

VOL. 1 ISSUE 1 · NOVEMBER 2023

HTAC FAMILY MINISTRIES

Holy Trinity Anglican Church – Gleneagle, CO

Advent of a Newsletter

We're on the cusp of the Advent Season. Sounds like a fitting time to send out our first Family Ministries Newsletter, right? Here are a few things you can look forward to with these newsletters:

- We'll start by sending them out quarterly but may increase publication as the ministry grows and progresses.
- We hope to offer something to all the intergenerational layers of the family from little littles to our elder elders.
- Content will include a letter from me to our families, ideas and resources, bits of education, updates and announcements, and opportunities to get to know other members at HTAC.

As we enter this Advent Season, I anticipate God's work within our families and I hope and pray that these newsletters will be at least a small blessing to you and yours.



This issue:

Advent of a Newsletter
PAGE 01

What is Advent?
PAGE 02

Advent in Catechesis
PAGE 03-04

Upcoming Events
PAGE 05

A Musical Advent
PAGE 06

Discipleship At Home -
Ideas for Advent
PAGE 07-09

What is Advent?

by Pastor Jeff

Advent is the first season in the church calendar. We begin every year awaiting with all of creation the birth of the promised Savior. It's when the God of the universe has humbled himself and put on flesh, to become a helpless baby. It is a great mystery. It is the incarnation. It is God with us, Emmanuel.



- *Advent* is from the Latin “Adventus” meaning “coming.”
- The Season of Advent lasts for four Sundays and ends on Christmas Eve.
- It is a time of both anticipating Jesus as the newborn savior and also anticipating his Second Coming when He will judge the living and the dead.
- The liturgical color for Advent is purple or blue. Purple symbolizes Christ’s royalty and our sorrow and repentance of sins. Blue symbolizes preparation.
- It is a time of waiting and preparing our hearts.
- We learn from Mary’s expectancy and John the Baptist who prepared the way for Jesus.
- We also turn inward and pray for the Holy Spirit to examine our hearts and minds and reveal anything in need of repentance.
- It is also a time to remember those in great need. We think on those who like Joseph and Mary, have very little in this life and no place to rest their weary heads.

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Advent in Catechesis

by Laura Laurie

In addition to our Sunday worship gatherings and discipleship at home in the context of families and community groups, the children of Holy Trinity can attend catechesis (during 2nd service). Here's what happens in that time:

Level 1 (Preschool/Kindergarten)

Key posture: Worship as Wonder

Our vision is to create an environment that enables young children to encounter God through His Word. Within the framework of family morning prayer, we watch and listen to God's story unfold. We respond with wondering questions, Scripture, responsive prayer, artwork, and by retelling the story.*

Level 2 (Grades 1-3)

Key posture: Worship as Conversation

Our vision is to create an environment where children learn to articulate their encounter with God in His Word. All conversation enfolds within a brief liturgical framework centered on the reading and memorization of Scripture. Conversation pages help engage learners and leaders through ideas, images, questions, information, and background. By considering Scripture together, we aim to understand how Bible stories inform our lives, shape our worldview, and articulate what it means to be a faithful disciple.**

Allow me to illustrate what this looks like as we approach the season of Advent:

This is the season of Advent, the time we get ready to celebrate the mystery of Christmas, the time we are all on the way to Bethlehem. But who will show us the way? Thus begins our journey on the well-traveled road to Bethlehem, and we will meet different companions along the way.

(Cont'd on Page 04)

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and listen to
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ADVENT IN CATECHESIS CONTINUED...

The **Prophets** are the first to show us the way: Isaiah listened and spoke the word of God. He said one day the Messiah would be born. The Messiah would be like a light shining in darkness (Isaiah 9:2).

Next, the **Holy Family** shows us the way. They have a secret. An angel came to them and said: “Do not be afraid. Be joyful. You will have God’s special Son. You will name him Jesus.”

The **Shepherds** are on their way to Bethlehem too, and they have good news! An angel came to them about “... good news of a great joy that will be for all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord.”

Our last companions, the **Magi**, come from far away. They saw a special star in the sky—a star for a king. They follow the star to Bethlehem, bringing gifts for the newborn king: gold, frankincense, and myrrh.

