Diocese of Athabasca

Sunday School Lesson Plan

Here's a **Sunday School Lesson Plan** for **young children (ages 4–8)** and some activities for older children using the **Revised Common Lectionary readings** for the **First Sunday of Advent (Year B).** Bible Verses: Isaiah 64:1-9; Psalm 80:1-7, 16-18; 1 Corinthians 1:3-9; Mark 13:24-37; Preface of Advent

✨ Sunday School Lesson Plan

First Sunday of Advent – Year B

GET READY! JESUS IS COMING!

Theme: Waiting, Watching, Hoping, and Preparing Our Hearts for Jesus

Big Idea: Advent is a special time when we prepare our hearts for Jesus. We wait with hope, trust God's promises, and show God's love while we wait.

Revised Common Lectionary Readings — As Requested

- Isaiah 64:1–9
- Psalm 80:1–7, 16–18
- 1 Corinthians 1:3–9
- Mark 13:24–37

Preface: Advent
Liturgical Colour: Purple or Blue
Age Group: Preschool to Young Elementary (approximately 3–9 years)
Suggested Lesson Length: 30–45 minutes, with additional activities as desired.

1. Lesson Title / Theme / Big Idea

GET READY! JESUS IS COMING!

Theme: Waiting with Hope and Preparing Our Hearts for Jesus

Big Idea: Advent reminds us that Jesus came into the world as a baby and that Jesus will come again. While we wait, we can pray, trust God, help others, and share God's love.

Lesson Focus for Kids:

- Advent is the beginning of a new church year.
- Advent is a special time of waiting and preparing.
- We remember that Jesus came as a baby in Bethlehem.
- We look forward with hope to Jesus coming again.
- God always keeps his promises.
- Jesus teaches us to be watchful and ready.
- We prepare our hearts by praying, helping, sharing, and showing kindness.
- We can shine God's love while we wait.
- The first Advent candle reminds us of hope.

This Week's Message

GET READY! JESUS IS COMING!

2. Scripture Readings — Kid-Friendly Language

Isaiah 64:1–9 — God Is Our Loving Father

Long ago, God's people were waiting for God to help them.
They remembered the wonderful things God had done.
They prayed for God to come close and help them again.
They knew that sometimes they made wrong choices and forgot to follow God's ways.
But they also knew that God loved them.
They said: "Lord, you are our Father."
They compared God to a potter who shapes clay.
Just as a potter carefully makes something beautiful, God made us and cares for us.
God's people asked God to remember them and help them.

Kid Connection: God made us, loves us, and never stops caring for us. We can trust God while we wait.

GOD MADE ME AND LOVES ME!

Psalm 80:1–7, 16–18 — God, Shine Your Light on Us!

The psalm is a prayer asking God for help.
God's people called to God: "Please listen to us!"
"Please come and help us!"
"Let your face shine upon us."
They wanted God to be close to them.

They trusted that God could guide them and save them.

Kid Connection: Just as sunshine helps us see and grow, God's love brings hope into our lives. We can ask God to guide us and help us.

GOD'S LOVE SHINES ON ME!

1 Corinthians 1:3–9 — God Is Faithful

Paul wrote a letter to people who loved Jesus.
He thanked God for them.
He reminded them that God had given them many blessings.
God helped them learn about Jesus.
God gave them gifts they could use to help others.
Paul reminded them that they were waiting for Jesus to come again.
He also reminded them of something wonderful:
God is faithful.
That means God keeps his promises.

Kid Connection: We can trust God. God loves us and helps us while we wait for Jesus.

GOD ALWAYS KEEPS HIS PROMISES!

Mark 13:24–37 — Keep Watch and Be Ready!

Jesus was talking to his friends.
He told them that one day he would come again in glory.
Jesus described great changes in the sky and told them to watch for signs.
He gave them an example.
"When you see new leaves growing on a fig tree, you know that summer is coming."
Jesus wanted his friends to understand that they should pay attention and be ready.
He told them a story about a man who went away on a journey.
Before leaving, the man gave his servants work to do.
He told the doorkeeper to keep watch.
The servants did not know when the man would return.
They needed to be ready.
Jesus said: "Keep awake."
Jesus wanted his friends to live faithfully while they waited.

Kid Connection: We do not need to be afraid or stay awake all night. Jesus wants us to live each day with loving hearts, ready to follow him. We can pray, help, share, and show kindness.

I CAN BE READY FOR JESUS!

3. Welcome & Opening Prayer / Circle Time

Activity: What Are We Waiting For?

Materials: An Advent wreath, one purple or blue candle, a small wrapped gift, a heart, and a picture of baby Jesus.

Gather the children in a circle.

Show the wrapped gift.

Ask:

- "Have you ever waited for a birthday?"
- "Have you ever waited for Christmas?"
- "Is it easy or hard to wait?"
- "How do you feel when you are waiting for something wonderful?"

Explain:

"Today is the First Sunday of Advent. Advent is a special time when we prepare for Jesus."

Show the Advent wreath.

"Each Sunday during Advent, we light another candle. The candles remind us that Jesus is the Light of the World."

Point to the first candle.

"Today we light the candle of HOPE."

Explain:

"Hope means trusting that God loves us and keeps his promises."

Show the heart.

"We can prepare our hearts for Jesus by loving others."

Lighting the First Advent Candle

Have an adult light the first Advent candle, or use a battery-operated candle.

