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Orders of service by Leon Jameson. Sermons by Ruth Geisler. Art and design by Lindsay Galvin. © 2016 Creative Communications for the Parish, 1564 Fencorp Dr., Fenton, MO 63026. 800-325-9414. www.creativecommunications.com. All rights reserved. Printed in the USA. Purchase of this kit gives the purchaser the copyright release to use the material in any format for use in worship.



Advent is a season of waiting. During these four weeks we become more aware of God's actions—past, present and future. We encounter our very present God, present by his presence. We are assured in our Christmas waiting that Christ will come again to shine brightly among us.

Introduction

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With that in mind, join us in this special series we call "From Heaven Above."

These four service guides can be used in many different ways. Ideal for midweek services, the services can also be used for weekly Sunday worship, kid's church, or even a special family Advent Sunday school series.

I've teamed with Rev. Tim Wells and Ruth Geisler, both Family Ministry experts, to develop this experiential worship resource for families. You'll find age-appropriate materials that will connect members of all ages and draw everyone together in preparation and expectation.

Enjoy your preparation this Advent season as we journey to meet Christ.

Rev. Leon Jameson



About the Series

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In this From Heaven Above Family Advent Worship Series, help families focus on the divine gifts that come down to us through the birth of Jesus. Each week in the series written by trained ministers to families, Rev. Leon Jameson and Ruth Geisler, family members of all generations will gather together in a more informal setting to "unwrap" one of the precious treasures that is delivered to us in the holy child wrapped in swaddling clothes. A simple order of service, a short sermon, song suggestions and ideas for activities and crafts are included for each week.

• Week 1: The Gift of Hope (Matthew 12:15-21): The people of Israel waited in hope for the promised Messiah. We now wait in hope for his return on the Last Day. Families will engage in activities revolving around what it means to have the gift of hope as we wait for Jesus' return.

• Week 2: The Gift of Love (John 3:13-17): The steadfast love of God is revealed in the gift of his Son. As the redeemed people of God we share his love with others. Families will engage in activities revolving around what it means to have the gift of love in our daily lives.

• Week 3: The Gift of Peace (John 14:25-27): In Christ Jesus we have peace with God. We now share that good news of peace with the world. Families will engage in activities revolving around what it means to have the gift of peace each day.

• Week 4: The Gift of Life (John 1:1-5): Through faith in Jesus we have forgiveness and life, a life of love and service now in his name and eternal life in his presence. Families will engage in activities revolving around what it means to have the gift of life each day and for all eternity.

Kit includes everything you need for each service as well as a CD-ROM (Mac/PC) with the text of the entire kit in .rtf (rich text format), a list of contemporary music song suggestions for each service and PowerPoint documents of all the services with images and text (along with a copyright release) for use on screens.





How To Use the Series

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Interest in family ministry has skyrocketed over the past decade, but the concept has been around for a long time. The church has long offered a wide variety of family related ministry programs and services: premarital counseling for engaged couples, marriage retreats, parenting classes, even Sunday school classes that teach children of all ages to love God and obey their parents. As valid as this approach may be in some cases, it is not the only way to conduct family ministry.

Many pastors and church leaders recognize that a more effective family ministry style teaches and guides family members in family-friendly events, where families learn, worship, discuss and laugh together. This approach is what guides the From Heaven Above Advent Worship Series. This resource helps family members hear, talk and experience the incarnation of Jesus together.

An intentionally designed family worship service is a moving and memorable experience. It's not easy to structure worship so that it engages and challenges a wide range of ages, needs and learning modalities. This resource is not an all-inclusive answer to family ministry or family worship, but it is a starting point. We hope that the ideas and tools in this series allow you to minister to the families in your church in the most effective way possible.

Each service outline includes liturgical elements, guided activities, music and multimedia.

LITURGICAL ELEMENTS

Call to Worship

A thematic call to worship provides a consistent invitation as worship begins. With it, we are reminded that God invites us to gather in his name, and to worship in the joyful context of our renewed relationship with God in Christ. Speak these words with a gesture of open embrace and a genuine smile to convey the warmth of God's love.

Prayer

One of the central acts of worship is prayer. Thematic opening and closing prayers are provided. These prayers can be offered corporately or by the worship leader.

Confession and Absolution

Our God longs for honesty within the promise-based relationship God has established with us in Jesus Christ. In a culture that avoids talk of sin and guilt, prayers of confession foster honesty and openness in our relationship with God. In this series, the opportunity for Confession and Absolution provide an Advent focus that point us to the forgiveness we receive in Christ.

Scripture Reading and Message

The reading and preaching of God's Word stands at the center of worship. Each Scripture reading and message in this series is thematic with a clear focus on Jesus Christ.

Benediction

God's Greeting (Invocation) at the beginning of a service and God's Blessing (Benediction) at the end of the service frame the liturgy. In the benediction, the dialogue of worship shifts from the people's response to God and emphasizes God's parting words of grace to his people.