The road to Bethlehem is dark but these companions help the light the way. Together, we wonder things like the following:

Level 1: What did the way to Bethlehem look and feel like? How did the prophets listen to God? How did the holy family feel on their way to Bethlehem? What will happen when the Shepherds find Jesus? How did the Magi know the star was special that led them to Bethlehem?

Level 2: In the passage... Who God is? What God has done? What may be God asking you to do?

*We use *Young Children and Worship* by Sonja M. Stewart and Jerome W. Berryman

**Our conversation pages are developed by Picture the Bible

The road to
Bethlehem is
dark but these
companions
help light the
way.



Mark Your Calendars

**Want to have local Family Fun?
Here are some ideas!**

Festival of Lights Parade

Tejon St in downtown Co Springs

December 9th @ 5:50pm

Electric Safari at

Cheyenne Mountain Zoo

Most evenings through January 1st

Gingerbread display at

Broadmoor Hotel

through January 1st

Ice Skating in Acacia Park

Daily until January 31st

(closed Dec 24/25)

UPCOMING EVENTS @ HTAC

December

2 – Little Women Society Christmas Tea (3-5pm)

9 – Valor Collective (3-5pm)

17 – Youth Group Christmas Party

24 – Single morning service (9:30am)

Evening Services (4:30pm & 7pm)

25 – Christmas Day Service (10am)

January

13 – Valor Collective (3-5pm)

20 – Little Women Society (3-5pm)

February

10 – Valor Collective (3-5pm)

13 – Pancake Dinner

14 – Ash Wednesday

17 – Little Women Society (3-5pm)

ONGOING OPPORTUNITIES

Children's Catechesis – Every Sunday during
2nd service

Level 1 (Preschool/Kindergarten)

Level 2 (Grades 1–3)

Youth Group

Every Sunday after 2nd service (noon-2pm)

A MUSICAL ADVENT

Dear Families,

Advent is a special time to teach children about both the first coming and the second coming of Jesus. There is so much richness to experience, and some of that can come through the music of Advent. I wanted to pass on to you two hymns that we will be singing every week during this season, because you might like to sing these at home and teach them to your children.

“Come Thou Long Expected Jesus”

Here's a video you can sing along to together:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=USpDPZhtNrU>

“O Come O Come Emmanuel”

Here's a video you can sing along to together:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7xtpJ4Q_Q-4

The music is also included in our Advent Booklet and it is part of the “O Antiphon” Bible activity that was specially written for families to share during Advent. We hope you will sing it together at home!

The beautiful “O Antiphon” art can be enjoyed as ornaments that you can hang! They are printed on stiff paper and you can cut them out, punch a small hole in the top and hang with a ribbon on your tree or garland. Just let Mark Summers know if you would like your own copy of these ornaments to cut out at home.

We also have a Christmas carol booklet that you can print at home — it's a collection of 20 Christmas Carols which we sang at the Hanging of the Greens. This should be available on the church's website soon.

-Terri Moon



Discipleship at Home

by Becca Stone

In addition to our Sunday worship gatherings and catechesis, kids have the opportunity of being discipled every day of the week in the place they spend most of their hours--at home!

What can this look like?

Anything! There is no formula. Reading Scripture together, memorizing a verse as a family, leading evening prayers from The Book of Common Prayer, singing hymns or playing instruments together, or sharing thanksgivings over a meal.

When can this happen?

Anytime! Discipleship can take place at dinner, before bedtime, or on the way to soccer practice or a play rehearsal. When we bring discussions about God into everyday life, we're communicating that God is with us at all times and cares about every aspect of our lives.

What's a good place to start in the Advent season?

First, we've provided a guide that connects to the candles on the Advent wreath that we'll be lighting during the Advent season. Check out this amazing resource from Christy Jansson on Pages 07-08 in this newsletter!

Next, be sure to check out the [Family page](#) from Next Generation Anglican Initiative. In particular, they have a [PDF for Advent](#) that offers songs, readings, prayers, and activities. This resource also utilizes the *Jesus Storybook Bible* which many families already own.

The NGLI offers [ideas for Christmas and Epiphany](#) too.

No matter what, remember all of this is an invitation. You can make it your own as we eagerly await the coming Messiah!



