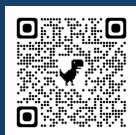


Countdown to Christmas with an

ADVENT CALENDAR

An Advent calendar is a way to count the days until Jesus' birth on Christmas. Often on each day you open a window and there is a little chocolate, here are some other Advent calendars that don't have chocolate, but have other ways to explore the season. Which one did you pick to share with your family?

Go to columba.org/Adventathome to get all the links or use this QR code:



1. Follow @stcolumbas.dc on instagram to see where Mary on the Mantel will be each day in the church and what act of kindness she suggests you do! Starts on November 29 when Ms. Katie reads the story of Mary on the Mantel.
2. Reverse Advent Calendar: collect a non-perishable food item in a box each day. On Sunday bring it to church to share with the Samaritan Ministry food collection in the back of the Nave or in the Great Hall or save it during Advent and take it to your favorite food pantry after Christmas.
3. Outdoor Advent Calendar: Offers 29 days of easy outdoor activities. It's not filled with prayers, but doing these activities will help your family have a few moments of Sabbath each day together.
4. Pray in Color: do you like to doodle and color? This Advent calendar offers you a space each day to pray for someone or something.
5. Advent Word: this calendar offers you a word each day of Advent. Your family can talk about its meaning and how it relates to your journey through Advent.



ADVENT AND CHRISTMAS AT ST. COLUMBA'S

November 26 10:15am-12pm

Advent Workshop - come make an Advent Wreath and do some Advent crafts.

December 3 10:05am

First Sunday in Advent

Happy Church New Year Party in the Common
Celebrate the start of the new liturgical year with a sparkling cider toast and countdown!
Columba Crew, Quest, Basecamp, and Summit meet as usual

December 10

Second Sunday in Advent

Columba Crew, Quest, Basecamp, and Summit meet as usual

December 17 10:15am - 11am

Third Sunday in Advent

Prepare the Way Sunday

All parishioners are invited to help with Christmas preparations, to attend the forum or Holy Household, drink cider and sing carols.
No Children or Youth Formation today.

December 24

Fourth Sunday in Advent and Christmas Eve

All services are in the church.

9am - Advent IV Eucharist service

11am - Christmas Pageant

4pm - Christmas Pageant with the Eucharist

Come dressed as a shepherd, angel or animal to worship the baby Jesus.

6pm; 8pm; and 10:30pm Christmas Eucharist

December 25 12pm

Christmas Day

Festival Christmas Eucharist in the Church



St. Columba's Episcopal Church

ADVENT

PREPARE THE WAY

2023

ST. COLUMBA'S CHURCH

WHAT IS ADVENT?

Advent means "coming" and during these first weeks of the new church year we await the coming of Christ. Advent is a time of preparation and anticipation. We prepare for Jesus by making room in our hearts. The season of Advent comes at the darkest time of the year so we light candles on our Advent wreaths as a reminder that Jesus was born to be a light to all people. Jesus, the light of the world, helps us find our way even in the dark. God loves us so much; God gave us the perfect gift, the Christ child.

Let this be your family's guide to preparing yourselves and your home for the birth of Jesus!

THE LITURGICAL CALENDAR

The Episcopal Church follows a calendar that is different than the one we use to mark days and months. It is called the liturgical calendar and it sets out all the special feast days for the year. The first day of the year is the First Sunday in Advent. After the season of Advent, there is Christmas, Epiphany, Lent, Easter and Pentecost. Pentecost lasts from the Day of Pentecost until the first Sunday in Advent. It is also called Ordinary time. The seasons of the liturgical year mark the important milestones in Jesus' life from his birth, his ministry, his death and resurrection and the gift of the Holy Spirit. During Ordinary time, we don't celebrate special events in Jesus' life, but we continue to worship, learn and live God's love in the world.

THE ADVENT WREATH

We use the Advent wreath as a symbol of the coming of Christ. It is a circle that has no beginning and no end, like God. The candles represent the light of Christ and each week we light an additional candle to show us we are getting closer to the birth of Jesus. There are five candles in an Advent wreath — one for each Sunday in Advent and one for the Feast of the Nativity (Christmas). The candles for the Sundays in Advent are purple (for royalty) or blue (for hope and expectation), as we wait in hope for the coming of the King. The candle for the third Sunday (Rose Sunday) is usually pink. It signifies a "lighter" day as Christ is coming soon!

The candle in the center is white to celebrate the Feast of the Nativity, Jesus' birth. Evergreens decorate the wreath, symbolizing everlasting life.

Prayers for Lighting the Advent Wreath

Week One: God of hope, be with us this Advent season and help us to slow down, be quiet and prepare for the coming of Christ. You created light and gave us the light of the world, Jesus. As we light this candle, keep us mindful of the light of Christ in each person and help us to be a light to others. Amen

Week Two: God of peace, this Advent season help us to watch and wait for the coming of the Christ child. Open our eyes that we may see, open our ears that we may hear and open our hands that we may serve, but most of all open our hearts to receive your love and to know when Jesus is with us. Amen

Week Three: God of joy, you sent messengers to tell us of the coming of the Messiah. Help us to be messengers to the world about the light of Christ. Amen

Week Four: God of love, Giver of all gifts, prepare us for the greatest gift. Help us to welcome Jesus into our hearts, celebrate our love and be at peace in your light. Amen

FIVE WAYS TO PREPARE FOR THE BIRTH OF JESUS AT HOME

Slow Down, Quiet! It's Advent. The outside world draws us to busy-ness, but spiritually, Advent is a time of reflection and waiting.

How will your family make time to be together, to reflect on the season of Advent and to practice your faith at home? Here are 5 suggestions for traditions that help you reflect, anticipate and connect at home during Advent.

1 Light the Advent wreath candles each night at dinner (see the prayers in this brochure). Pray for hope, peace, joy, and love in the world.

2 Make a "to-don't" list. What events and activities keep you busy but draw you away from what is most important to you during this season? Can you say no to some things so you are free to say yes to other things? Pray for connection in your relationships.

3 String popcorn and cranberries and decorate the trees in your yard for the birds. Pray for God's creation.

4 Read Christmas picture books aloud together. Pick a story that you enjoyed as a child or choose something new. Pray for children around the world to be loved and cared for.

5 Create your own "Journey to Bethlehem" in your home. Get a crèche set, if you don't have one already, and put the stable in a special and central location in your home. Have Mary and Joseph move from room to room as they travel to the stable, to remember the journey they made to Bethlehem. As Christmas Eve gets closer, Mary and Joseph should come nearer to the stable. They should arrive there on Christmas Eve, along with angels and shepherds. Baby Jesus appears on Christmas Day and the three wise men arrive 12 days later, on January 6, the Day of Epiphany.