GUIDED ACTIVITIES

Lighting of the Advent Wreath

The lighting of Advent candles vividly symbolizes our growing expectation for Christ's coming as the Light of the World. It is a useful object to teach participants of all ages the truths of the Advent season. The evergreen of the Advent wreath reminds us that Jesus is life and brings life to us; it's circular form reminds us that life in Christ has no end. Even if you are familiar with the Advent wreath, consider these creative uses in your service:

Each week of Advent, consider moving the wreath closer and closer to the congregation to depict Jesus drawing closer to humanity.

Involve children or teenagers in the lighting of the Advent Wreath.

Provide instructions for families to create Advent wreaths in their homes and encourage them to light the candles before meals and during family devotion times.

Family Advent Crafts

Crafts are a unique, experience-rich addition to family worship. For congregations with lots of children in worship, this element of the outline is especially important.

First and foremost, children love creating things, even if they appear to be simply experts in the art of "mess"! These family Advent crafts provide a first-hand learning experience that is not only appropriate educationally and developmentally, but also provides an element in the worship service that links hand and heart, mind and spirit to God's truth.

Each Family Advent Craft connects to the weekly theme and is explained in detail in the weekly "Worship Planning Outline." This year, following the overall theme of "FROM HEAVEN ABOVE," each craft reminds us that "every good gift" comes from our heavenly Father. Each week, kids will make a craft that represents a Christmas gift with a twist. Each craft will point kids to the reality of God's good gifts.

Included for each week's Family Advent Craft are the following:

• Explanation of weekly theme and Advent craft application

• List of needed craft supplies

• Instructions and pictures for completing the Advent craft

Volunteers

To ensure that this element of the service is impact-rich and chaos-light, consider getting some volunteers involved. Appointing an individual or a family as "Family Advent Craft Coordinator" will help make the craft time cohesive, calm and coordinated. Consider asking one person to coordinate all four services or invite families to sign-up to serve for one of the four weeks.

Instructions for the "Family Advent Craft Coordinator":

Read through instructions for each weekly craft suggestion.

Gather supplies for each weekly craft.

Set up supplies in assigned family craft location.

Be present during the worship service to give instructions and explain the craft.

Coordinate craft clean up after each service.

Family Conversation

You can approach this element in a variety of ways. You may want to use the suggested Family Conversation questions during the sermon or during the family craft time. Wherever you decide to place this element, make it an intentional choice focused on helping families have meaningful conversation about the service theme. Note that the family conversation questions are intentionally designed to



MUSIC AND MULTIMEDIA

Music Suggestions

The music suggestions for each service are just that, suggestions. You know your congregation best.

The option for "Song Choice" is a creative invitation for participants to choose what to sing from a list of Advent-themed songs. This approach is especially effective with children, actively involving them in the flow of the service.

Video Suggestions

Did you know that most people remember 85% of what they see and just 15% of what they hear? Imagebased learning connects worship participants with important lesson points. Video is an awesome tool for communicating the Gospel and biblical truth in a language that people of all ages appreciate.

Each service outline suggests places for videos to be used. As with the songs, these are just that, suggestions. You know your congregation best.

This resource does not include any custom-made videos. The recommendations connect to the weekly theme or the theme of Advent. If you opt to use these videos, you must purchase them from the appropriate web link (accurate at the time of publication). Generally, these videos cost \$10-\$20 per video and allow nearly unlimited use in your setting.

Here are the points in each worship outline where video is recommended:

1. Before the invocation.

This makes an effective lead-in or launch of the service because it quickly focuses people's attention and visually introduces the thematic focus. There is a different invocation video suggestion for each week. If your budget is tight, consider purchasing and downloading one invocation video and using it for all four weeks as a consistent start.

2. Before the sermon.

This placement can be an effective method to bring focus to a specific Scripture text, theme or event.

3. During songs as "background."

There seems to be a progression when it comes to the presentation of song lyrics for worship services: from printed lyrics, to projected lyrics, to projected lyrics with still-picture backgrounds, to projected lyrics with video backgrounds. Experimenting with video backgrounds help to make a visual connection with what our ears hear and our lips sing.

In order to use video backgrounds behind your projected song lyrics, you must operate presentation software that allows you to overlay text onto video. There are a number of software packages that do this effectively.

Where to Find Great Videos and Other Content Ideas

Some of the leading media websites for worship videos include:

Worship House Media http://www.worshiphousemedia.com/



OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

Space Design

Your worship space should first and foremost be a reverent and sacred place to worship the coming Christ, but for this series you also want to worship in a space that lends itself to this style of interactive worship.

You know your space options and limitations. You may need to adapt certain elements suggested in this resource.

You may want to consider using an open space with round tables and chairs with an altar at the front. This layout lends itself well to the Family Advent Craft and Family (table) Conversations.

Special attention should be given to visual displays in the worship space. The liturgical colors for Advent are purple and deep blue, and rough and coarse textures are common. An Advent wreath with four candles and a Christ candle

can heighten the sense of anticipation.