Next
Generation
Anglican
[Family Page](#)

DEAR Families

Thank you for engaging your family in the great liturgical traditions of the Church. Advent is an often-misunderstood part of the Christmas season, so the following are thoughts on the richness of the Advent wreath to deepen your own expression of your faith, and to provide some background if children have questions on each of the elements. Each of the five candles of Advent has a name, a modern theme and a traditional theme. Each candle also has a traditional color: purple, pink or white. I have tried to weave the names and themes together in a story that will become a foundational part of how your family experiences Advent in the years to come.

Advent 1

This first candle represents the Prophets that for thousands of years prior to Jesus' birth, death and resurrection, proclaimed his coming and the hope he would bring to the world. These modern themes of Prophets and Hope marry with the traditional theme of Death to show that the Prophets told of Jesus coming, but also knew that sins could only be covered by Jesus' death. It is through his sacrifice that we find hope. The purple of this candle as well as Advent 2 and 4 symbolizes royalty, repentance, and fasting, which are key to all of what Advent inspires in our hearts.

Advent 2

We move further into the great story of the Bible by focusing on Bethlehem this week. Bethlehem is David's city, and has been at the heart of history since its founding. Even today, we hold in reverence the city where the Man After God's Own Heart was crowned and where Jesus Christ came to earth. The themes of Bethlehem and Love show the adoration so many had for Jesus at his coming, and that His love founds an eternal kingdom. The story also connects with the traditional theme of Judgement, which is overcome by Love that "keeps no record of wrongs."

Advent 3

Oh, if only we could have been a Shepherd in that field receiving the news that Israel had waited thousands of years to receive! The Shepherds candle celebrates the theme of Joy in a glorious pink. In liturgical tradition, pink is a symbol of rejoicing, which is why this candle differs from the purple of the other weeks. The traditional theme of Heaven points us to look above our work in the fields (or the home and worksite) and up into the glory of God.

Advent 4

Angels can be terrifying beings. They often start their appearances with "Do not be afraid!" But the Angel candle celebrates not what they look like, but their message, which is Peace. There is no better expression of the theme of Peace than "Glory to God in highest heaven, and peace on earth to those with whom God is pleased." Luke 2:14, ESV The traditional theme is Hell, which is a challenge to think about when the radio is playing "Jingle Bells." It may seem grim, but how can we celebrate Christ's power without also contemplating what He came to overpower? Christ came to vanquish death and hell, and that is peace for our souls.

Christmas Eve

Our wait is over! Tonight we light the Christ candle, celebrating that the King has come. There is no better theme than that. This large, white candle is at the center of our journey toward Christ through the season of Christmas. It symbolizes purity, light and victory – all that Christ is and that we never could be. Praise Him!

About Advent Candles

This resource came about from my love for my own family. I searched for a simple tool that could help me explain to my young children the joys and deep meaning of Advent. In the end, I realized the church needed an original resource. I pray that my work will bring your family Hope, Love, Joy and Peace as you wait for Christmas.

Christy Janssen

November 26, 2023

I am indebted to Rev. Fleming Rutledge's *Advent* for sparking creativity and deepening my understanding of the Advent season, and to Holy Trinity Anglican Church, whose annual celebrations of Advent formed my vision for this work.



ADVENT *Candles*



Before we honor when Jesus came
Are four Sundays with a special name.

In *Advent*, we start the church's new year
By eagerly waiting for Christ to appear.

The four candles with their golden beams
Share Bible stories and beautiful themes.

The Advent candles light the way
To move toward Jesus each Sunday.

God sent His *Prophets* to tell the story
That Jesus would come to show God's glory.

Advent 1

The prophets waited for the world made right;
Their *Hope* was fulfilled on that cold, dark night.

Bethlehem was the place on earth
Where our King Jesus had his birth.

Advent 2

In His kingdom of *Love*, Christ Jesus will reign
Over lands and people who call on His name.

The *Shepherds* in fields were the first to know
When skies like a candle began to glow.

Advent 3

It was *Joy* they heard instead of danger;
The Greatest Shepherd was in the manger!

"Be not afraid," the *Angels* said
When filling the sky overhead.

Advent 4

With their candle, we proclaim *Peace*
because through Jesus, death will cease.

On Christmas Eve, our wait is past.
Jesus has come, at last! At last!

Christmas Eve

Through candles purple, pink, and white;
We start Christmas with this, *Christ's light*.