Say together:

"We light this candle for HOPE. Thank you, God, for sending Jesus!"

Opening Prayer

Dear God,
Thank you for the beginning of Advent.
Thank you for loving us and keeping your promises.
Help us wait with patience and hope.
Help us prepare our hearts for Jesus.
Teach us to pray, share, help, and show kindness.
May your love shine through us every day.
Amen.

4. Memory Verse

"Keep awake."

Mark 13:37

For a slightly longer memory verse:

"And what I say to you I say to all: Keep awake." — Mark 13:37

Memory Verse Actions

Words	Actions
KEEP	Hold both hands close to your heart
AWAKE	Open your eyes wide and look around

Explain:

"Jesus is not telling us to stop sleeping. He is reminding us to pay attention to God and be ready to show love."

Memory Verse Activity

Ask the children to close their eyes.
Say: "Get ready!"
Children open their eyes and say: "KEEP AWAKE!"
Then ask: "How can we be ready for Jesus?"
Encourage responses such as praying, sharing, helping, and loving others.
Finish together: "I CAN BE READY FOR JESUS!"

5. Bible Story Time

Jesus Teaches Us to Be Ready

One day Jesus was talking to his friends. He wanted them to know something very important. Jesus told them that one day he would come again. His friends did not know when that would happen.
Jesus said: "Keep watch and be ready!"
Then Jesus told them a story.
There was once a man who was going away on a journey.
Before he left, he gave his servants jobs to do.
One servant had work to finish.
Another servant had things to look after.
The doorkeeper had a special job.
He needed to watch for the master's return.
The servants did not know when their master would come home.
Would he come in the evening?
Would he come during the night?
Would he come early in the morning?
They did not know.
But they knew they should be ready.
Jesus told his friends: "Keep awake!"
Jesus wanted them to remember to follow God's ways every day.
He wanted them to love God and love others.
He wanted them to help people in need.
He wanted them to pray and trust God.
And he wanted them to be ready whenever he came.
Today, during Advent, we remember Jesus' words.
We are getting ready to celebrate Christmas.
We remember that Jesus came into the world as a baby.
And we look forward to the day when Jesus will come again.
We do not need to be afraid.
Jesus loves us.
While we wait, we can do wonderful things.
We can help someone.
We can share a toy.
We can welcome a new friend.
We can comfort someone who is sad.
We can pray.
Every time we show love, we are preparing our hearts for Jesus.

Say Together
GET READY!
JESUS IS COMING!
I CAN SHOW HIS LOVE!

6. Craft / Activity

Craft 1 — My Advent Wreath of Hope

Materials: Paper plates or wreath templates, green crayons, purple and pink paper candles, glue, and yellow paper flames.

Give each child a wreath template.

Help them add four candles: traditionally three purple and one pink, or four blue candles where that is the parish custom.

Add a yellow flame to the first candle.

Across the top write:

ADVENT IS A TIME OF HOPE!

Across the bottom:

GET READY! JESUS IS COMING!

Explain:

"Every Sunday during Advent, we light another candle as we prepare for Christmas."

Craft 2 — My Heart Is Ready for Jesus

Materials: Large paper hearts, crayons, markers, scissors, and glue.

Give each child a large heart.

Inside the heart write:

I AM GETTING READY FOR JESUS!

Children draw ways they can prepare their hearts:

- Praying.
- Helping.
- Sharing.
- Being kind.
- Welcoming others.
- Showing love.

Explain:

"We prepare our hearts for Jesus by showing God's love."

Craft 3 — A Candle of Hope

Materials: Candle templates, yellow paper flames, crayons, glue, and construction paper.

Give each child a large paper candle.

Write:

JESUS IS OUR HOPE!

Children colour the candle and decorate it with hearts and stars.

Attach a yellow flame.

Explain:

"Jesus brings hope and light into our world."

7. Games

Game 1 — Be Ready!

Have children stand in a circle.

Call out different actions.

When the teacher says:

"GET READY!"

Children stand still and listen.

Then the teacher calls out a way to prepare for Jesus:

- "PRAY!" — Fold hands.
- "HELP!" — Pretend to help someone.
- "SHARE!" — Pretend to give someone a toy.
- "LOVE!" — Place hands over heart.
- "WELCOME!" — Wave hello.
- "PRAISE!" — Raise hands joyfully.

After each action, say:

"I CAN BE READY FOR JESUS!"

Game 2 — Watch for the Light

Materials: Battery-operated candle or small lantern.

Place the candle somewhere in the room.

Ask children to close their eyes while the teacher moves the candle.

When the teacher says:

"Open your eyes!"

Children look for the light.

Once they find it, everyone says:

"JESUS IS THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD!"

Explain:

"Advent reminds us to watch, wait, and look forward with hope."

Game 3 — Getting Ready for Christmas

Place pictures of an Advent wreath, Bible, heart, praying hands, helping hands, and baby Jesus around the room.

Ask children to find each picture.

When they find one, discuss how it reminds us to prepare for Jesus.

8. Song Suggestions

- O Come, O Come, Emmanuel — Waiting for the promised Saviour.
- Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus — Advent hope.
- This Little Light of Mine — Sharing God's love.
- Jesus Loves Me — Trusting Jesus.
- He's Got the Whole World in His Hands — God's faithful care.
- God Is So Good — Thankfulness.
- Seek Ye First the Kingdom of God — Following Jesus.
- Prepare Ye the Way of the Lord — Preparing for Christ.
- Away in a Manger — Looking forward to Christmas.
- Light One Candle to Watch for Messiah — Advent candle lighting.

