

4 WEEKS



FAMILY ADVENT STUDY GUIDE

The holiday season can be a hectic rush of decorating, shopping, and gatherings with family & friends. Amidst the busyness, it's crucial to guide our kids in understanding the true meaning of Christmas: cherishing moments with loved ones and reflecting on the gift of Jesus. Advent provides a special opportunity to slow down, and focus on the significance of the season. Through activities like reading Bible stories and spending time together as a family, we can appreciate the incredible gift God gave us. The season unfolds like a story in four parts, as we explore Christmas through the perspectives of the "Eyewitnesses to Christmas": The Angels & Shepherds, Mary, The Wise Men, and God. Weekly scriptures, using your Jesus Storybook or Adventure Bibles, and a "Song of the Week" from the Advent Playlist on SunnybrookKids Spotify enhance the experience. Advent is a purposeful preparation for Christmas, emphasizing not just decorations and gifts, but the profound joy that Jesus brings— a time of hope, peace, and love.

We would love to see pictures of your time together using our Family Ministry Advent Study! Tag @sunnybrookkids and use the hashtag #SunnybrookAdvent2023 to share your photos & videos with us!

Merry Christmas!

Sunnybrook Family Ministry Team



TABLE OF CONTENTS

WEEK 1.....	4
WEEK 2.....	7
WEEK 3.....	10
WEEK 4.....	13

ANGELS & SHEPHERDS

WEEK 1 | DECEMBER 3-7

SONG OF THE WEEK: HERE COMES HEAVEN



DAY 1 – FEAR NOT, TRUST GOD

Main Idea: Don't be afraid.

Bible Passage: Luke 2: 8-10

Discussion:
Why were the shepherds afraid, and what happened to change that?

The shepherds were scared when the angels appeared, but the angels told them not to be afraid because they were bringing good news about the birth of Jesus. The shepherds realized there was no need to fear.

How can we apply the idea of "Don't be afraid" to our own lives?

Just like the shepherds, when we feel scared or worried, we can remember that God is with us. We can trust in His love and promises, just as the shepherds did.

Activity: Make a paper link chain Christmas countdown to celebrate the Good News of Jesus.



DAY 2 – SEEKING JESUS LIKE SHEPHERDS

Main Idea: We should search for God like the shepherds did.

Bible Passage: Luke 2:15-16

Discussion:

Why did the shepherds actively look for Jesus, and why is that important for us today?

The shepherds were excited to find Jesus because the angels told them about the Savior's birth. Similarly, we should actively look for Jesus in our lives every day, seeking His love, guidance, and presence.

What are some ways we can 'look for God' in our daily lives, like the shepherds did?

We can look for God in nature, in acts of kindness, in the love of our family and friends, and in moments of joy and gratitude. It's about being aware of His presence in both big and small things.

Activity: Look up some things in nature (leaves, flowers, bees, etc.) and see how God designed every detail.

DAY 3 – SHARE THE JOY

Main Idea: Tell people about God's goodness

Bible Passage: Luke 2:17-19

Discussion:

Why did the shepherds share the news about Jesus, and why is it important for us to share about Him too?

The shepherds were excited and wanted everyone to know about the amazing thing that happened. Similarly, we can share the good news of Jesus with others because it brings hope, joy, and love.

What are some simple ways we can tell people about Jesus in our everyday lives?

We can share a kind word, help someone in need, talk about Jesus with our friends, or simply be a good example of His love through our actions.

Activity: Play charades (it's hard not to talk, so when we do, we should use our voices for good).



DAY 4 – DAILY PRAISE

Main Idea: Glorify God everyday.

Bible Passage: Luke 2:20

Discussion:

Why did the shepherds continue to praise God after seeing Jesus?

The shepherds were so happy and amazed by what they saw that they couldn't stop praising God. Similarly, we can praise God every day for the good things in our lives, remembering His faithfulness.

How can we make praising God a part of our daily lives, just like the shepherds did?

We can start and end our days with prayers of thanksgiving, praising God when things go well, and even praising Him during challenging times, trusting that He is with us.

