eve Candlelight Service: 12/24 at **5PM**
Celebrate the birth of Jesus, the light of the world.



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