

2021 Family Advent Calendar of Opportunities



WALNUT CREEK PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

2021 Family Advent Calendar of Opportunities

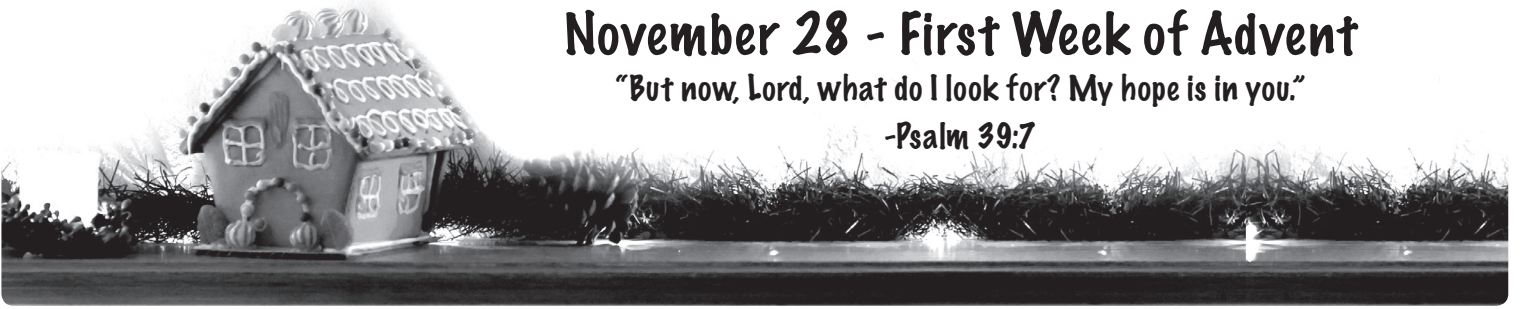
Have you ever picked up one of those fancy, cardboard Advent calendars from the grocery store and wondered what Advent is really all about? It couldn't just be about eating an extra 10 calories of chocolate each day in December, right? Well, for many Christian families, the Advent calendar serves as a tool to help keep their minds on the practice of waiting for the arrival of Jesus. This Family Advent Calendar of Opportunities is intended to provide inspiration for a daily activity that can coincide with the All Church Advent Series Overview, the Memory Verses and activities adapted from the Go! Sunday School Curriculum and service opportunities with our Missions Partners.

Unlike traditional calendars which assign an activity to a specific day counting down the days until Christmas Eve, this Advent Calendar of Activities offers 7 options weekly, underneath a new weekly theme. You can use any activity on any day of the week. Each Friday there is an invitation to attend a special event at the church. Feel free to skip activities that don't work with your schedule, or reuse an activity more than once if your family really enjoys it. We know that the holiday season is already jam-packed. The flexibility of this guide should help inspire you towards waiting and preparing for Christmas, a devotion that can become a natural part of your family rhythm. Use it over breakfast before school, at the dinner table, or around bedtime prayers. The Hymn of the Week can be accessed through our WCPC Spotify channel. Listen and be encouraged as you wash the dishes or commute to work. We hope that these opportunities to prepare for the coming of Christmas will bring your family into the joy of anticipating Jesus!

November 28 - First Week of Advent

"But now, Lord, what do I look for? My hope is in you."

-Psalm 39:7



Advent Prayer

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.

-First Sunday of Advent,
The Book of Common Prayer, 1979

Friendly Friday

Invite a friend to the...



Friday,
December 3
6-7:30 PM



wcpc.church/gingerbread



Advent Activity

You will need:

Pass the CANDY CANE



Scissors



Candy Cane

Cut off the bible verse at the bottom of this page.

Begin the game by passing a candy cane around the table (like hot potato). As the candy cane is being passed, recite the Bible verse together and in unison from the card in the middle.

When the group has finished reading the verse, the person holding the candy cane can keep it.

Next, flip the Bible verse card over so that the verse is no longer visible. Whoever is holding the candy cane recites the verse from memory along with the kids sitting to their left and right. If the kid holding the candy cane successfully recites the verse, they can keep the candy cane. Otherwise, they have to give it back.

Question

Sometimes we just need to remember to wait patiently and hope in the Lord. What can we do to help us remember to have hope in the Lord?



"But now, Lord, what do I look for? My hope is in you."

-Psalm 39:7

Song of the Week

Once in Royal David's City

Once in royal David's city
stood a lowly cattle shed
where a mother laid her baby
in a manger for his bed:
Mary was that mother mild,
Jesus Christ her little child.

