

Lake Shore's Advent Activities

- Nov 30 First Sunday of Advent
Missions Tree begins
Pick up your Advent Book
- Dec 7 Second Sunday of Advent
Advent Craft Night
- Dec 11 Family Self-Sufficiency
Party (come & help)
- Dec 13 Preschool Cookie
Decorating Party
- Dec 14 Third Sunday of Advent
4th-6th Grade S.S. Party
Christmas Open House
- Dec 17 Caroling on the school bus
& Chili Supper
- Dec 19 Youth Progressive Dinner
- Dec 21 Fourth Sunday of Advent
- Dec 24 Christmas Eve Service
6:00 p.m.

Sunday School begins at 9:30 a.m.

Sunday Services are at 10:45 a.m.

Call the church office or check the on-line
newsletter for more information on
Wednesday Night suppers and activities.

www.lakeshorewaco.org

Remember the 4 things children really want for Christmas:

1. A relaxed & loving time with family
2. Realistic expectations about gifts
3. An evenly spaced holiday season
4. Reliable family traditions

The Christmas Pledge

*Believing in the true spirit of Christmas,
I commit myself to*

Remember people who truly need my gifts

Express my love in more direct ways
than gifts

Examine my holiday activities is light of
my deepest values

Be a peacemaker within my circle of
family and friends

Rededicate myself to my spiritual growth

**Taken from *Unplug the Christmas Machine*.*

Resources

www.rethinkingchristmas.com

www.adventconspiracy.org

*Unplug the Christmas Machine: A Complete
Guide to Putting the Love & Joy Back into the
Season* ISBN 0-688-10961-6

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Observing Advent & Christmas 2008



Intentionally. Simply. Humbly.

What is Advent?

Advent is the time of expectant waiting and preparation for the birth of the Messiah, Jesus the Christ. Advent is the first season of the Christian year. It consists of the four Sundays prior to Christmas and ends on Christmas Eve. The lighting of the Advent wreath helps to mark each of the four Sundays of Advent and traditionally takes on the themes of “hope,” “love,” “joy,” and “peace.”

The liturgical color for Advent is purple, the color of preparation. On Christmas Eve at the conclusion of the reading of the birth narrative, the color changes to white—the color of Christmastide. Commonly the Advent wreath consists of three purple candles and one pink candle sitting in a wreath of greenery. The circular nature of the wreath prompts us to think about God’s eternality and the greenery prompts us to think about our eternal life in God through Christ. The Christ candle in the center of the wreath is a white candle symbolic of Jesus, the light of the world. It is lit on Christmas Eve.

Advent begins in darkness. We are waiting for the Light. The first hymn of Advent is “O, Come, O, Come Emmanuel.” Its minor chords create tension and longing within us as we remember we are sinners in need of a Savior. We labor with creation as we await the coming of our Lord both as the unlikely babe in the manger and the victorious King at the end of all time.

Readings from the biblical prophets and apocalyptic passages are commonly heard during Advent, especially on the first Sunday. Christians slowly move toward the nativity beginning with Elizabeth, Zechariah, and John the Baptist then on to the angel’s appearances to Mary and Joseph and the shepherds. The story doesn’t end at the manger. There is still Jesus’ presentation at the Temple, Anna and Simeon, the visit of the Magi, and Jesus’ growing up, and on to his baptism. These holy days and seasons are called Christmastide and Epiphany.

“Let every heart prepare him room . . .”

A question to prompt further contemplation

List the major aspects of a typical holiday observance. Decorating, parties, service, shopping, cooking, traveling, worship, etc. Think about the hours and money spent on each of these things. Are your core values reflected? What adjustments can you make so that what matters to you most is reflected?

“All is calm, all is bright . . .”: Ideas for a Simple and Meaningful Advent and Christmas

- Make your own Advent wreath for your home and light it each week. Read Scripture, sing a song, and pray.
- Come to Sunday school and worship each week and other church events. (See the calendar on the back of this brochure).
- Choose a family mission project from the Lake Shore Missions Tree.
- Add the figurines to your nativity scene one by one each week as the story unfolds. You might want to live with an empty stable for a while. Place the magi somewhere else in the room and move them closer to the stable as Epiphany (Jan. 4) approaches.
- Be intentional in your gift giving. Scale back. Don’t give out of obligation. Don’t impulse buy. Avoid junk.
- Attend a community Christmas Concert.
- Make a paper chain with one link for each day of Advent (Nov. 30-Dec. 25) . Tear off a link as each day passes.
- Take a poinsettia to an elderly neighbor.
- Keep a stash of change in your car to drop into the shiny red Salvation Army buckets.
- Have a picnic on the floor in front of your Christmas tree. Turn off all the lights except for the tree, listen to holiday music, share family memories, and dream about the future.
- As holiday cards arrive in your mailbox or inbox, share them at a family meal and say a prayer of thanksgiving for the sender.
- Children will especially enjoy making a birthday cake for Jesus. Sing “Happy Birthday, dear Jesus.”
- Begin a large jigsaw puzzle that will take a good part of the season to complete. Pop some corn, sip some hot cider and enjoy!
- Give the birds a Christmas present by setting out a bird feeder with black-oil sunflower seeds.
- Drive through First Church of the Nazarene’s Drive-Through Nativity.
- Watch a classic Christmas program on TV as a family. Talk about how the story conveys the Christmas message.
- Read classic a Christmas story like *The Best Christmas Pageant Ever*.
- To save time, energy, and money, consider emailing your Christmas greetings. Or simply cut back by sending cards only to out-of-towners.
- Begin or end your day with silent prayer and meditation. Close your time by signing “Silent Night.”
- *Just hang out as a family.*