



FAMILY ADVENT DEVOTIONAL

THE LIGHT HAS COME



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DECEMBER 1

God sees what we cannot

Activity (OPTIONAL)

Everyone has 30 seconds to find one object in the house they think best represents the word 'trust'. Bring them back to the table and tell us about your choice!

Scripture

Matthew 1:18–25

Read

Joseph had a good life lined up. He was a carpenter, he worked hard, and he was engaged to a lovely young woman named Mary. The future looked clear and settled.

Then everything changed.

Mary told him she was going to have a baby — a baby that was not his son, but God's Son. Joseph must have felt confused, hurt and completely lost. In those days, this was a big deal. He could have walked away, and no one would have blamed him.



But then an angel spoke to him in a dream. The angel told Joseph not to be afraid — that Mary’s baby was from God, and that Joseph had an important role to play in caring for them both.

Joseph woke up and did exactly what the angel said. No arguments. No long list of questions. He just trusted God and got on with it.

The Bible doesn’t record a single word Joseph ever said. But his quiet, steady faithfulness changed everything. He said “Yes” to God before he could see how it would all work out.

We must do the same — we must trust God even when we can’t see everything that’s ahead.

Share

- Has someone ever trusted you to do something really important? How did that feel?
- What is one thing you can trust God with today?

Pray

Dear God, thank you for Joseph’s quiet and faithful example. When we feel confused or unsure about what’s ahead, help us to trust you just like Joseph did. Amen.

DECEMBER 2

God is worthy of our “Yes”

Activity *(OPTIONAL)*

Go around the group and take turns finishing this sentence: “Even if it was really difficult, I would say ‘Yes’ to...” See what funny or surprising answers come up.

Scripture

Luke 1:26–38

Read

Mary was a young woman — probably a teenager — living in a small town called Nazareth. She was engaged to a man named Joseph and was getting on with her ordinary life, making plans for her future.



That was until an angel appeared right in front of her and told her she was going to have a baby — and that baby would not come from a man, but would be the Son of God. Can you imagine how shocked she must have felt? In those days, having a baby before you were married was a very big deal. People would talk. Her engagement to Joseph might fall apart. Her whole future — everything she had planned — was suddenly uncertain.

Mary had lots of questions. She was probably scared, too. But even in the midst of all this, Mary said “Yes”. She said, *“I am the Lord’s servant! Let it happen as you have said”* (Luke 1:38, CEV).

Mary could say “Yes” because she was God’s servant and he was her everything. She knew that any plan she could come up with would never be as good as God’s plan; even if it looked wildly different to what she had dreamed of.

God’s plan is always worth saying “Yes” to, because he can see the big picture. So, even if God’s plan seems completely crazy, we can trust he knows what’s best for us, and he is worthy of our “Yes”.



Share

- Can you think of a time when you did something scary, but it turned out okay?
- Is there something God might be asking your family to say “Yes” to right now?

Pray

Dear God, thank you for Mary’s example of trusting and being a faithful servant. Help us to be brave and say “Yes” to you, knowing we can trust your good plans for our lives. Amen.

DECEMBER 3

Everyone is important to God

Activity (OPTIONAL)

Play a round of ‘*What’s different?*’ One person leaves the room and changes three things about their appearance. Everyone else has to spot what’s changed when they come back.

Scripture

Luke 2:8-20

Read

In Bible times, shepherds had a tough job. They spent long nights out in the fields, in the cold and dark, watching over their sheep. Being a shepherd was dirty difficult work. In fact, shepherds were considered some of the lowest people in society — the kind of people others looked down on.

So, imagine the shepherds’ shock when the night sky suddenly exploded with light and an angel appeared right in front of them! The Bible says they were terrified. And honestly, who could blame them?



But the angel said something amazing: “*Don’t be afraid! I have good news for you, [news] that will make everyone happy*” (Luke 2:10, CEV). The Saviour of the world had been born, and God had chosen to tell the shepherds first. Not the kings. Not the religious leaders. The shepherds.

That’s the kind of God we have. He doesn’t just show up for the important or powerful people. He shows up for ordinary people, in ordinary places, going about their ordinary lives. This Christmas let us be reminded that **everyone** is important to God!