Activity: Pray as a family.



DAY 5 – GOD KEEPS HIS PROMISES

Main Idea: God is faithful.

Bible Passage: Isaiah 7:4

Discussion:

Why is it important to trust that God is faithful and keeps His promises?

God promised to send a Savior, and He fulfilled that promise by sending Jesus. It's important to trust God's faithfulness because it shows us that we can rely on Him and His promises in our lives.

How can we wait patiently, like waiting for cookies to bake, knowing that God's promises are worth the wait?

Waiting can be hard, but just like waiting for cookies to bake is worth it, waiting for God's promises to be fulfilled is worth it too. We can be patient and trust that God's timing is perfect.

Activity: Bake cookies as a family and reflect on the waiting for them to come out of the oven can be difficult, but the wait is worth it.

MARY

WEEK 2 | DECEMBER 10-16

SONG OF THE WEEK: MARY, DID YOU KNOW



DAY 1 – THE COURAGEOUS HEART

DAY 2 – THE RECEPTIVE HEART

Main Idea: Mary had a courageous heart, facing the unknown with faith.

Bible Passage: Luke 1:30

Discussion:

What do you think Mary felt when the angel appeared?

Mary might have felt surprised, scared, or even uncertain about what the angel was telling her.

How can we show courage in our own lives, even when things seem difficult or impossible?

We can show courage by trusting God's plan for us, even when it doesn't seem easy.

Activity Idea: Create "Angel Visit" drawings. Have each family member draw or color a picture of what they think the angel's visit to Mary looked like.

Main Idea: Mary had a receptive heart, open to hearing and accepting God's plan.

Bible Passage: Luke 1:29-45

Discussion:

Why do you think God chose Mary to be Jesus' mother?

God saw Mary's heart and knew she was the right person for this important task.

What does it mean to have a receptive heart?

Being open and willing to listen and follow God's plans.

Activity Idea: Using red or pink construction paper, cut out hearts in various sizes. Use hole punchers and string ribbon or twine through them and hang them on your Christmas tree to remind you of Mary's heart.

DAY 3 – THE HOPEFUL HEART



DAY 4 – THE REFLECTIVE HEART

Main Idea: Mary's heart was filled with hope & gratitude as she trusted in God's promises.

Bible Passage: Luke 1:46-56

Discussion:
What did Mary do after she found out she would be Jesus' mother?

She praised & thanked God.

Why?

Mary recognized God's goodness and felt grateful for His plan.

What are some things Mary praised God for in her song?

Mary praised God for His mercy, strength, and faithfulness in fulfilling His promises

Activity Idea: Create a "Gratitude" jar. Throughout the week, family members can write down things they are thankful for and put them in the jar.



Main Idea: Mary pondered and reflected on the events surrounding Jesus' birth.

Bible Passage: Luke 2:16-20

Discussion:
What does ponder mean?

Pondering is like when you have a really cool idea or hear something amazing, and you take a moment to think about it. Mary did a lot of pondering. Imagine it like when you get a new toy, and you spend time looking at it, figuring out all the cool things it can do. So, pondering is like giving your brain some extra time to understand and appreciate something awesome.

Why do you think Mary pondered things in her heart?

To remember and treasure the goodness of God for what He was doing in her life.

Activity Idea: Have a "Christmas Memory Sharing" time where each family member shares their favorite Christmas memory or tradition.

DAY 5 – THE RESPONSIVE HEART

Main Idea: Mary responded to God’s call with obedience and humility.

Bible Passage: Luke 1:38

Discussion:
How can we respond with obedience and humility when God calls us to do something?

We can respond by trusting God’s guidance, obeying His commands, and humbly accepting His will for our lives.

Why do you think it was important for Mary and Joseph to do what God asked them to do, even if it might have seemed a little bit scary or different?

Mary and Joseph knew that God's plans are always good, even if they seem a little scary or different at first. By obeying and being humble, they showed trust in God and helped bring Jesus into the world as part of God's amazing plan to save us. So, it was important for them to listen to God and follow His instructions with love and faith.