Adapt

This resource is not intended to be a perfect fit for all congregations and for all families. Use what works, adapt where needed, and add to these ideas to best meet the needs for the families gathering in your congregation. The design of these services targets families with children but is also appropriate and can be well received by older adults and teenagers. Again, adapt to meet the needs of your congregation.

Recruit Families

Don't rely on one or two people to do all the work. Effective family ministry encourages families to do things together. Invite families to help plan and prepare these worship services. The "Family Advent Craft Coordinator" is a great example.



Newsletter/Bulletin Notices

Service One Newsletter Notice

We invite you to join us for an innovative Advent worship series designed especially for families called "From Heaven Above." The services in this series will help families focus on the divine gifts that come down to us through the birth of Jesus. Each week will include guided activities, family conversation starters and ideas for making crafts that all generations can create and use in their Advent preparation. Each service in the 4-part series focuses on a gift from heaven above that is "unwrapped" through the birth of Jesus. Service 1 (The Gift of Hope), based on Matthew 12:15-21, tells us how the people of Israel waited for the promised Messiah and how we now wait in hope for his return on the Last Day. Families will engage in activities revolving around what it means to have the gift of hope as we await Jesus' return.

Service One Bulletin Notice

Welcome to our family Advent worship series, From Heaven Above. We join with the people of Israel in this service in waiting in hope for the promised Messiah to come. Let the Christ-centered conversations, Scripture verses, songs, video clips, activities and prayers of this worship experience help you to focus on the Gift of Hope that we "unwrap" through the birth of Jesus.



Service Two Newsletter Notice

Newsletter/Bulletin N

We invite you to join us for an innovative Advent worship series designed especially for families called "From Heaven Above." The services in this series will help families focus on the divine gifts that come down to us through the birth of Jesus. Each week will include guided activities, family conversation starters and ideas for making crafts that all generations can create and use in their Advent preparation. Each service in the 4-part series focuses on a gift from heaven above that is "unwrapped" through the birth of Jesus. Service 2 (The Gift of Love), based on John 3:13-17, reveals the steadfast love of God shown in his only Son and displayed in the love we as his redeemed people share with others. Families will engage in activities revolving around what it means to have the gift of love in our daily lives.

Service Two Bulletin Notice

Welcome to our family Advent worship series, From Heaven Above. We join with all the redeemed people of God in this service in receiving and sharing the steadfast love of God found only in Jesus. Let the Christ-centered conversations, Scripture verses, songs, video clips, activities and prayers of this worship experience help you to focus on the Gift of Love that we "unwrap" through the birth of Jesus.



Newsletter/Bulletin N

Service Three Newsletter Notice

We invite you to join us for an innovative Advent worship series designed especially for families called "From Heaven Above." The services in this series will help families focus on the divine gifts that come down to us through the birth of Jesus. Each week will include guided activities, family conversation starters and ideas for making crafts that all generations can create and use in their Advent preparation. Each service in the 4-part series focuses on a gift from heaven above that is "unwrapped" through the birth of Jesus. Service 3 (The Gift of Peace), based on John 14:25-27, reminds us that we have peace with God in Christ Jesus and we are called to spread that peace to all the world. Families will engage in activities revolving around what it means to have the gift of peace each day.

Service Three Bulletin Notice

Welcome to our family Advent worship series, From Heaven Above. We join with the people of God in this service in receiving and spreading abroad the peace of God in Jesus Christ, our Lord. Let the Christ-centered conversations, Scripture verses, songs, video clips, activities and prayers of this worship experience help you to focus on the Gift of Peace that we "unwrap" through the birth of Jesus.



Service Four Newsletter Notice

Jewsletter/Bulletin N

We invite you to join us for an innovative Advent worship series designed especially for families called "From Heaven Above." The services in this series will help families focus on the divine gifts that come down to us through the birth of Jesus. Each week will include guided activities, family conversation starters and ideas for making crafts that all generations can create and use in their Advent preparation. Each service in the 4-part series focuses on a gift from heaven above that is "unwrapped" through the birth of Jesus. Service 4 (The Gift of Life), based on John 1:1-5, assures us that through faith in Jesus we now have life in his name and eternal life in heaven to come. Families will engage in activities revolving around what it means to have the gift of life every day and for all eternity.

Service Four Bulletin Notice

Welcome to our family Advent worship series, From Heaven Above. We join with the people of God in this service in celebrating the life of faith we have in Jesus here on earth and the eternal life with him yet to come. Let the Christ-centered conversations, Scripture verses, songs, video clips, activities and prayers of this worship experience help you to focus on the Gift of Life that we "unwrap" through the birth of

Jesus.





Service One: The Gift of Hope



P As the people of God it is in anticipation that we gather and with expectation that we wait. We make our beginning in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

Invocation

C Amen.

Lighting of the Advent Wreath

(One purple candle of the Advent Wreath is lit at this time.)

P Prepare the way of the Lord.

G We light this candle in hope,

P the hope of our coming Savior, Jesus.

C Prepare, then, the way of the Lord.

