

# ADVENT

**A GUIDE TO**
PREPARE YOUR HEART FOR
THE COMING KING

# WHAT IS ADVENT?

At The Bridge Church, we believe some seasons are worth slowing down for. Advent invites us to turn our attention toward Jesus as we prepare to celebrate His birth.

The word *Advent* means “coming” or “arrival.” For centuries, Christians have observed this season during the four Sundays leading up to Christmas. We remember the people who waited for the promised Messiah, celebrate that Jesus has come, and look forward to His return, when He will make all things new.

Advent is part of the Christian calendar—a yearly rhythm that helps the church remember and live in response to the story of Jesus. Through Scripture, prayer, worship, and simple practices, we make space to consider what His coming means for our lives today.

This year, our invitation is **Come Adore Him**. Through the stories of those who welcomed Jesus, we will reflect on the hope, peace, joy, and love we find in Him. Their circumstances were different, but each encountered the same Savior. We are invited to respond to Him, too.

Whether this season finds you celebrating, grieving, waiting, or simply trying to keep up, there is room for you to come near to Jesus.

# HOW TO PARTICIPATE IN ADVENT

Each Sunday, we will focus on an Advent theme as we worship together. This guide will help you carry that focus into your week through Scripture, prayer, and a simple response.

**Make it part of your life.** You can celebrate Advent on your own, as a couple, with children or teenagers, or with friends. Choose a time that works for you—around a meal, before bed, or during your regular time with God.

- **On your own**: Read slowly, write a few thoughts in a journal, and use the prayer to begin your conversation with God.
- **With young children**: Keep it short. Let children help switch on battery-operated candles, explain the week's theme in simple words, and invite each child to offer a short prayer.
- **With teenagers**: Take turns reading Scripture and allow space for honest questions. Share your own answers to the reflection questions, too.
- **As a couple**: Read and reflect together, then pray for one another as you consider the week ahead.
- **With friends**: Gather over coffee or a meal, read the passage, and talk about how you see its message connecting with your lives.

# HOW TO PARTICIPATE IN ADVENT

You don't need to follow the guide exactly the same way each time. Start simply, adapt it to those participating, and let the focus remain on Jesus.

**Prepare a simple place.** If you would like to use candles, gather four for the Sundays of Advent and a white candle for Christmas Day. An Advent wreath is one way to arrange them; ordinary candles or battery-operated candles work, too. Each week, light an additional candle along with those from previous weeks. On Christmas Day, light all five.

The growing light helps us remember Jesus, the Light of the World. The candles are a visual reminder that helps direct our attention toward Him. You can fully participate without them.

**Follow a familiar rhythm:**

- **Pause**: Settle your attention on God. If using candles, light the candle or candles for that week.
- **Read**: Read the week's Scripture slowly.
- **Listen**: Consider the reflection question. Leave room for quiet or conversation.
- **Pray**: Use the provided prayer or respond in your own words.

Return to the passage during the week, explore the additional readings, and practice the suggested response. If you miss a day or start late, simply begin where you are. This is an invitation to spend time with Jesus, not another December deadline.

# COME ADORE HIM: AN ADVENT GUIDE

## Week One · November 29
## Hope: Adore Him in the Waiting

**Scripture: Luke 2:25–32**
**Witness: Simeon**

**Candle lighting**: Light the first Advent candle as a reminder of the hope we find in God's faithfulness.

Simeon waited for the consolation of Israel, trusting the promise God had given him. When he held Jesus, he recognized God's salvation in a child. His story invites us to bring our own waiting before God while remembering that our deepest hope is found in Jesus.

**Reflect**: What are you waiting for, and how is that waiting affecting your relationship with God?

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**Pray**: *Faithful God, You know what we are waiting for. Help us trust You when we cannot see what comes next. Fix our hope on Jesus and teach us to recognize Your presence today. Amen.*

**During the week**: Read Isaiah 9:2–7 and Romans 8:18–25.

**Practice hope:** Choose one concern you have been carrying. Bring it to God each day this week, asking Him to sustain your hope. Reach out to someone else who is waiting and offer encouragement without trying to explain away their difficulty.