Share

- How does it make you feel that God notices all people, not just ‘important’ people?
- What is one way you can make someone feel special this Christmas?

Pray

Dear God, thank you that you don’t just show up for the people this world thinks are important — you show up for everyone. Help us to keep our eyes open and notice you at work in our everyday lives. Amen.

DECEMBER 4

Trust God to lead

Activity (OPTIONAL)

Head outside after dark and spend a few minutes looking at the stars together. See if you can spot some pictures in the stars or the brightest one in the sky. Talk about what it must have been like for the wise men seeing the star over Bethlehem.

Scriptures

Matthew 2:1–10; John 8:12

Read

Have you ever been outside on a very clear, dark night and looked up at the stars? It's an incredible sight. When Jesus was born, there were no streetlights or glowing cities to wash out the night sky — the stars would have blazed brilliantly in the darkness. But even that star-filled sky had a standout — one star so bright and unmistakable that wise men hundreds of kilometres away stopped everything to follow it.



This wasn't unusual for God. Throughout the Bible, we see him speaking through unexpected things and revealing himself in surprising ways. When the wise men saw the star, they knew immediately they had to follow it to find God's promised Saviour. And they trusted that the God who made that star would be faithful enough to guide them all the way to Jesus.

That same God still wants to lead us. Maybe not through a star in the sky, but through the quiet moments, the unexpected conversations, and the gentle nudges that remind us he is near. He led the wise men all the way to Jesus — and he will lead us, too.

Share

- What do you think God has been saying to you recently?
- Where could you allow God to lead you this Christmas season?



Pray

Dear God, thank you for being faithful to lead us in your ways. Please open our eyes to see where you are leading us, and our ears to hear you speak. Help us to trust your plan for our lives. Amen.

DECEMBER 5

The wise men's journey

Activity (OPTIONAL)

Hide a small object somewhere in the house. Give the family a series of clues to follow until they find it. Talk about what it felt like to keep going even when you weren't sure where the clues were leading.

Scripture

Matthew 2:1–12

Read

The wise men were experts in astronomy — highly educated men who studied the stars. When they spotted an unusual star in the sky, they knew it was pointing to the birth of the King of the Jews. So, they packed up and followed it.

This was no short trip. Most historians believe the wise men travelled hundreds of kilometres. It likely took them months — maybe even years. They left behind their homes, their comfort, and their normal lives to follow a star towards a king they had never met.



And when they finally found Jesus, they bowed down and worshipped him. They gave him precious gifts — gold, frankincense and myrrh. Gifts fit for a king.

The wise men hadn't known exactly where they were going or how long it would take. But they kept going anyway. They decided that finding Jesus was worth the cost.

Following Jesus today might not mean travelling thousands of kilometres or chasing stars across the sky. But it does mean making choices every day to put him first — even when it's inconvenient, even when it's costly, even when others don't understand.

Like the wise men, we can trust that Jesus is always worth it.

Share

- What is something you have worked really hard for or waited a long time to get? Was it worth it?
- What is one way you and your family could put Jesus first this Christmas, even if you have to give up something?



Pray

Dear God, thank you for the example of the wise men who gave everything to find Jesus. Help us to follow you wholeheartedly, knowing that you are always worth it. Amen.

DECEMBER 6

Gold, frankincense and myrrh — three gifts that tell a big story

Activity (OPTIONAL)

Ask everyone to think of three gifts they would give to the most important person in the world if they had all the money in the world to spend on them. Share your answers and talk about why you chose those three gifts.

Scripture

Matthew 2:1–12

Read

When the wise men finally found Jesus, they brought three very specific gifts — gold, frankincense and myrrh. These might seem like strange things to give a baby! But each gift was telling a story about who Jesus was and why he had come.

Gold is a gift for a king. By bringing gold, the wise men were saying that even though this child was born in a humble manger, he was royalty. A king! And not just any king, he is the King of kings!



Frankincense was a sweet-smelling incense burned in the temple when people worshipped God. It was a gift for someone who connects people to God. By bringing frankincense, the wise men were saying that this child will be our way into perfect relationship with God.