"Comfort, comfort ye my people, speak ye peace," thus saith our God; "Comfort those who sit in darkness, mourning 'neath their sorrows' load. Speak ye to Jerusalem of the peace that waits for them; Tell her that her sins I cover and her warfare now is over."

Make ye straight what long was crooked; make the rougher places plain. Let your hearts be true and humble, as befits his holy reign. For the glory of the Lord now o'er earth is shed abroad, And all flesh shall see the token that his Word is never broken.

Opening Litany

P People of God, Jesus is coming!

C Yes, Jesus is coming!

- P At Christmas Jesus came as a baby
- C Yes, Jesus is coming!
- ${f P}$ He comes from heaven above bringing hope, love, peace and life.
- **C** Yes, Jesus is coming!
- **P** He comes to save us from our sin.

O Yes, Jesus is coming!

P He brings forgiveness, grace and mercy.

C Yes, Jesus is coming!

P Lift heart, hands and voices. Get ready for him!

G Alleluia! Jesus is coming! We're ready for him!

Children's Motion Play

▶ This is Advent! It is a special time of waiting. We come together as members of God's family, young and old, to celebrate how and why Jesus came. Let's talk about the hope Jesus brings. Repeat each line after me and copy the motions.

(Leader will say lines and perform motions. Children and adults will repeat the words and perform the motions.)

P God's gift of hope shines like a light (shield eyes with hand as if looking)

(Children and adults repeat words and motions.)

P to give us courage day and night. *(show "muscles" and "strength" with both arms)*

(Children and adults repeat words and motions.)

P Hope means that what our eyes can't see (point to eye

(Children and adults repeat words and motions.)

P we know for sure will come to be. (*tap bead with finger, as if thinking*)

(Children and adults repeat words and motions.)

P Hope means we trust in Jesus' Word, (open hands like a book)

(Children and adults repeat words and motions.,

P and believe what we have heard. (cross bands over your heart)

(Children and adults repeat words and motions.)

Opening Prayer

ℙ Jesus, Gift of Hope, you came to a stable in Bethlehem to become one with us. Jesus, Gift of Love, you were nailed on a cross at Calvary to take away our sin. Jesus, Gift of Peace, you walked the plains and hills of Galilee and Judea teaching us how to live. Jesus, Gift of Life, you rose from a tomb defeating death's power over us. Jesus, you came from heaven above and have ascended beyond the clouds to be our reigning Lord. During this Advent season, bless us with patience, perfect our faith, and, while we await the fulfillment of your promises, grant us confidence through your Word. Amen.

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Confession and Absolution

- Through Jesus, we live new lives and understand our sins through His sacrifice on the cross. God's Word reminds us that all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God and calls us to repentance. We speak our confession together.
- Lord God, our lives are filled with sin. We need the Savior to come. We confess that we have not loved you with our whole heart. We have failed to fulfill your desire for us to love one another. We have not followed the paths you have given us, choosing instead to follow our own. Lord God, our lives are filled with sin. We need the Savior to come. For our worry and hurrying this Advent season, forgive us. For the way we make this a season of shopping rather than waiting, forgive us. For seeking life from places other than in you, forgive us. Lord God, our lives are filled with sin. We need the Savior to come. Free us for joyful obedience, through the coming of Christ, our Lord, our Messiah, our Hope. Amen.
- People of God: Jesus Christ, our Lord, whose coming we announce in this season, is our righteousness. In Christ, your sins are forgiven. In Christ, you are made right with God.

C Thanks be to God!

> Hark, the herald's voice is crying in the desert far and near, Calling sinners to repentance, since the Kingdom how is here. O that warning cry obey! Now prepare for God a way; Let the valleys rise to meet him and the hills bow down to greet him.

Yea, her sins our God will pardon, blotting out each dark misdeed; All that well deserved his anger he no more will see or heed. She hath suffered many a day, now her griefs have passed away; God will change her pining sadness into every-springing gladness.

Scripture: Psalm 130:5-8

Song.....Jefferson 87 87 D

Come, thou long-expected Jesus, born to set thy people free; From our fears and sins release us; let us find our rest in thee. Israel's Strength and Consolation, hope of all the earth thou art; Dear desire of ev'ry nation, joy of ev'ry longing heart. Born thy people to deliver, born a child and yet a King, Born to reign in us forever, now thy gracious kingdom bring. By thine own eternal Spirit rule in all our hearts alone; By thine all-sufficient merit, raise us to thy glorious throne.

Video

Message

Family Advent Craft Presentation

Family Conversation

Offering

Offering Prayer

(Leader will say lines and perform motions. Children and adults will repeat the words and perform the motions.)

P God of wonder, we offer you these humble gifts, (All extend arms forward.

(Children and adults repeat words and motions.,

P signs of your goodness and mercy. (All point hands to beaven.)