Simple Action Song

To the tune of "Are You Sleeping?"

We are waiting,
We are waiting,
For our King,
For our King.

Jesus brings us hope,
Jesus brings us hope,
Let us sing,
Let us sing.

9. Snack Suggestions

Advent Star Snacks

Serve star-shaped sandwiches or cookies.
Explain: "Advent is a time of waiting for Jesus, who brings light and hope."

Candle Snacks

Make simple pretend candles using banana pieces with a small piece of orange or another suitable fruit for a flame.

Sharing Snack

Invite children to help distribute crackers or fruit.
Explain: "We prepare for Jesus by sharing and caring for others."

Snack Prayer

Dear God,
Thank you for this food.
Thank you for the hope of Advent.
Help us remember people who are hungry.
Teach us to share and care for others.
Help us prepare our hearts for Jesus.
Amen.

Check allergies and choking hazards. Use age-appropriate foods and supervise preparation.

10. Wrap Up & Reflections

Gather the children in a circle.

Ask: What special season begins today? Advent.
What are we preparing for? Jesus and the celebration of Christmas.

What does the first Advent candle remind us of? Hope.
Does God keep his promises? Yes!
What did Jesus tell his friends to do? Keep awake and be ready.
How can we prepare our hearts for Jesus? By praying, helping, sharing, and showing kindness.
Do we need to be afraid while we wait for Jesus? No. We can trust God's love.

Say Together
ADVENT IS HERE!
GOD GIVES US HOPE!
I CAN BE READY FOR JESUS!

11. Closing Prayer

Loving God,
Thank you for the season of Advent.
Thank you for sending Jesus into the world.
Help us wait with hope and joy.
Help us remember that you always keep your promises.
Teach us to be watchful and ready.
Fill our hearts with kindness.
Help us share, pray, and care for others.
May our lives shine with your love.
Through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.

12. Take-Home Idea

My First Week of Advent — Hope Challenge

Encourage children to complete an act of kindness each day.

GET READY FOR JESUS!

Sunday — Pray and thank God for Jesus.
Monday — Help someone at home.
Tuesday — Share something with another person.
Wednesday — Say something kind to a friend.
Thursday — Pray for someone who is sick or lonely.
Friday — Welcome someone or make a new friend.
Saturday — Do something helpful without being asked.

Invite families to light the first Advent candle together, using a battery-operated candle if preferred.

Family Prayer: "Dear Jesus, fill our home with hope and help us prepare our hearts for you. Amen."

13. Teacher Notes

Understanding Advent

Advent begins the Christian liturgical year.

The word Advent means "coming."

During Advent, Christians remember that Jesus came into the world and look forward to his coming again.

Advent is not simply a countdown to Christmas. It is a season of hope, waiting, prayer, and preparation.

Connecting the Readings

Isaiah 64: God's people cry out for God's help and remember that God is their Father and Creator.

Psalm 80: God's people pray for restoration and ask God to shine upon them.

1 Corinthians 1: Paul reminds Christians that God is faithful and provides what they need while they await Christ.

Mark 13: Jesus teaches his followers to stay watchful and faithful because they do not know when he will return.

Important Teaching Points

1. Advent is about hope. We trust God's promises even when we must wait.

2. Jesus came and will come again. Advent remembers both the birth of Jesus and the promise of his return.

3. Being ready means living faithfully. Children can prepare their hearts by loving and helping others.

4. God is faithful. God's love does not disappear while we wait.

5. We do not need to be frightened. Present Jesus' teaching about the future as a message of hope and trust rather than fear.

6. Prayer helps us prepare. Advent gives us time to listen to God and grow in love.

A Note About Mark 13:24–37

This reading includes dramatic language about the sun, moon, stars, and the coming of the Son of Man.

For young children, avoid frightening descriptions of the end of the world.

Instead, emphasize Jesus' central instruction:

"Be ready. Stay faithful. Keep following God's ways."

Explain that Christians do not know when Jesus will come again, but we can trust him and live with hope.

14. Anglican Connection

The Beginning of the Church Year

The First Sunday of Advent marks the beginning of a new liturgical year in the Anglican Church.

The liturgical colour is traditionally purple, although some Anglican churches use blue during Advent.

Purple reminds us of preparation, reflection, and the coming of our King.

Blue is sometimes used to emphasize hope and expectation.

The Advent Wreath

Many Anglican parishes use an Advent wreath.

The wreath is circular, reminding us of God's never-ending love.

The evergreen branches remind us of life and hope.

The four candles represent the four Sundays of Advent.

A common arrangement is:

Sunday	Theme	Candle
First Sunday	Hope	Purple or blue
Second Sunday	Peace	Purple or blue

Third Sunday	Joy	Pink or blue
Fourth Sunday	Love	Purple or blue

The candle themes and colours vary among Anglican parishes. Follow your parish's tradition.

The First Advent Candle — Hope

Explain:

"Today we light one candle. It reminds us that God gives us hope. We are waiting for Jesus."

The Anglican Baptismal Covenant

In our Baptismal Covenant, we promise, with God's help, to continue in prayer, worship, and Christian fellowship.

We also promise to seek and serve Christ in all persons.

During Advent, we can live out these promises by preparing our hearts and showing God's love.