Myrrh was used to prepare bodies for burial. It was a gift that pointed to death. Even on the night of his birth, this gift quietly showed what Jesus had come to do — to give his life, so that we might live.

So, we see three gifts that show three truths about one extraordinary child. Everything the world had been waiting for was lying in a manger in Bethlehem.

Share

- Which of the three gifts do you find most surprising or interesting, and why?
- If you were going to give Jesus a gift, what would it be?



Pray

Dear God, thank you for the gift of your Son, Jesus. This Christmas, help us remember the big story of Jesus and how he is the best gift of all. Amen.

DECEMBER 7

The shepherds spread Good News

Activity (OPTIONAL)

Using craft supplies, make and decorate Christmas cards as a family. Inside your card, show the Good News about Jesus being born, using words or drawings.

Scriptures

Luke 2:8-20; Mark 16:15

Read

Have you ever been so excited about something that you couldn't keep quiet? Maybe it was when you got a new toy or when you were picked for something special?

That's how the shepherds in the Christmas story felt. When they found out Jesus was born, they couldn't keep it to themselves. This was the best news ever — Jesus, the Saviour of the world, was born! They praised God and told everyone the Good News about Jesus.



This Christmas, let's be like the shepherds. They saw God's goodness and couldn't stay quiet. We can do the same by telling everyone about Jesus, and praising God for his goodness in our lives. He is worthy of all our praise and honour!

Share

- What is one thing in your life you can praise God for?
- Who is one person you could share the Good News of Jesus with this Christmas?

Pray

Thank you, God, for being so good to us. Help us to be full of excitement like the shepherds and share the Good News of Jesus. You are worthy of all our praise and honour. Amen.

DECEMBER 8

God is with us

Activity (OPTIONAL)

Play ‘*Human Knot*’. Stand in a circle, reach across the circle and take hold of two different people’s hands to form a knot. Then work together to untangle back into a circle, without letting go of each other’s hands.

Scriptures

Matthew 1:23; Joshua 1:9

Read

Have you ever felt alone?

In the Bible, Jesus has many names. One of those names is “*Immanuel*”, which means “*God with us*” (Matthew 1:23, ERV).

When Jesus came to Earth, he showed us something important. God didn’t want to be far away from us. Instead, he wants to be close to us! He wants to be our friend.

Several small, golden, five-pointed stars are scattered in the top right corner of the page.

Sometimes life can feel lonely. But the good news is, Jesus is our friend and is always with us. He loves us, cares about us, and wants to be friends with us. And unlike our other friends that may come and go, he will be with us forever. He is by our side and will never let us go. Jesus is “God with us”.

Share

- How does it feel to know that Jesus is always with you?
- Where might you notice Jesus with you this week?

Pray

Dear Jesus, thank you for being our greatest friend. In the moments we feel alone, remind us that you are always with us. Amen.

DECEMBER 9

“Wonderful Counselor”

Activity (OPTIONAL)

Play a few rounds of ‘*Balderdash*’. Grab a dictionary or search ‘unusual English words’ on your phone to find a word you think no one would know the meaning of. One person reads the word aloud and everyone else writes a made-up definition. See whose made up definition is most convincing. Talk about how difficult it can be to know what’s true and how grateful we are to have God’s wisdom to guide us.

Scriptures

Isaiah 9:6; James 1:5

Read

Can you remember the hardest problem you have ever had to solve? Did you feel lost? Not knowing what to do?

We all need guidance sometimes. We turn to parents, friends, teachers — anyone who might help. But even the wisest people we know don’t have all the answers.



Hundreds of years before Jesus was born, the prophet Isaiah said a child would come whose name would be “*Wonderful Counselor*” (Isaiah 9:6, ERV). A counsellor is someone who listens carefully and helps us find the right way forward. But Jesus isn’t just a good counsellor — he is a *wonderful* one. The “Wonderful Counselor”!

That name wasn’t chosen by accident. It tells us something important about who Jesus is and how he relates to us. He knows everything about us — every worry, every question, every fear, every difficult thing we face — and he is always ready to listen.

