



Indiana-Kentucky Synod
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
God's work. Our hands.

Resources and Ideas Advent



The first Sunday in Advent this year is November 29, 2020. If you haven't already begun, it's not too late to plan for Advent faith formation opportunities.

Start by considering who you want to reach and what your goals are. Think about the message you will want to send and what tools you will employ to do so. Be sure to look to the liturgical calendar for Scripture, reflections, and themes.

This is certainly a different year. As you plan, be sensitive to what people are going through right now. Consider the losses we all face because things will be different. Think about what people have the capacity to do and how things can be offered safely.

Think also about annual traditions. Are there ways to continue those traditions in new ways? What might have to be put off until next year? Can we create a new tradition?

Remember to also turn your focus outward. Assess community needs. How can your congregation make an impact and do it safely? How can you serve those in need with endangering anyone? How can you get young people and families involved? How can you engage the community online with encouraging messages, social media posts, videos, and/or blogs?

As you plan, here are some resources to get you thinking:

[The Advent Invitation](#): A two-page handout that introduces families to Advent at home.

[Advent Calendars for 2020](#): A variety of Advent calendars for families, mostly online.

[Reverse Advent: A Spiritual Discipline of Reaching Out](#): Information for families to use the season of Advent to reach out to those in the community (even during a pandemic).

[#Advent Word](#): A global, online Advent devotional with images shared on social media.

[Advent Resources from ELCA World Hunger](#): A variety of downloadable resources related to world hunger designed for use in Advent.

[12 Questions to Spark Family Discussions](#): This resource helps you move from "how's school?" to deeper questions that engage family members of all ages during the Advent and Christmas seasons.

[Advent in 2 Minutes](#): This is a video by Busted Halo that explains Advent in just two minutes. (It does use 3 purple and 1 pink candle on the Advent wreath, in case that is a dealbreaker for you!).

[Praying in Color Advent templates](#): This site not only explains how praying in color works but offers some wonderful downloadable handouts.

[A Christmas Collection of Children's Story Books](#): Check out this list of children's story books with Christmas themes.

[Hey, Mary!](#) Families with young children will enjoy viewing and singing along to this adorable video.

[Blessing for the Christmas Tree](#): A simple blessing for use by families once your Christmas tree is put up.

[Printable Nativity Scene](#): Download this nativity scene, cut it out, color it, and use it to tell the Christmas story.

[99¢ Advent Wreath](#): Instructions for a simple advent wreath that families can make together along with simple devotions.

[St. Nicholas Day](#) is December 6. The St. Nicholas Center in Holland, MI, offers a multitude of suggestions of how St. Nicholas Day can be observed in the home.

Advent devotional materials. Consider various ages and both print and online resources. They are available almost everywhere! Use Google to find the ones that are right for your congregation.

Family Advent Project. Is there a special project that you encourage families to engage in during the Advent season? It might be a special service project, using Advent devotional resources, or taking part in Advent activities online. Offer suggestions to families about ways they might embrace the Advent season. You can find some suggestions at <http://www.adventconspiracy.org/>.



Advent Calendars. Who doesn't love an Advent calendar? Pinterest has oodles of suggestions of Advent calendars that can be handmade. You could also purchase them and send them to children.



Christmas Cards. This might be the year to send Christmas cards to shut-in or homebound members of your congregation even if you don't usually. Make or prepare Christmas cards for a residential care or assisted living facility nearby. Check with the staff in advance to see if they will deliver them if you mail or drop them off. Be sure to let the recipients know that your family will be praying for them. Young children can draw a picture that can be included.

Other Resources

Check out these articles from Buildfaith.org: [Advent in a Box](#), [Advent Prayer Stations](#) (while these were designed to be done at church, they could easily be done at home), and [Free Family Friendly Resources for Advent](#).

Pastor Dan Fugate serves as the Assistant to the Bishop for Discipleship in the Indiana-Kentucky Synod. He stands ready to partner with you and your congregation to help you develop a clear plan for faith formation and provide resources necessary to help your members grow in faith. Faith formation resources, networking opportunities with other congregations and leaders, planning, training, and support are some of the ways he can assist. Contact Pastor Fugate at dfugate@iksynod.org or by phone at 317.775.4876.