He came down to earth from heaven
who is God and Lord of all,
and his shelter was a stable,
and his cradle was a stall:
with the poor, the mean, and lowly,
Lived on earth our Savior holy.

Listen at home



wcpc.church/songs



Family/Small Group Active Prayer Opportunity

Either with a gingerbread person cookie, or using the coloring page below, decorate your cookie while creatively praying for God to provide in each way a person might be in need.

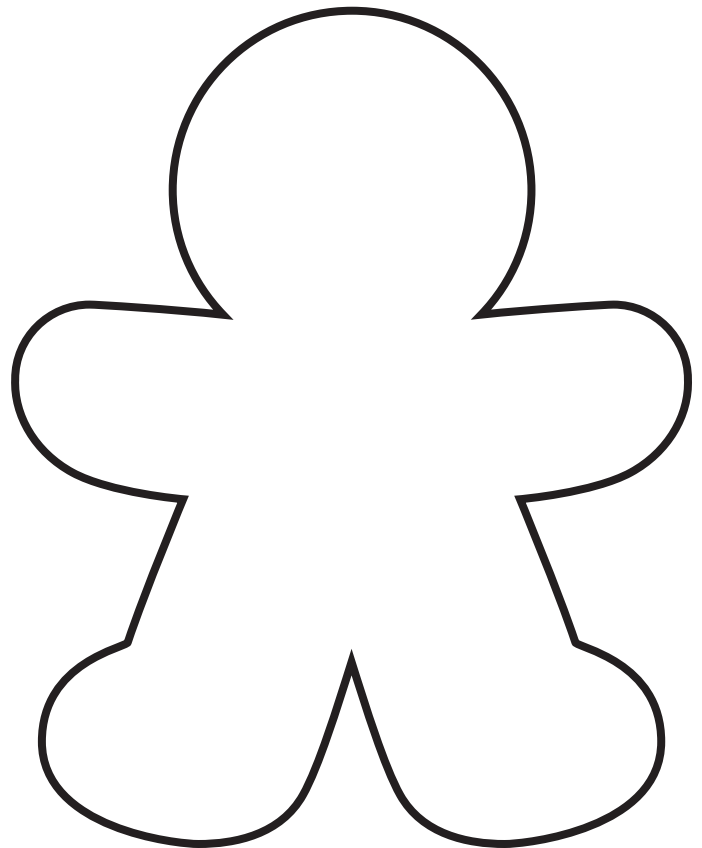
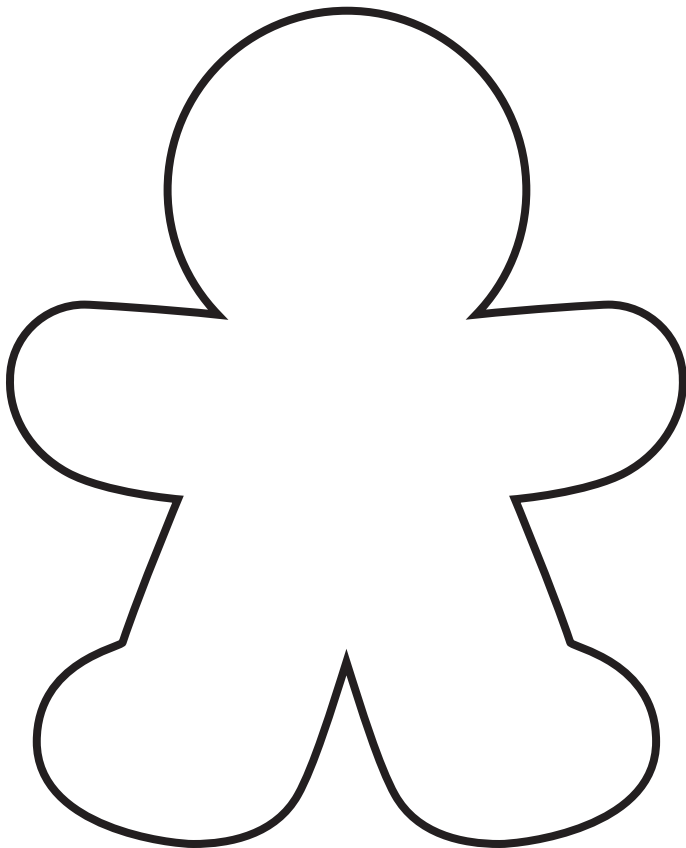
Here are some examples to get you going: While frosting the cookie's body, pray that the people who sleep outdoors this season will have warm coats to keep them dry. While decorating the feet, pray for every child on earth to have a pair of shoes that fit. Let the youngest kids in your group come up with their own prayers while you work together on their cookies or pictures.