The Bible promises that if we need wisdom, we should ask God — and he will give it generously (James 1:5). Because of Jesus we don’t have to figure life out alone – he will help us.

Share

- Who do you usually turn to when you need advice?
- Is there something you or your family could bring to God in prayer this Christmas, asking for his wisdom?



Pray

Dear Jesus, thank you that you are a “Wonderful Counselor”, that you know us completely and are always ready to listen. Help us to turn to you first when we need guidance. Amen.

DECEMBER 10

God shows up in unexpected places

Activity *(OPTIONAL)*

See who can build the best manger scene using whatever you can find around the house — cushions, toys, boxes – anything goes. Take a photo of your creation when you're done.

Scripture

Luke 2:1-7

Read

Where would you expect a king to be born? You would probably expect him to be born in a palace or very special hospital. But that's not how Jesus arrived.

Jesus — the Son of God, the King of all kings — was born into a mess. His first bed was a manger — a feeding box for animals. It would have been smelly, dirty and uncomfortable. Hardly the kind of place you would expect to find the Saviour of the world.



But here's what this tells us about God: he loves to show up in unexpected places. In the ordinary, the messy and the humble corners of our lives. In a difficult conversation, a quiet moment, or a hard day at school. God is not limited to the places we think he should be in.

If God could show up in a smelly stable, he can show up anywhere. Even in the middle of our ordinary day, right where we are.

Share

- Where is the most unexpected place you have ever felt close to God?
- What unexpected ways might God show up this Christmas?

Pray

Dear God, thank you that you are not limited to impressive or important places. Thank you for showing up in the messy and unexpected moments of our lives. Help us to keep our eyes open for you every single day. Amen.

DECEMBER 11

Jesus came to serve

Activity (OPTIONAL)

Prepare a simple snack or sweet treat using what you already have at home and share it with your family.

Scriptures

Mark 10:43-45; 1 Peter 4:10

Read

Christmas is a time of the year when we can show love to our community in many different ways. Some show love through their words. Others show love through their actions.

The Bible tells us that Jesus showed love and kindness by serving others. He did this by helping people, caring for them, and hanging out with those who felt left out. In fact, Jesus showed the greatest act of service by dying on the cross for our sins so we could have everlasting life.

Because Jesus served us, we can follow his example and serve others. Even the smallest act of kindness to someone in our world can make them feel special and loved this Christmas!



Share

- What is one kind thing someone has done for you recently?
- How can you serve your local community this Christmas?

Pray

Dear God, we are so grateful that you sent Jesus to Earth to serve us. Help us to also love others through our acts of kindness and service. In Jesus' name, Amen.

DECEMBER 12

Jesus truly satisfies

Activity (OPTIONAL)

Do a blind taste test! Prepare a few different foods and see if everyone can guess what they are with their eyes closed. Talk about how we are always searching for something that satisfies — and how Jesus is the only one who truly does.

Scriptures

John 6:35; Matthew 4:4

Read

Christmas time is full of delicious food, isn't it? Turkey, ham, roast meats, seafood, gingerbread, pavlova, Panettone... there is so much to enjoy! But have you ever noticed that no matter how many times you say, "I couldn't eat another thing", somehow you always end up going back for more?

Food is wonderful, but it only satisfies us for a little while.

One day, a huge crowd of people followed Jesus because they wanted more miracles. Jesus looked at them and said something surprising: *“I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never be hungry again.”* (John 6:35a, NLT).

Jesus wasn't talking about actual bread. He was saying that he is the one thing that truly satisfies. We all have a longing for meaning, for love, for belonging — and nothing in this world can fully fill that gap. Not food, not presents, not popularity. Only Jesus can truly satisfy what we're looking for.

This Christmas, as you enjoy all the wonderful food and celebrations, remember that the greatest satisfaction comes not from what's on the table — but from knowing Jesus.

Share

- What are some things people try to fill their lives with to feel happy or satisfied?
- What is one thing your family values most at Christmas that money can't buy?



Pray

Dear Jesus, thank you that you are the bread of life and you satisfy our deepest needs. Help us to turn to you first when we are looking for meaning, love and belonging. Amen.