(Children and adults repeat words and motions

P Receive them with our gratitude, (All put hands over hearts

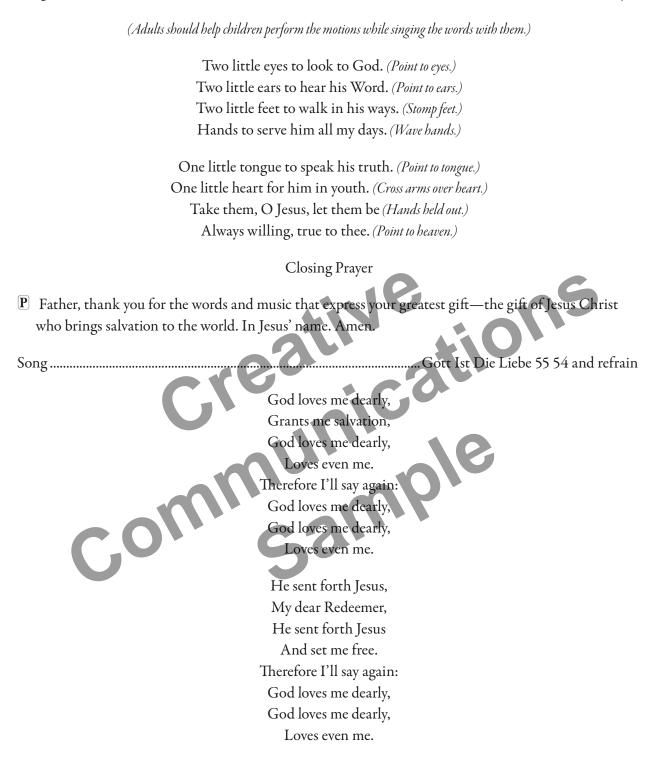
(Children and adults repeat words and motions.)

P that through us all people may know the riches of your gift of hope in our Savior Jesus. (*Join hands with one another.*)

(Children and adults repeat words and motions.)

P Amen.

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Jesus, my Savior, Himself did offer; Jesus, my Savior, Paid all I owed. Therefore I'll say again: God loves me dearly, God loves me dearly, Loves even me.

Now I will praise you, O love Eternal; Now I will praise you All my life long. Therefore I'll say again: God loves me dearly, God loves me dearly, Loves even me.

Benediction

■ In all your Advent preparations and waiting, remain watchful with your eyes on Christ, whose birth in a manger is but a promise of his coming again in glory. And may the blessing of God, Father, + Son and Holy Spirit be with you now and forever. Amen.

Closing Song.....

.....Vom Himmel Hoch LM

tions

"From heav'n above to earth I come to bear good news to ev'ry home; Glad tidings of great joy I bring, whereof I now will say and sing:

"To you this night is born a child of Mary, chosen virgin mild; This little child of lowly birth shall be the joy of all the earth.

"This is the Christ, our God Most High, who hears your sad and bitter cry; He will himself your Savior be from all your sins to set you free.

"He will on you the gifts bestow prepared by God for all below, That in his kingdom, bright and fair, you may with us his glory share."



Service One: The Gift of Hope

Complete Script for Worship Leaders

• Pre-service Songs are sung by the congregation, following these guidelines:

The option for "Songs" is a creative invitation for participants to choose what to sing from a list of Advent-themed songs. This approach is especially effective with children, actively involving them in the flow of the worship service. This style of Advent worship for families also lends itself to involving Orff Instruments in your music selections. If your budget allows, consider purchasing a variety of these instruments for children and families to use during select worship songs.

Optional Advent "Song Choice" list (offer the same list each week or vary your list):

"God of Wonders" by Paul Baloche

"Here I Am to Worship" by Tim Hughes

"You Are Holy (Prince of Peace)" by Michael W. Smith

"O Come, Little Children" by Christoph von Schmid

"God Loves Me Dearly" by August Rische

"Soon and Very Soon" by Andrea Crouch

"Away in a Manger"

"O Come, All Ye Faithful"

"Jesus, Name Above All Names" by Naida Hearn

"Everlasting God (Strength Will Rise)" by Brenton Brown

"God with Us" by All Sons and Daughters

"Here Is Our King" by David Crowder Band

"Light of the World" by Matt Redman

"Comfort, Comfort Ye My People"

"My Hope Is Built on Nothing Less"

- A **Welcome** is read by the pastor or other worship leader:
- P Welcome to our Advent worship, a preparation for our Savior Jesus who comes from heaven above bringing the gifts of hope, love, peace and life.
- A Video is presented on a screen:

Show: Let Us Worship Christ from Centerline New Media

http://www.worshiphousemedia.com/mini-movies/34753/let-us-worship-christ

- An **Invocation** is read responsively by the pastor and the congregation:
- P As the people of God it is in anticipation that we gather and with expectation that we wait. We make our beginning in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.

C Amen.

- A Lighting of the Advent Wreath is read responsively by the pastor and the congregation:

(One purple candle of the Advent Wreath is lit at this time.)

P Prepare the way of the Lord.

G We light this candle in hope,

P the hope of our coming Savior, Jesus.

C Prepare, then, the way of the Lord.