Advent in the Parish

Invite children to notice the changes in church:

- The Advent wreath.
- Purple or blue altar hangings.
- Advent hymns.
- Advent prayers.
- The lighting of candles.
- The preparation for Christmas.

Explain:

"All these things remind us that we are waiting and preparing for Jesus."

This Week's Message

Advent is a season of hope, waiting, and preparation. Isaiah reminds us that God is our loving Father. Psalm 80 teaches us to ask God for help and guidance. Paul reminds us that God is faithful and keeps his promises. Jesus teaches us to be watchful and ready.

We prepare for Jesus not only by decorating our homes or counting the days until Christmas, but also by opening our hearts to God's love.

We can pray, share, help, welcome others, and show kindness.

GET READY! JESUS IS COMING!

These lesson plans are intended as a collection of ideas rather than a single lesson that must be completed in full. Teachers are encouraged to select the stories, crafts, games, and worksheets that best suit the ages, abilities, and interests of the children they teach.

Get Ready! Jesus is Coming

First Sunday of Advent



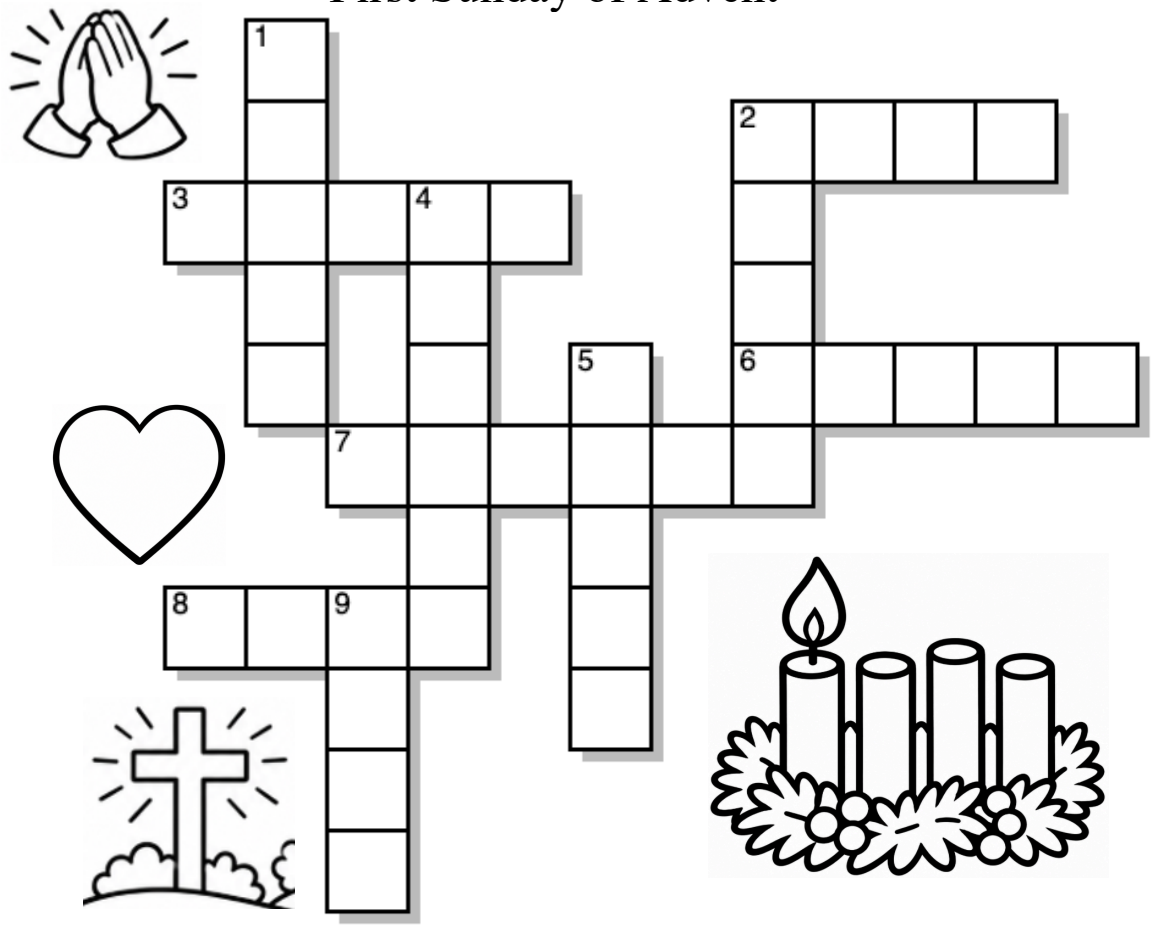
Get Ready! Jesus is Coming

First Sunday of Advent



Get Ready! Jesus is Coming

First Sunday of Advent



ACROSS

2 We prepare our hearts by showing _____.
3 Jesus tells us to keep _____.
6 We can prepare this for Jesus.
7 The special season when we prepare for Christmas.
8 The first Advent candle reminds us of this.

DOWN

1 We should be _____ for Jesus.
2 Jesus brings _____ into the world.
4 We light one of these each Sunday during Advent.
5 Who are we waiting for in Advent?
9 We can talk to God when we _____.