DECEMBER 13

God keeps his promises

Activity

Share a situation when you had to wait a really long time for something. Share with each other how it felt and what you did while you waited.

Scripture

Luke 2:25-32

Read

There was a man in Jerusalem named Simeon. The Bible describes him as a good and faithful man who had been waiting his whole life for the promised Messiah, the one God had said would come and rescue his people.

We don't know how old Simeon was, but we know he had been waiting a long time. Long enough that God had made him a personal promise — that he would not die before he had seen the Messiah with his own eyes. Can you imagine carrying that promise through years of waiting, wondering, hoping?



Waiting is one of the hardest things. Especially when we are waiting for something that really matters. Christmas can make that kind of waiting feel even harder, especially when everyone around us seems to be celebrating while we are still holding on.

But Simeon kept waiting. And one day, a young couple walked into the temple carrying a baby, and everything Simeon had been holding onto was suddenly right in front of him! He took Jesus in his arms and said: *“Lord, I am your servant, and now I can die in peace, because you have kept your promise to me. With my own eyes I have seen what you have done to save your people”* (Luke 2:29-30, CEV).

God did not forget Simeon. And he will not forget you either.

Share

- How do you usually respond when things take longer than you expected?
- How can you have hope while you wait for something this Christmas?



Pray

Dear Jesus, thank you for being faithful to do all that you say you will do. When things we are praying for are taking longer than expected, please help us to be patient and remind us that you always keep your promises. Amen.

DECEMBER 14

A different kind of peace

Activity (OPTIONAL)

Do a family freeze challenge — put on some Christmas music and when it stops, everyone freezes. Talk about what it feels like to find a moment of stillness in the middle of all the noise.

Scriptures

John 14:27; Isaiah 9:6

Read

Think about the night Jesus was born. A sky full of angels, blazing with light, praising God at the top of their voices – it was anything but quiet! And yet the message the angels were proclaiming was peace. There is something pretty amazing about that. The announcement of peace to the world was loud, big and definitely not ‘peaceful’.



That's because the peace Jesus brought was never about silence. The world didn't stop being difficult the night he arrived in Bethlehem — there have still been wars, sickness and problems. The birth of Jesus reminded the world that people could find peace with God — a peace that had nothing to do with their circumstances. Something far deeper than 'quiet'. Something that could hold firm even in the middle of the hardest moments.

Just before he died, Jesus told his friends: *"I give you peace, the kind of peace only I can give. It isn't like the peace this world can give."* (John 14:27a, CEV).

The world's peace depends on everything going right – on people behaving well, life cooperating, and everything going to plan. The peace Jesus offers is different. It is a deep knowing that we are loved and held by the Almighty King.



Share

- Can you think of a time when life was crazy but you still felt peaceful on the inside?
- Is there something your family could bring to God in prayer, trusting him with it and asking for his peace?

Pray

Dear Jesus, thank you that when you came into the world you brought a different kind of peace. Help us to rest in your peace in every circumstance we go through, knowing that you love us and that you will never let us go. Amen.

DECEMBER 15

The power of encouragement

Activity (OPTIONAL)

Find some craft supplies you have at home, like paper, pencils, markers and stickers. Using those supplies, make a Christmas card, and write or draw something encouraging inside it.

Once you are finished, give your card to a friend or family member or neighbour, to encourage them!

Scriptures *Luke 2:8-20; 1 Thessalonians 5:11*

Read

Sometimes our words can be mean and hurt people. Other times, they can be kind and encouraging. But did you know that the words we say about others actually matter?

In the Bible, we learn that our words should build others up, not tear them down. The shepherds in the Christmas story understood this. When they arrived at the stable where Jesus was born, they used their words to share the Good News, that Jesus is the Son of God who will save the world from sin.

When everyone heard this, they felt encouraged! The shepherds could have complained about the smelly animals or how squishy and hot the stable felt. But instead, they used their words to bring joy! In fact, Mary was so encouraged that she treasured those words in her heart!

This Christmas, let's take the time to encourage someone who may be feeling down. Just like the shepherds, our words have the power to bring joy, kindness and love!

Share

- How does it feel to be encouraged by someone?
- What is one way you can encourage someone this Christmas?