Service Opportunities

Donate a food bag to the holiday food drive at the Deacons' Cottage. Pick up a donation bag at church on Sunday, or look up what items are most needed, wcpc.church/cottage

Be a Neighbor

Deliver gingerbread cookies to a person on your street who you don't know very well. Pray for an opportunity to invite this neighbor to church.



December 5 - Second Week of Advent

"Nothing is Impossible with God."

-Luke 1:37



Advent Prayer

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.

-Second Sunday of Advent,
The Book of Common Prayer, 1979

Friendly Friday

Invite a friend to...

*Carols, Candles
AND Cocoa*

Friday,
December 10
6-7 PM



wpc.church/ccc



Advent Activity

THE GREAT *BIBLE SKATE*

You will need:



Scissors



Tape/String



Paper Plates

Cut out the words on the last page of this packet. Use painters tape or string to create a starting line on the floor. Place the cut out words on a carpeted floor about 15 feet (4.5 meters) from the starting line. Give each player a set of paper plates to use as skates.

Have your child(ren) place one paper plate beneath each of their feet.

"Skate" to the words, pick one up and "skate" back to the tape line.

Continue "skating" until each card has been retrieved.

When all of the cards have been retrieved, race to assemble the cards in the order of today's verse: "Nothing is impossible with God."

Once the verse is in the right order, read it together several times until the kids have it memorized. Then, flip the cards over and have your group recite it from memory.

Questions

Is there a challenge you're facing now that seems impossible for you? What is it?

How do you think God might be able to help you through that challenge?

Song of the Week

Come Thou Long Expected Jesus

Come, thou long expected Jesus,
born to set thy people free;
from our fears and sins release us;
let us find our rest in thee.

Israel's strength and consolation,
hope of all the earth thou art,
dear desire of every nation,
joy of every longing heart.

Born thy people to deliver,
born a child and yet a king,
born to reign in us forever,
now thy gracious kingdom bring.

By thine own eternal Spirit,
rule in all our hearts alone;
by thine all-sufficient merit,
raise us to thy glorious throne.

Listen at home



wcpc.church/songs



Family/Small Group Active Prayer Opportunity

Take a blank holiday greeting card (or use the one below) and draw or write inside it a prayer for someone you might not feel comfortable sending a Christmas card to. Some examples might be a neighbor you don't get along with, or a child with whom your son or daughter has had a conflict. In the card, pray for God's goodness to come to that person. You don't need to send the card, but you might want to keep it and return to pray for this person more than once over the Advent season.

Service Opportunities

Donate to the Deacons' Cottage toy drive. The annual Christmas Store provides toys for boys and girls up to twelve years old free of charge through donations from our congregation.

Hand write Christmas cards for the almost 2 dozen foster children who live at the NAOMI House in Arizona.

Be a Neighbor

Send personal greeting cards to the neighbors to your left and right inviting them to join you for an evening of Christmas music and dessert at your home.

Merry
Christmas

December 12 - Third Week of Advent

"I have come into the world as a light, so that no one who believes in me should stay in darkness." -John 12:46



Advent Prayer

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.

-Third Sunday of Advent,
The Book of Common Prayer, 1979

Friendly Friday

Invite a friend to...

*Carols, Candles
AND Cocoa*

Friday,
December 17
6-7 PM



wcpc.church/cc



Advent Activity



You will need:



10 Plastic Cups



Blindfolds

Gather 10 plastic drinking cups.

Work together as a group to stack the cups in the shape of a pyramid.

Turn off the lights and try to build the pyramid again.

Now try it blindfolded!

Read the Bible verse for the week and turn the lights back on. Build the pyramid in the light again, just to see how much easier it is.

Questions

What was it like trying to build the pyramid in the dark?

Can you imagine what the world would be like if it was totally dark like that all the time?

Song of the Week

O Come, O Come Emmanuel

O come, O come Emmanuel
And ransom captive Israel
That mourns in lonely exile here,
until the Son of God appears.

REFRAIN

Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
shall come to thee, O Israel

O come, thou Dayspring, come and cheer
our spirits by thine advent here;
disperse the gloomy clouds of night,
and death's dark shadows put to flight.

REFRAIN

O come, Desire of nations, bind
in one the hearts of all mankind;
bid thou our sad divisions cease,
and be thyself our King of Peace.

REFRAIN

O come, O come, Emmanuel,
and ransom captive Israel,
that mourns in lonely exile here
until the Son of God appear.