• A **Song** is sung by the congregation to the tune Freu Dich Sehr 87 87 77 88 or you are welcome to use "Light One Candle" by Natalie Sleeth or to choose a different song from the "Song Choice" list at the beginning of this script:

"Comfort, comfort ye my people, speak ye peace," thus saith our God; "Comfort those who sit in darkness, mourning 'neath their sorrows' load. Speak ye to Jerusalem of the peace that waits for them; Tell her that her sins I cover and her warfare now is over."

Make ye straight what long was crooked; make the rougher places plain. Let your hearts be true and humble, as befits his holy reign. For the glory of the Lord now o'er earth is shed abroad, And all flesh shall see the token that his **Word** is never broken.

50

- The **Opening Litany** is read responsively by the pastor and the congregation:
- P People of God, Jesus is coming!
- C Yes, Jesus is coming!
- P At Christmas Jesus came as a baby.
- **C** Yes, Jesus is coming!
- P He comes from heaven above bringing hope, love, peace and life

C Yes, Jesus is coming!

- P He comes to save us from our sin.
- **C** Yes, Jesus is coming!
- P He brings forgiveness, grace and mercy.
- **C** Yes, Jesus is coming!
- P Lift heart, hands and voices. Get ready for him!

• Alleluia! Jesus is coming! We're ready for him!

- The Children's Motion Play is spoken by the pastor line by line with motions and repeated line by line with motions by the children and adults.
- P This is Advent! It is a special time of waiting. We come together as members of God's family, young and old, to celebrate how and why Jesus came. Let's talk about the hope Jesus brings. Repeat each line after me and copy the motions.

(Leader will say lines and perform motions. Children and adults *will repeat the words and perform the motions.*)

P God's gift of hope shines like a light (*shield eyes with hand as if looking*)

(Children and adults repeat words and motions.)

P to give us courage day and night. (show "muscles" and "strength" with both arms) jons

(Children and adults repeat words and motions.)

- P Hope means that what our eyes can't see (point to eye
- **P** we know for sure will come to be. (*tap head with finger, as if thinking*

(Children and adults repeat words and motions.

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P Hope means we trust in Jesus' Word, (open hands like a book

(Children and adults repeat words and motions.)

P and believe what we have heard. (cross hands over your heart)

(Children and adults repeat words and motions.)

- The **Opening Prayer** is read by the pastor:
- P Jesus, Gift of Hope, you came to a stable in Bethlehem to become one with us. Jesus, Gift of Love, you were nailed on a cross at Calvary to take away our sin. Jesus, Gift of Peace, you walked the plains and hills of Galilee and Judea teaching us how to live. Jesus, Gift of Life, you rose from a tomb defeating death's power over us. Jesus, you came from heaven above and have ascended beyond the clouds to be our reigning Lord. During this Advent season, bless us with patience, perfect our faith, and, while we await the fulfillment of your promises, grant us confidence through your Word. Amen.

- The **Confession and Absolution** is read responsively by the pastor and congregation:
- Through Jesus, we live new lives and understand our sins through his sacrifice on the cross. God's Word reminds us that all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God and calls us to repentance. We speak our confession together.
- Lord God, our lives are filled with sin. We need the Savior to come. We confess that we have not loved you with our whole heart. We have failed to fulfill your desire for us to love one another. We have not followed the paths you have given us, choosing instead to follow our own. Lord God, our lives are filled with sin. We need the Savior to come. For our worry and hurrying this Advent season, forgive us. For the way we make this a season of shopping rather than waiting, forgive us. For seeking life from places other than in you, forgive us. Lord God, our lives are filled with sin. We need the Savior to come. Free us for joyful obedience, through the coming of Christ, our Lord, our Messiah, our Hope. Amen.
- People of God: Jesus Christ, our Lord, whose coming we announce in this season, is our righteousness. In Christ, your sins are forgiven. In Christ, you are made right with God.

C Thanks be to God!

• A **Song** is sung by the congregation to the tune Freu Dich Sehr 87 87 77 88 or you are welcome to choose a different song from the "Song Choice" list at the beginning of this script:

Hark, the herald's voice is crying in the desert far and near, Calling sinners to repentance, since the Kingdom now is here. O that warning cry obey! Now prepare for God a way; Let the valleys rise to meet him and the hills bow down to greet him.

Yea, her sins our God will pardon, blotting out each dark misdeed; All that well deserved his anger he no more will see or heed. She hath suffered many a day, now her griefs have passed away; God will change her pining sadness into every-springing gladness.

- The Scripture: Psalm 130:5-8 is read by the pastor or other worship leader:
- ℙ I wait for the LORD, my soul waits, and in his word I hope; my soul waits for the LORD more than watchmen for the morning, more than watchmen for the morning. O Israel, hope in the LORD! For with the LORD there is steadfast love, and with him is plentiful redemption. And he will redeem Israel from all his iniquities.

• A **Song** is sung by the congregation to the tune Jefferson 87 87 D:

Come, thou long-expected Jesus, born to set thy people free; From our fears and sins release us; let us find our rest in thee. Israel's Strength and Consolation, hope of all the earth thou art; Dear desire of ev'ry nation, joy of ev'ry longing heart.