Pray

Thank you, God, for bringing joy and encouragement into the world through your Son, Jesus. Help us to use our words to build others up and encourage those who may be feeling down. In Jesus' name, Amen.

DECEMBER 16

Jesus is the Light of the World

Activity (OPTIONAL)

Turn off all the lights and play a game of hide and seek with a torch or go for a walk around the streets and look at the Christmas lights in your area.

Scriptures

John 8:12; Isaiah 9:2

Read

Have you ever been in a place where you weren't quite sure which way to go? Maybe it was dark, unfamiliar or confusing. But when a light came on, or someone showed you the way, everything became clearer.

Before Jesus came, the Bible describes people as living in darkness – not physically, but spiritually. They were lost, confused, and far from God.



Then Jesus arrived on the scene and made an extraordinary announcement: *“I am the light of the world. If you follow me, you won’t have to walk in darkness, because you will have the light that leads to life”* (John 8:12, NLT).

Jesus didn’t just bring a little flicker of light; he brought a light that nothing and no one can put out. Not sadness, fear, or even death. The darkness simply cannot win against him.

And here’s the amazing part — when we follow Jesus, we carry that light with us, too. Wherever we go, into our homes, our schools, our neighbourhoods and our friendships, we bring his light with us.

This Christmas, as we light candles and hang fairy lights, let’s remember who they point to — Jesus, the light that the darkness can never, ever put out.

Share

- Where do you think the world needs the light of Jesus the most right now?
- How can you show Jesus to others this Christmas?



Pray

Dear Jesus, thank you that you are the light of the world and that your light can never be put out. Help us to follow you closely and carry your light with us wherever we go. Amen.

DECEMBER 17

The Good Shepherd – No one gets left behind

Activity (OPTIONAL)

Play the game ‘*Simon Says*’. One person gives commands, such as: “Simon says, touch your toes”. Only do the action if they say, “Simon says...” first. If they give a command without saying “Simon says” and you do it, you’re out. The last person still in the game, wins!

Scriptures *John 10:1-4 & 14-16; Matthew 18:12-14*

Read

Can you think of a time when you were left out of something or left out by someone? If so, you can probably still remember the horrible feeling that went along with that experience. Being left out usually raises questions about our self-worth and where we fit in. It can make us wonder whether someone cares about us or really knows us.



In the Bible, Jesus describes himself as the “*Good Shepherd*” and us as his “*sheep*” (John 10:2-3, 14). Jesus tells a story about leaving 99 sheep in a field to go and find one lost sheep (Matthew 18:12-14). Now, that might seem strange to leave something as important as his whole flock, just to find one lost sheep.

But that is what Jesus does. He goes after the one lost sheep, and he will always come looking for us. Because every person is important to God. No one gets left behind when Jesus is our Shepherd.

Share

- Who can you try to include this Christmas season?
- What could your family do to make someone feel seen and valued this Christmas?

Pray

Dear God, thank you for being our Good Shepherd. Help us to include people who may feel left out, and open our eyes to those who need your love in this Christmas season. Amen.

DECEMBER 18

God can work in the small things

Activity (OPTIONAL)

Find anything you have at home that is small and can be used for building. Examples can include Lego blocks, cups and books.

Together, build something big from those small pieces you have all collected.

Once everyone has finished building, count how many pieces were needed to make your big build.

Scriptures *Luke 1:26-38; 1 Corinthians 1:26-30*

Read

Mary was an ordinary girl. She wasn't rich or important, and in those days, girls were often overlooked. Despite that, God chose her to do something very special – to be the mother of Jesus, the Saviour of the world!



Why would God choose someone like Mary, who might have seemed unimportant, to do something so big? Because God often works through people and moments that seem so small and ordinary. He chooses people who might not seem like much to the world to work out his plan. And through Mary – who had a heart to serve him – God did something extraordinary!

In the same way, our lives don't have to look perfect for God to use us. It doesn't matter if we don't have a perfect family or lots of money or stuff. Because when we trust God the way Mary did in the Christmas story, he can use what we already have and do something big in and through our lives!