Get Ready! Jesus is Coming

First Sunday of Advent

H O P E G T D X Y
A C K J V T V A M
S D T L R O R M C
U G V A R P L A Q
S Y E E W W N D L
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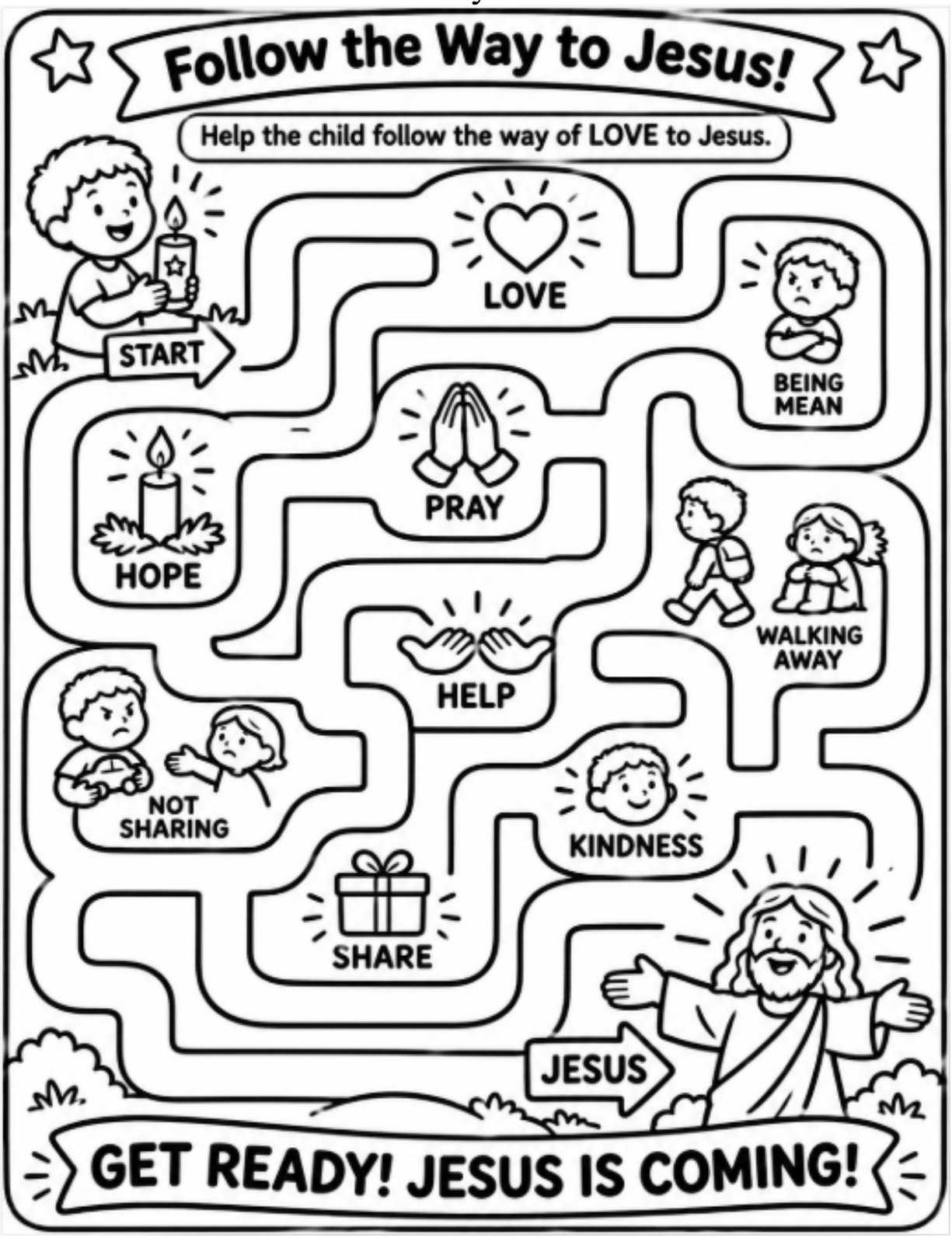
Advent
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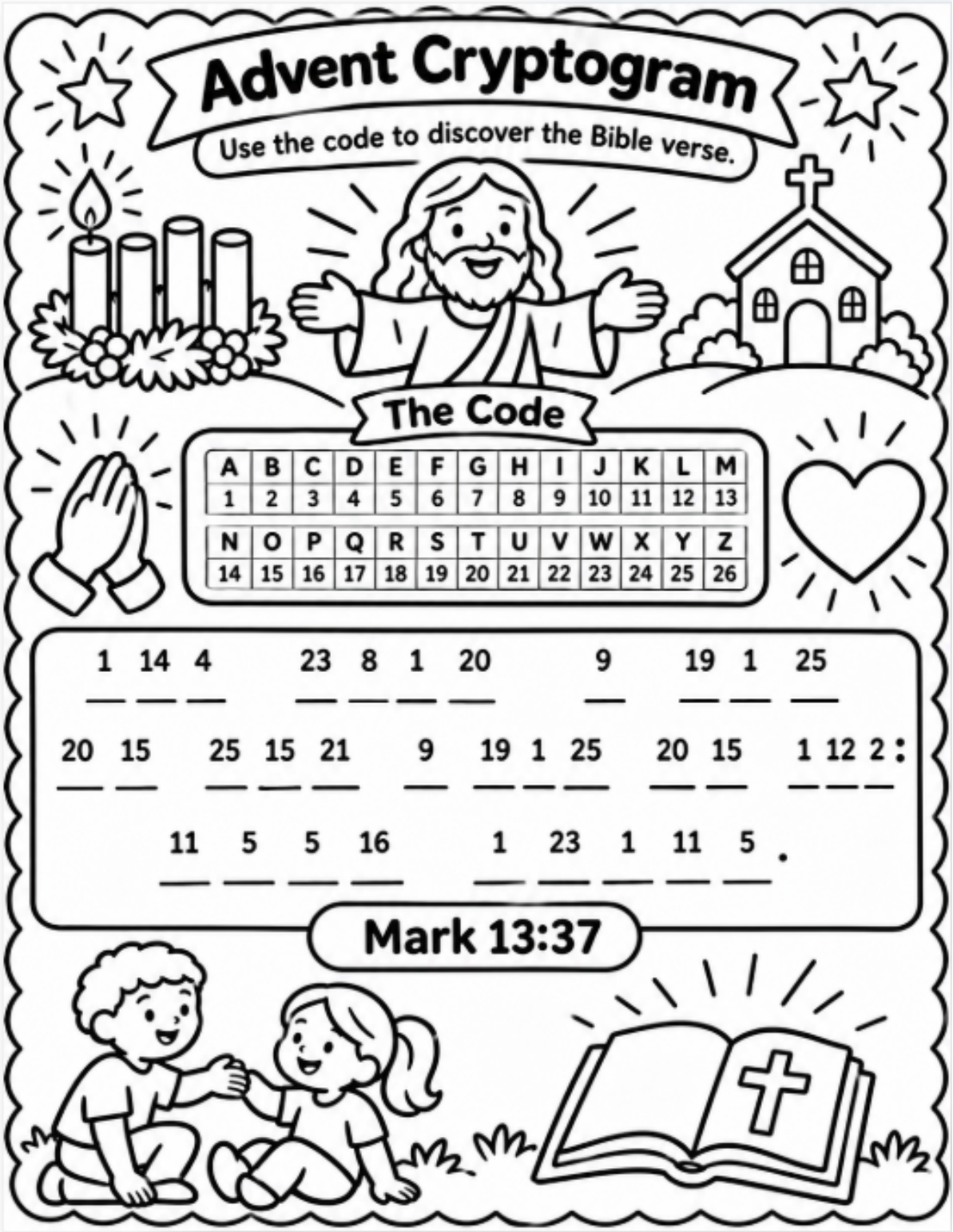
Get Ready! Jesus is Coming