# COME ADORE HIM: AN ADVENT GUIDE

## Week Two · December 6
## Peace: Adore Him in the Uncertainty

**Scripture: Matthew 1:18–25**
**Witness: Joseph**

**Candle lighting**: Light the first two Advent candles as a reminder of the hope and peace we find in Jesus, Emmanuel—God with us.

Joseph's plans changed in ways he could never have anticipated. God called him to obedience before every question had been answered. The promise at the heart of this story is Emmanuel: God with us. We, too, can take the next faithful step while trusting God with what remains unresolved.

**Reflect**: Where are you struggling to trust God because you do not know how things will work out?

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**Pray**: *Jesus, Emmanuel, thank You for being with us. Meet us in our uncertainty, quiet our anxious thoughts, and give us courage to follow You. Let Your peace shape our words and actions this week. Amen.*

**During the week**: Read Isaiah 26:3–4 and John 14:25–27.

**Practice peace**: Set aside five quiet minutes each day to pray before reaching for a screen. Consider one way you can bring peace into a relationship through a patient response, an apology, or a willingness to listen.

# COME ADORE HIM: AN ADVENT GUIDE

## Week Three · December 13
## Joy: Adore Him with Joy

**Scripture: Luke 2:8–20**
**Witnesses: The shepherds and angels**

**Candle lighting**: Light three Advent candles as a reminder of hope, peace, and the joy of our Savior's coming.

The shepherds were working through an ordinary night when heaven's announcement interrupted them. The good news was for them, too. They came to Jesus just as they were and left praising God. Our circumstances may still hold difficulty, but the coming of our Savior gives us a reason for joy within them.

**Reflect**: What about Jesus' coming gives you a reason to rejoice today?

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**Pray**: *Jesus, thank You that Your good news reaches ordinary people in ordinary places. Open our eyes to reasons for gratitude, renew our joy in You, and help us share Your goodness with others. Amen.*

**During the week**: Read Isaiah 35:1–10 and Philippians 4:4–7.

**Practice joy**: Name one reason to thank God each day. Choose a Christmas worship song to return to throughout the week, and bring someone a moment of joy through a visit, an encouraging message, or a small act of kindness.

# COME ADORE HIM: AN ADVENT GUIDE

## Week Four · December 20
## Love: Adore Him as You Draw Near

**Scripture: Luke 2:1–7, 16–19**
**Witness: Mary**

**Candle lighting**: Light all four Advent candles as a reminder of the hope, peace, joy, and love revealed in Jesus.

Mary treasured what she had seen and heard, pondering these things in her heart. There was wonder to receive even before there was everything to understand. In the middle of our own preparations, we can pause to consider this extraordinary gift: God sent His Son into our world because He loves us.

**Reflect**: What do you want to slow down long enough to treasure about Jesus this Christmas?

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**Pray**: *Loving Father, thank You for sending Your Son. Help us receive Your love and give it freely. In the busyness of this week, draw our attention back to Jesus. Amen.*

**During the week**: Read John 1:1–14 and 1 John 4:9–12.

**Practice love**: Choose someone who may feel overlooked this Christmas. Make room for that person through a call, an invitation, a meal, or time spent together. Let your response be personal and practical.

# COME ADORE HIM: AN ADVENT GUIDE

## Christmas Day · December 25
## Christ Has Come: Come Adore the King

**Scripture: Matthew 2:1–11**
**Witnesses: The Wise Men**

**Candle lighting**: Light all four Advent candles and the white Christ candle in the center. Celebrate that Jesus, the Light of the World, has come.

When the Wise Men found Jesus, they bowed before Him and offered their treasures. Their response invites us to consider our own. Among the gifts we exchange today, we can pause to thank God for the gift of His Son and offer ourselves to Him in worship. The Wise Men visited after Jesus' birth; today, we join their response of worship.

**Reflect**: What are you thankful for about Jesus, and what would you like to entrust to Him today?

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**Pray**: *Jesus, our Savior and King, we adore You. Thank You for coming near, bringing salvation, and welcoming us into life with You. Receive our gratitude, our worship, and our lives. Amen.*

**Practice adoration**: Sing or listen to Come Adore Him. Let each person offer a brief prayer of thanks. Ask Jesus to help you carry this attention to His presence into the days ahead.