Born thy people to deliver, born a child and yet a King, Born to reign in us forever, now thy gracious kingdom bring. By thine own eternal Spirit rule in all our hearts alone; By thine all-sufficient merit, raise us to thy glorious throne.

• A Video is presented on a screen.

Show: Heartbeat from Igniter Media

http://www.worshiphousemedia.com/mini-movies/56265/heartbeat

• A Message is delivered by the pastor:

Note: You will need a large, empty box of Cheerios. As worshipers leave at the end of the service, let children pick their favorite kind of individual-boxed cereal to take home.

P Please pray with me. Father, bless our worship as we gather together in this first week of Advent. Help us to live in the sure and certain hope you have given us of salvation through your Son. Fill our hearts with your Holy Spirit as we study your holy Word and claim the hope you have given us. In Jesus' name. Amen.

How many candles did we light on our Advent wreath today? (*Wait for response.*) We're going to call that candle the Candle of Hope. Just thinking of hope makes me hungry! Do you know what I wanted when I woke up this morning? I wanted a gigantic bowl of Cheerios filled to the top with nice cold milk. As I went into the kitchen I thought, "Oh, I hope we have some Cheerios." I reached into the cupboard and took out the box. Open the box and shake it upside down. Guess what happened? (*Wait for response.*) You're right. No matter how much I hoped, the box was empty.

Now I want you all to say something after me. Say, "I hope I will go to heaven." (*Let the people respond.*) You will go to heaven! That's because God's hope is way different from people's hope. The hope God gives us comes from his love for us—a love so strong that he let his own Son die for us to give us life forever with him.

God first gave his people hope over four thousand years ago. Adam and Eve disobeyed God and brought sin into his perfect world. But God didn't leave Adam and Eve—and us—lost in sin. He promised that one day he would send his own son, Jesus, to crush Satan. Through the next two thousand years, God used his prophets to tell his people how his son would come. Isaiah said that a virgin would have a baby and name him Immanuel, which means "God with us." Micah said that Jesus would be born in the little town of Bethlehem. Through the years God's people lived in the hope that God's son would come to be their Messiah—their King and Savior who would forgive their sins. And he did come.

When it was almost time for baby Jesus to be born, God used angels to be his messengers. At the end of the service we will sing the first four verses of "From Heaven Above." We will sing the words of the angel talking to the shepherds the night Baby Jesus was born. Look at the words with me. (*If words are not on a screen, have parents point to the words in the bulletin or hymnal for their children to see.*) In verse 1, the angel says, "I have good news for you!" Repeat after me: good news. (*Allow the children to repeat the words* good news.) What is the good news the angel has to share? (*Allow the children to respond.*) In verse 2, the angel says, "To you this night is born a child." Say the word *child.* (*Allow the children to respond with the word* child.) Who is that child? (*Allow the children to respond.*) In verse 3, the angel says, "Jesus is your Savior." Say the word *Savior.* (*Allow the children to say the word* Savior.) What does the word *Savior* mean to you? (*Allow the children to respond.*) In verse 4, the angel says you will live "in his Kingdom." Say "in his kingdom." (*Allow the children to respond.*) You live in God's kingdom! The hope of God's people came true. Baby Jesus did come. He grew up and lived a perfect life for us. He died on the cross to pay for all the sins we do. He came alive just like we will one day.

Before Jesus went back to heaven to get our homes ready, he promised that one day he will come back to get us and take us home to heaven. Do you hope he will do that? (*Allow the children to respond.*) Will he do that? (*Allow the children to respond.*) That's the hope we live in now, four thousand years after God first gave his promise. We know that Jesus is with us every minute of every day and night and one day he will come to take us home. It might be tonight. It might be tomorrow. It might be in a hundred years. But he will come. That is our hope.

Have you ever stayed awake all night, praying for God to help you because you were worried or sick or afraid? You had hope that God would help you and he did. Sometimes we put our hope in the amount of money we have. We say, "I hope I have enough money to take care of this." Sometimes we put our hope in how smart we are. "Oh, I'll be able to figure this out by myself." Sometimes we put our hope in other people. "Mom and Dad will help me. The doctor will help me." And they will. But it is God who helps them and God who helps us. In times when we are weak and feel like giving up, God fills us with his strength and hope. We can trust him to make things right.

As we think about the candle of hope this Advent, we remember that Baby Jesus grew up to die on the cross and win us forgiveness and eternal life. We live in hope that he will come back on the Last Day to take us to heaven with him.

Boys and girls, at the end of this service, I would like you to pick out your favorite box of little cereal to take home. When you eat your cereal tomorrow morning, remember that my hope for Cheerios did not come true. But the hope God gives us in Jesus to take care of us and take us to heaven will

always be true.

Let's pray. Father, we thank you so much for giving us the hope of salvation and eternal life through your Son. Help us to share that hope with everyone we meet this Advent season. In Jesus' name. Amen.