Activity Idea: Make a list together of how you can serve others in your family, or in your community. Choose at least one idea off of your list and commit to doing it together as a family over the next week.



WISEMEN

WEEK 3 | DECEMBER 17-20

SONG OF THE WEEK: THE FIRST NOEL



DAY 1 – THE JOY OF SEEKING

Main Idea: Seeking Jesus brings joy to our hearts.

Bible Passage: Matthew 2:10

Discussion:
How do you feel when you're on a quest or adventure?

When you're on a quest or adventure, it's like going on a really exciting journey! You might feel a mix of feelings like happiness, curiosity, and maybe a bit of excitement. It's a bit like when you're about to discover something new or solve a mystery. The best part is that you never know what surprises might come your way!

Why do you think the wise men were filled with joy when they saw the star?

The wise men were filled with joy when they saw the star because it was like a special sign for them. The star was like a big, bright arrow pointing them to something amazing.

Activity Idea:

Watch "The Story of Christmas - Jesus & The Wise Men"



DAY 2 – SETTING OUT ON THE JOURNEY

Main Idea: We set out on a journey to seek Jesus.

Bible Passage: Matthew 2:1-2

Discussion:
Why did the wise men set out on a journey to find Jesus?

The wise men went on a trip to find Jesus because they saw a special star. They thought this star meant that a very important king, the King of the Jews, was born. They wanted to find the baby and show respect and love by worshiping him.

What do you think it means to worship Jesus?

Worshiping Jesus means showing deep love and respect to Him. It's like saying how important He is and thanking Him.

Activity Idea: Go on a "journey" to visit your grandparents, or another family member. On the drive, discuss what the Wise Men might have experienced on their long journey to find Baby Jesus.

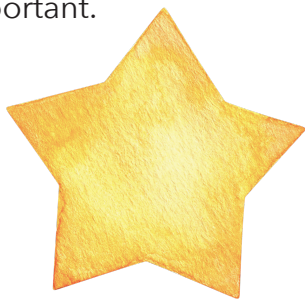
DAY 3 – CELEBRATING THE DISCOVERY

Main Idea: Discovering Jesus is a reason to celebrate!

Bible Passage: Matthew 2:11
The wise men didn't just find Jesus, they also gave him gifts! We might not have fancy gifts, but we can give Jesus our love and our trust. We can show our love for Jesus by being kind to others and following what God says in the Bible.

Discussion:
How did the wise men celebrate when they found Jesus?

They celebrated by giving him special gifts like gold, frankincense, and myrrh. It was their way of showing how much they honored and respected Jesus. Just like when we give our friends or family special gifts on their birthdays, the wise men wanted to make Jesus feel really special and important.



What are some ways we can celebrate Jesus?

There are lots of fun and special ways we can celebrate Jesus! We can sing songs about him, make arts and crafts that remind us of Him, and even spend time reading stories from the Bible about Jesus' life. We can also celebrate by being kind to others, helping those in need, and showing love to our family and friends—just like Jesus taught us to do. Celebrating Jesus is all about remembering how much he loves us and sharing that love with others!

Activity Idea: Make a “Giving Jar” for the family. Whenever someone does something kind, write it down and put it in the jar as a gift to Jesus.



DAY 4 – WORSHIP WITH WONDER

Main Idea: Experience the wonder of worshipping Jesus!

Bible Passage: Matthew 2:11

Discussion:
Why do you think the Wise Men worshipped Jesus with gifts?

Each gift, like gold, frankincense, and myrrh, had a special meaning—gold for kingship, frankincense for worship, and myrrh as a symbol of Jesus' future sacrifice. It was their way of saying, “You are a great and wonderful King!”

How can we worship Jesus in our own special way?

We might talk to Him in prayer, sing songs that praise Him, and read stories from the Bible to learn more about Him. Being kind to others, helping those in need, and showing love to our family and friends are also ways of worshipping Jesus. It's like telling Jesus, “You are special to us, and we love you!”

Activity Idea: Have a “Wonderful Worship Night.” Sing songs, pray together, and express your thanks to Jesus.