Share

- Can you think of something small that helped you in a big way?
- What is one small thing you can give to God this week?



Pray

Dear Lord, thank you for working in all things, big and small. Like Mary, help us to trust you with the small things you have given us and use them to do something big for your glory. In Jesus' name, Amen.

DECEMBER 19

Hope that never fails

Activity (OPTIONAL)

Give everyone two bits of paper. On one piece everyone needs to write what they are hoping to get for Christmas, and on the other piece what they are **not** hoping for. Put the papers in a hat and read them out. Take turns guessing who wrote which answer.

Scriptures

Romans 5:1-5; Luke 2:25-32

Read

Hope is one of those words we use all the time: “I hope it doesn’t rain” or “I hope I get what I want for Christmas”. But that kind of hope is really just a wish — something we want but we are not sure if it will work out.

The hope that Jesus has brought into the world is completely different.



Before Jesus was born, people had been waiting for hundreds of years for God to keep his promise. He had promised to send someone who would rescue his people and make things right. Generation after generation waited, wondering if it would ever happen.

Then a tiny baby was born in Bethlehem, and every promise God had ever made came to life. Jesus didn't just bring hope — he **is** the hope the world had been waiting for. The hope that God is faithful. The hope that no matter how dark things get, the light will always win.

This kind of hope will never fail, because it doesn't depend on what is happening around us. It is based on God's unfailing love. This is the hope Jesus brought into the world. And it is ours to hold onto today.

Share

- Can you think of a time when you hoped for something to happen?
- How does having hope change the way you face hard times?



Pray

Dear God, thank you for sending Jesus — the hope the whole world had been waiting for. Help us to know this hope in every situation we face and help us to share it with those around us. Amen.

DECEMBER 20

God provides for our needs

Activity (OPTIONAL)

Cut up some pieces of paper to fit in your palm. On each palm card, write a random item you would like to have.

Together as a family, sort those items as either a 'want' or a 'need'.

After all the cards have been sorted, discuss why you think each item is a 'want' or a 'need'.

Scriptures

Luke 2:1-7; Philippians 4:19

Read

At Christmas, we may feel disappointed when we don't get what we want, such as a cool toy or a special celebration. Other times, we may worry about bigger things, like not having enough food or money, and that can feel scary.

The good news is that even though God may not always give us everything we want, he gives us what we need! We see in the Christmas story that Mary and Joseph had to trust that God would provide for their needs.

When Mary was about to give birth to Jesus, they had to leave home to go to Bethlehem but then they couldn't find a place to stay. God was faithful and provided them with a stable. It was small and smelly and may not have been the nicest place, but it was what they needed.

In the same way, God always provides for our needs – big and small. When we trust in him, we can live in peace knowing that we will never lack anything that we need.

Share

- What are some of the things that God has provided for you or your family?
- What is one thing you need to trust God to provide?



Pray

Dear God, thank you that you care for us and provide for our needs. When we go through tough times, help us to remember and trust that you have good things planned for us. Amen.

DECEMBER 21

Jesus brings a peace the world cannot give

Activity (OPTIONAL)

Everyone stands on one leg and tries to balance for as long as they can. Once everyone is out, try it again, but this time focus on a still object. Discuss why you think it felt easier the second time around.

Scriptures

Isaiah 9:6; John 14:27

Read

If you watch the news or listen to grown-ups talk, it doesn't take long to notice that our world has troubles. There are wars in faraway countries, arguments between people, and sometimes there is tension right inside our own homes. Peace can feel hard to find.

Hundreds of years before Jesus was born, a prophet named Isaiah promised that a child would come who would be called the "Prince of Peace". That child was Jesus.



But Jesus didn't come to simply stop wars or solve arguments. He came to bring a much deeper kind of peace — a peace that starts on the inside. Just before he died, Jesus told his friends, *“I give you peace, the kind of peace only I can give. It isn't like the peace this world can give”* (John 14:27a, CEV).

The peace Jesus gives does not depend on everything going perfectly around us. It's a quiet confidence that God is in control, that we are loved, and that everything will ultimately be okay.

This kind of peace is available to every single one of us, no matter what is happening in our lives right now.