REFRAIN

Listen at home



wpcp.church/songs



Family/Small Group Active Prayer Opportunity

Decorate paper bands to wrap around your Christmas Candles. Write a prayer request for peace on each paper band, so that when you light your decorative candles (or the candles on your advent wreath) you can pray for God to answer your prayers to bring light into dark places.

Service Opportunities

Refuge Food Pantry Christmas Carnival -
1187 Meadow Ln, Concord, CA 94520

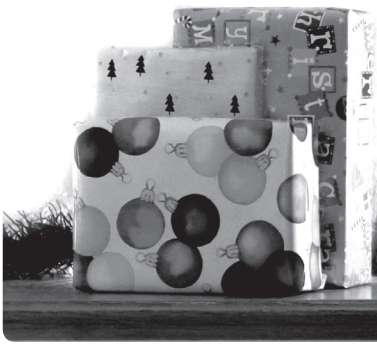
Come with your family and join the Refuge Food Pantry and CARE-a-Van community for a neighborhood Carnival event. There will be food, music, and ornament making.

Be a Neighbor

Bring a holiday scented candle as a gift to one of your neighbors on your block whom you have not met before.

December 19 - Fourth Week of Advent

"...at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue acknowledge that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." -Philippians 2:10-11



Advent Prayer

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.

-First Sunday of Advent, The Book of Common Prayer, 1979

Friendly Friday

Invite a friend to a...

Christmas Eve Service

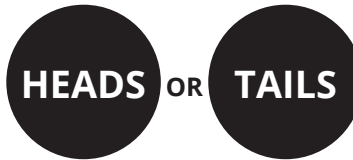
Friday,
December 24
4-5 PM or
6-7 PM



wcpc.church/eve



Advent Activity



You will need:



10 Coins

Divide the coins between your family (dividing evenly isn't necessary).

On the count of 3, everyone flips their coins into the air. When they've landed, mark how many heads and tails you got.

Keep track of the highest number of heads or tails achieved (your high score). For example, one turn, 8 of 10 coins might land on heads.

Flip until the kid's see it's nearly impossible to all get the same side (or until they lose interest). When finished, ask the following questions:

Questions

What do you think the chances are that all the coins could land on the same side? How long do you think it would take to do it?

Jesus fulfills all 48 Old Testament prophecies about the Savior. He fits EXACTLY the description God gave of the Rescuer. What are the chances that Jesus could have done this by accident?

It's nearly impossible that Jesus could have accidentally fulfilled all of the Old Testament prophecies. In fact, there's a much better chance that we could have all flipped our coins to the same side. There's only one explanation for that. Jesus IS the one that God spoke about through the prophets. That means that he is both Lord and Savior.



Christmas Eve Service

You're invited to a

Including

CHRISTMAS: IMPOSSIBLE
an interactive children's play

Christmas Eve Service

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Including

CHRISTMAS: IMPOSSIBLE
an interactive children's play

Song of the Week

Silent Night, Holy Night

Silent night! Holy night!
All is calm, all is bright
'Round yon virgin mother and child
holy infant so tender and mild,
Sleep in heavenly peace,
sleep in heavenly peace.

Silent night! Holy night!
Son of God, Love's pure light
Radiant, beams from Thy Holy face,
with the dawn of redeeming grace,
Jesus, Lord, at Thy birth,
Jesus, Lord, at Thy birth.

Listen at home



wcpc.church/songs



Family/Small Group Active Prayer Opportunity

While wrapping a small gift for someone in your family, draw or write a prayer for that person on the inside of the gift wrap. The recipient might tear through the words while opening their present, but you will have the opportunity to tell them what you have been praying for them.

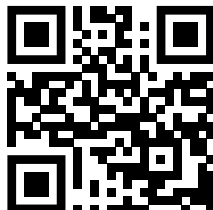
Service Opportunities

Bring a person who is alone for the holidays along with you as your family looks at Christmas lights in your neighborhood. Reach out to the Women's Ministry group at WCPC if you would like to be introduced to a member of our church who lives alone. You can also reach out to Julie Hamiter from InterVarsity Fellowship to be introduced to one of the international students from DVC who will be staying on campus for the holiday season.

12/24

4-5 PM

OR 6-7 PM

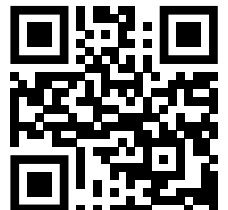


wcpc.church/eve

12/24

4-5 PM

OR 6-7 PM



wcpc.church/eve



WILLIAM

GO

IMPOSSIBLE



IS NOTHING