GOD

WEEK 4 | DECEMBER 21-25

SONG OF THE WEEK:

THE FIRST NOEL

DAY 1: LIGHT OF THE WORLD

Bible Passage: John 9:5
"While I am in the world, I am the light of the world."

Main Idea:
Jesus is the light of the world - making a path and showing the way we should live in obedience to God. As Christians, we are called to live as Jesus lived and be a light just like Him.

Discussion:
What does it mean that Jesus is the light of the world, and how can we be a light like Him?

Jesus being the light of the world means He shows us the way to live in obedience to God, guiding us like a light on a path. As Christians, we're called to live like Jesus, to follow His example and to bring light to others through our actions and kindness.

How does lighting a candle remind us that Jesus is the light of the world?

Lighting a candle can remind us of Jesus because it represents His light shining in our lives. Just like the candle brightens a room, Jesus brightens our hearts and shows us the way to live.

Activity: Light a candle as a reminder that Jesus is the light of the world.



DAY 2: JOY TO THE WORLD

Main Idea: Spreading Christmas cheer brings God's hope & joy to others.

Bible Passage: Luke 2:10

Discussion:

Why do Christians have hope and joy, especially during challenging times?

Christians have hope and joy because we know that our connection with God is eternal and will last forever. No matter what happens on earth, we have the promise of being with God in Heaven, and that brings us great joy.

How can spreading Christmas cheer and surprising a neighbor with a sweet treat bring joy and love?

Spreading Christmas cheer and surprising others with treats is a way to share joy and love, just like God's love for us. It brightens someone's day and shows them the joy of the Christmas season.

Activity: Spread Christmas cheer - bake a sweet treat and surprise a neighbor to spread joy and love!

DAY 3: CHRISTMAS CHEER

Main Idea: Doing things that remind us of Jesus brings joy.

Bible Passage: Philippians 4:4

Discussion:

How can we find joy as Christians, and what are some things that connect us to Jesus?

As Christians, we can find joy in activities that remind us of Jesus, such as listening to worship music, taking breaks to reflect, or engaging in things that bring us closer to God's presence.

How can looking at Christmas lights and listening to worship music bring joy and connect us to Jesus?

Driving around to see Christmas lights and listening to worship music creates a joyful atmosphere. It helps us focus on the beauty of the season and the joy that comes from celebrating the birth of Jesus.

Activity: Drive around looking at Christmas lights, listening to worship music.

DAY 4: SABBATH

Main Idea: Taking time to rest is important, just like Jesus did.

Bible Passage: Hebrews 4:9-11

Discussion:
Why is finding rest important, and how did Jesus set an example for us in finding rest?

Finding rest is important because it allows us to recharge and be in community with God. Jesus, our Savior, took time to rest, setting an example for us to prioritize rest and being in the presence of God.

How can watching a Christmas movie together be a way to enjoy rest and be in the presence of family?

It allows us to spend time with family, enjoy each other's company, and create lasting memories.

Activity: Watch a Christmas movie together and enjoy the rest.



DAY 5: JESUS' BIRTH

Main Idea: Happy Birthday, Jesus!

Bible Passage: Luke 2

Discussion:
Why is Jesus considered an incredible gift?

Jesus came in the form of a baby, He was sent by His Father as a gift to us so that he could save us.

How can we recognize and appreciate the gift of Jesus in our daily lives?

We can learn more about Him by reading stories from the Bible, being kind, and helping others, just like Jesus taught us. When we feel happy, sad, or thankful, we can always tell Jesus because He's always with us just like a forever friend.

A gift doesn't necessarily need to be a material object.

What else can we do or give as a gift that's not a physical gift?

We can give the gift of kindness, love, time, and prayers. Acts of kindness, spending time with someone, and praying for others are valuable gifts that show we care and share God's love.

Activity: Read Luke 2 together as a family and bake Jesus a birthday cake!



SUNNYBROOK
community church

5601 Sunnybrook Drive
Sioux City, Iowa 51106
www.sunnybrookchurch.org