First Sunday of Advent



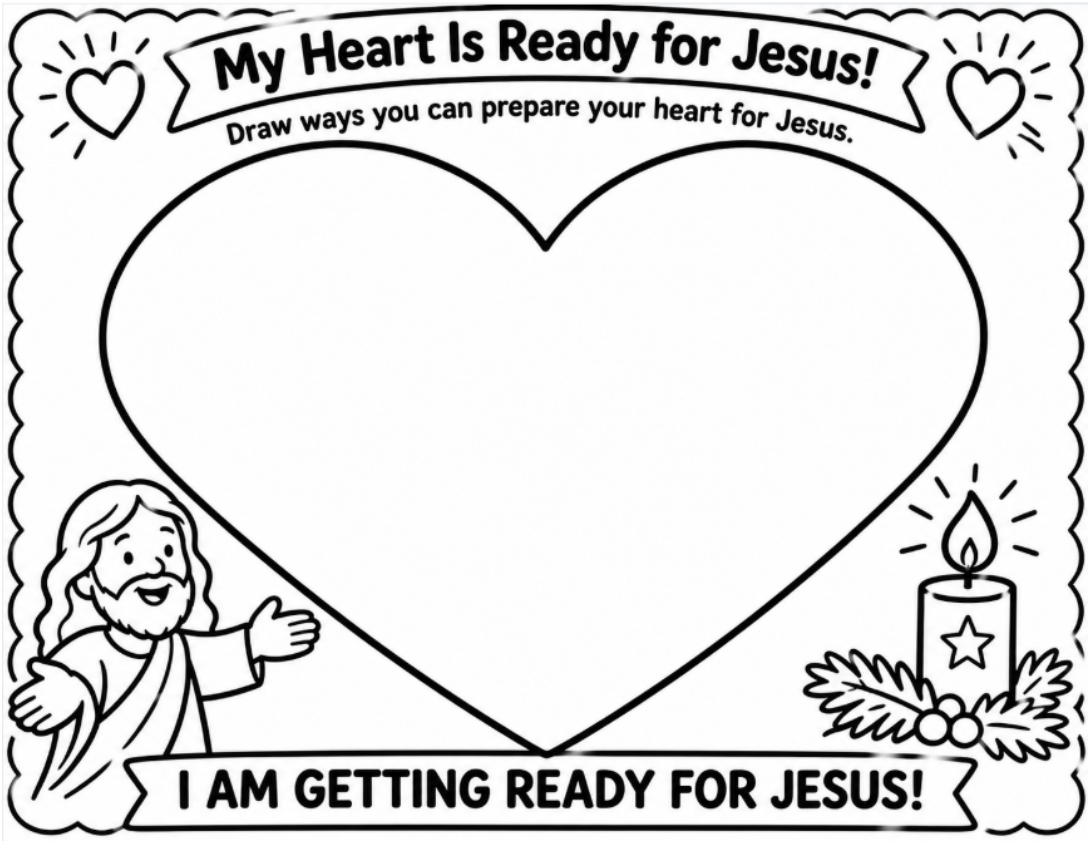
Get Ready! Jesus is Coming

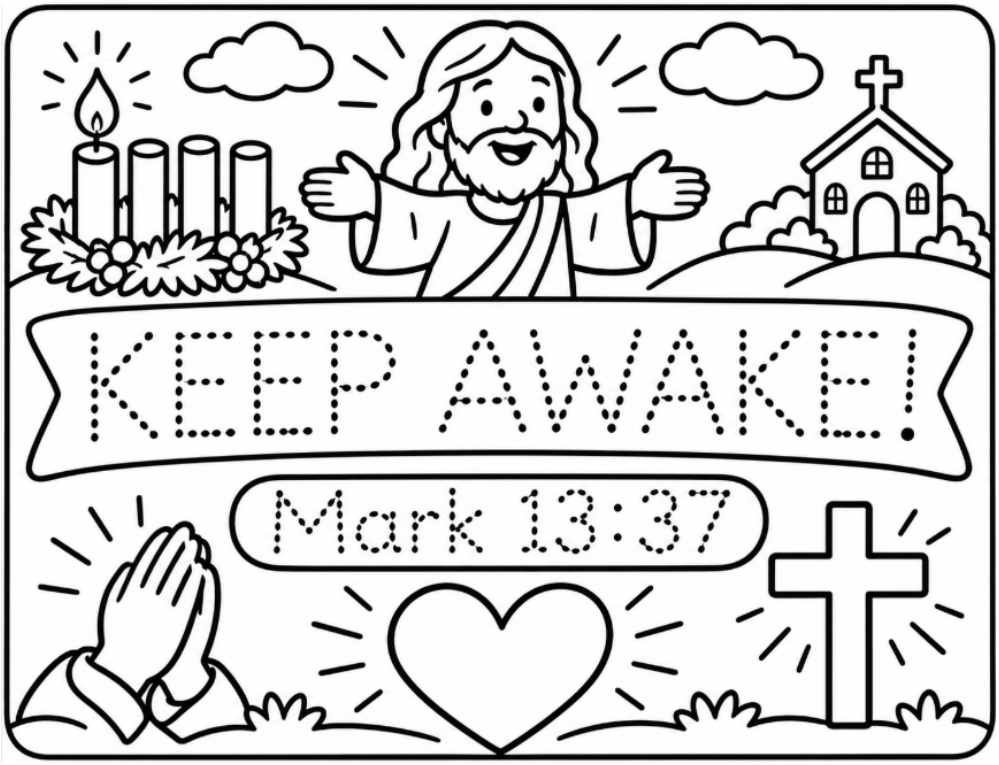
First Sunday of Advent



Get Ready! Jesus is Coming

First Sunday of Advent

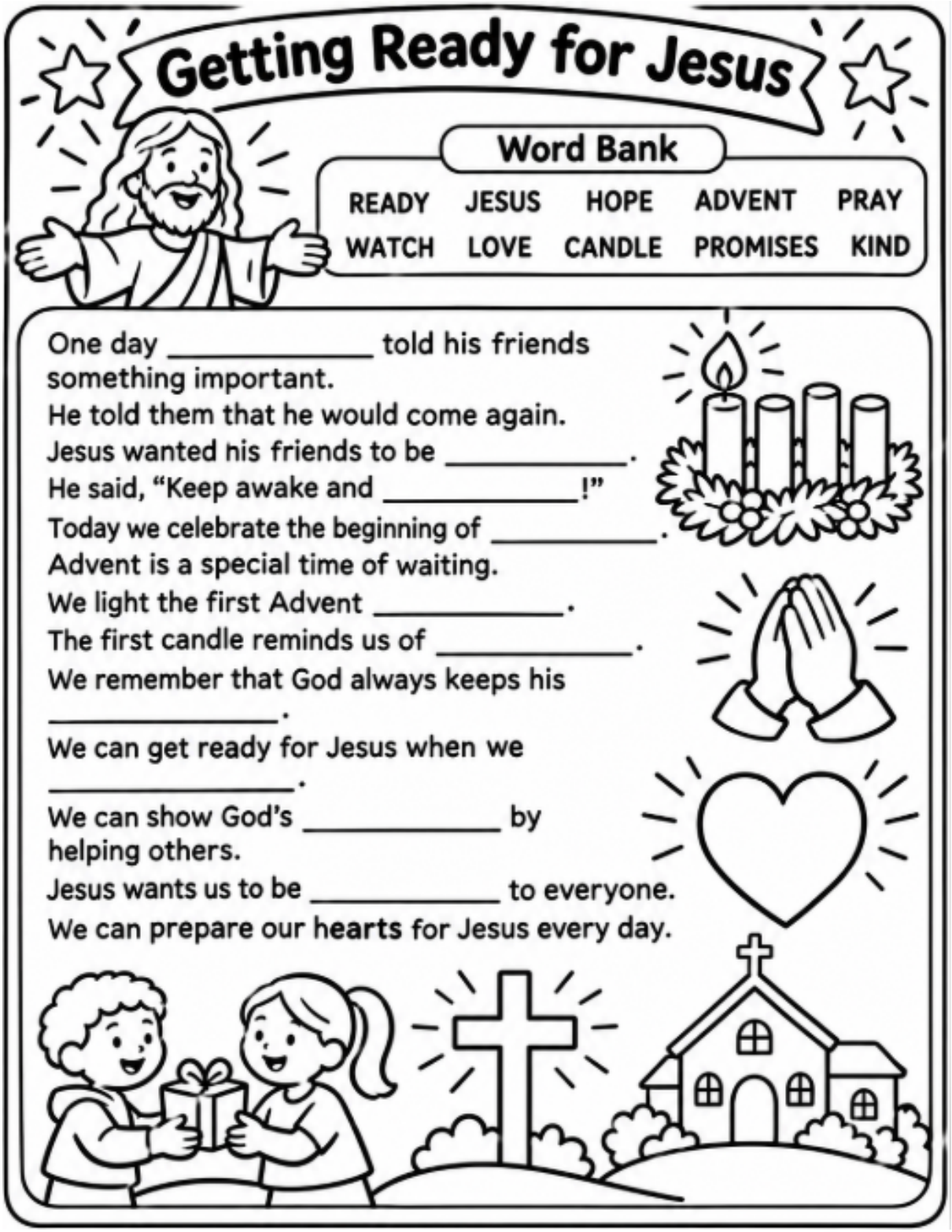




Get Ready! Jesus is Coming