Share

- When do you feel the most peaceful?
- What is one thing your family could do to bring more of God's peace into your home this Christmas?

Pray

Dear Jesus, thank you that you are the Prince of Peace and that your peace is available to all of us. In the busy and sometimes troubled times of life, help us to find our peace in you. Amen.

DECEMBER 22

Jesus is the greatest gift

Activity (OPTIONAL)

Give everyone in the family a piece of paper and ask them to draw or write their Christmas wish list.

Scriptures

John 3:16; Romans 6:23

Read

Have you ever received a gift that you really loved? Christmas is a time filled with lots of presents, excitement and wonder. The days leading up to Christmas can feel so slow, especially when there are gifts under the Christmas tree waiting to be opened.

Then finally, Christmas morning is here! We wake up, run straight to the tree and we're ready to open all our gifts. But have we taken the time to think about what truly makes Christmas special? Is it just the presents?



The Bible shows us that the very first Christmas was also about a gift. But this gift wasn't wrapped and under the Christmas tree. It was Jesus, born into the world. Jesus is the greatest gift we could ever receive. While other gifts grow old or lose their excitement over time, Jesus is the gift that lasts forever! That is because Jesus brings everlasting hope, love and a relationship with God.

So, as we receive our presents under the Christmas tree, let's remember that God has given us the greatest gift: his Son, Jesus.

Share

- What do you think makes something a good gift?
- How can we share the greatest gift – Jesus – with our friends and family?

Pray

Dear God, thank you for giving us the best gift we could ever have. Thank you that, through Jesus, we have the gift of everlasting life. Help us to share this amazing gift with all our friends and family. Amen.

DECEMBER 23

Christmas can be all year round

Activity *(OPTIONAL)*

Cut up paper strips. On each strip, write or draw one way you can stay connected to God. Then use some tape or glue to join the strips to make a chain. See how long you can make your chain!

Scripture

Colossians 2:6

Read

As we approach the end of the Christmas season, it can start to feel a bit disappointing. For weeks, everything feels festive, fun and full of joy! But then, when Christmas is over, it all fades away, and life goes back to 'normal'.

But was Christmas ever meant to be just one day?



The good news is that Christmas isn't just a season. It is something we can celebrate all the time! This is because Jesus didn't come into the world to be remembered once a year – he came so we could be in a relationship with him every single day! That means we can stay connected to him, trust him and worship him all year round.

So even when Christmas is over, we don't have to feel sad and go back to life 'as usual'. It's just the beginning of life with him!

Share

- What do you enjoy most about Christmas?
- What is one way you can stay connected to God when Christmas ends?

Pray

Thank you, God, that we can celebrate the Christmas season. We pray we wouldn't just remember Jesus on Christmas Day, but we would stay connected to him every day. In Jesus' name, Amen.

DECEMBER 24

The time has finally come!

Activity *(OPTIONAL)*

Watch a short video or a movie about the Christmas story.

Scripture

Luke 2:1-21

Read

Have you ever felt that spark of excitement when you find a package you've been waiting for at your front door? Perhaps you tracked it online and watched closely for when it would arrive.

It's a great feeling! Especially if the package ends up being everything you hoped it would be.

Well, try to imagine that feeling, but way bigger, because that is what it must have felt like for God's people when Jesus finally arrived.

God's people had not just been waiting for his arrival; they'd been longing for it. This is because Jesus was their promised Messiah – the one who had come to save them from their sins.



And the good news about Jesus' arrival is that he did not disappoint. Yes, he came in an unexpected package – he came as a baby. But he was everything God promised he would be. And he came exactly the way God promised he would. And guess what? He not only came for God's people back then, he came for us all!

Unlike some packages that arrive on your doorstep that break after a day or two, Jesus is still the same today. He is still the Messiah, he is still saving people, and he is still the best gift ever – available to anyone who wants to receive him.

Share

- What are you looking forward to most about Christmas Day?
- What is one thing about Jesus that you are especially thankful for this Christmas?

Pray

Dear God, thank you that Christmas is finally here and we can celebrate the birth of Jesus. Thank you that you always keep your promises and we can trust you, knowing that you always have the best for us. Amen.