First Sunday of Advent

Fill in the blanks of the story with the words in the box.



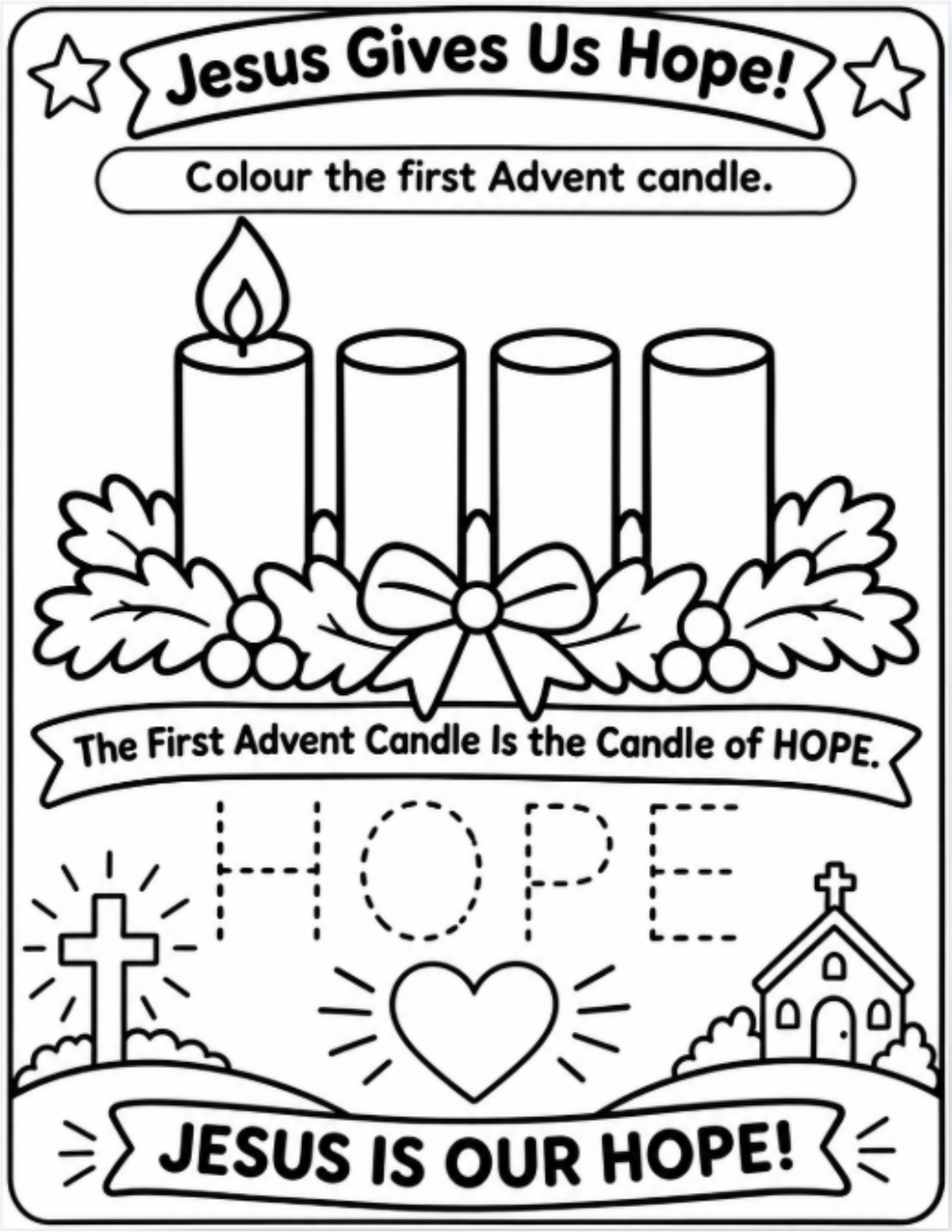
Get Ready! Jesus is Coming

First Sunday of Advent



Get Ready! Jesus is Coming

First Sunday of Advent



Crossword - Key

Across	Down
2. Love	1. Ready
3. Watch	2. Light
6. Heart	4. Candle
7. Advent	5. Jesus
8. Hope	9. Pray

Cryptogram – Key:

Psalm 34:1

I will bless the LORD at all times; his praise shall continually be in my mouth.

Fill-in-the-Blank – Key

Jesus
Ready
Watch
Advent
Candle
Hope
Promises
Pray
Love
Kind