• The Family Advent Craft: Clock of Hope (or alternate craft) instruction sheets (see pp. 45-48 for reproducible handouts) are handed out for families to do now or on their own during the week:

Family Advent Craft: Clock of Hope

Theme Connect: *Hope* has become a word that we often misuse. Too often, we equate hope with wishing. "I hope I get everything on my Christmas list this year." "I hope the ______ win the Super Bowl this year." You get the idea. But, this isn't hope. Hope is not wishing with uncertainty. Hope is waiting with certainty. The people of Israel waited in hope for the promised Messiah. We now wait in hope for his return on the Last Day. We don't know when what we hope for will finally come, but we trust that it will come and so we wait patiently.

Waiting can be difficult. Sometimes, when people are waiting, especially if they are becoming impatient, they might start looking at a watch or clock. Watches and clocks are symbols of waiting. They are also common Christmas gifts. Today, we will make a clock that reminds us of the hope that we have in Christ. The Church has been waiting for Christ's return for almost two thousand years. We don't know when he will return, but we know the day will come. Until then, we wait patiently in hope.

Supplies

- 1 paper plate per craft
- 1 sheet of colored construction paper per craft
- 1 paper fastener per craft
- Scissors
- Crayons
- Optional Colored sticker dots (12 per craft)

Instructions

 This is not just any ordinary clock. This is a Clock of Hope. When we look at this clock, we want to be reminded of the hope we have in Christ. So, to start, let's write this message on our plate. Using crayons, write the theme verse "I wait for the LORD, my soul waits, and in his word I hope. Psalm 130:5" across the front of your plate.



2. Now, it's time to make our clock hands. Using construction paper and scissors, cut out two hands for your clock, one longer and one shorter. Because this clock reminds us of hope, hands could be cut in the shape of crosses to point us to Christ.



3. Using a paper fastener, attach your clock hands to the center of the plate.



4. A clock needs numbers. Using a crayon, write the numbers 1-12 on your clock. If you want, you can use colored sticker dots, writing your numbers on each dot.



5. Your Clock of Hope is now complete. If you'd like, you can color the rest of your clock. Just remember to use bright colors that remind you of the hope we have in Christ.



"Hang Your Hope On Him – Ornament" – Item # IN-48/2007

"Fun Loop Watch Craft Kit" – Item # IN-13679110

• The Family Conversation Question Sheets (see p. 50 for reproducible handout) can be handed out or displayed on a screen and discussed among the families.

Family Conversation

- 1. What are some things that you have a difficult time waiting for?
- 2. What is the difference between wishing and having hope?
- 3. How can you share the hope we have in Jesus Christ with someone this week?
- The **Offering** is gathered.
- The **Offering Prayer** is spoken by the pastor line by line with motions and repeated line by line with motions by the children and adults, as the offering is brought forward.

(Leader will say lines and perform motions. Children and adults will repeat the words and perform the motions.)

P God of wonder, we offer you these humble gifts, (All extend arms forward.)

(Children and adults repeat words and motions.)

P signs of your goodness and mercy. (All point hands to heaven.)

Children and adults repeat words and motions.)

P Receive them with our gratitude, (All put hands over bearts.,

(Children and adults repeat words and motions.)

P that through us all people may know the riches of your gift of hope in our Savior Jesus. (*Join hands with one another.*)

(Children and adults repeat words and motions.)

P Amen.

• A **Song** is sung by the congregation with hand motions to the tune Two Little Eyes or you are welcome to choose a different song from the "Song Choice" list at the beginning of this script:

(Adults should help children perform the motions while singing the words with them.)

Two little eyes to look to God. (*Point to eyes.*) Two little ears to hear his Word. (*Point to ears.*) Two little feet to walk in his ways. (*Stomp feet.*) Hands to serve him all my days. (*Wave hands.*)

One little tongue to speak his truth. (Point to tongue.) One little heart for him in youth. (Cross arms over heart.) Take them, O Jesus, let them be (Hands held out.) Always willing, true to thee. (Point to heaven.)

• The Closing Prayer is read by the pastor:

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- P Father, thank you for the words and music that express your greatest gift—the gift of Jesus Christ who brings salvation to the world. In Jesus' name. Amen.
- A **Song** is sung by the congregation to the tune Gott Ist Die Liebe 55 54 and refrain or you are welcome to choose a different song from the "Song Choice" list at the beginning of this script:

God loves me dearly, Grants me salvation, God loves me dearly, Loves even me. Therefore I'll say again: God loves me dearly, God loves me dearly, Loves even me.

He sent forth Jesus, My dear Redeemer, He sent forth Jesus And set me free. Therefore I'll say again: God loves me dearly, God loves me dearly, Loves even me.

Jesus, my Savior, Himself did offer; Jesus, my Savior, Paid all I owed. Therefore I'll say again: God loves me dearly, God loves me dearly, Loves even me.

Now I will praise you, O love Eternal: Now I will praise you All my life long. Therefore I'll say again: God loves me dearly, God loves me dearly Loves even me.

• The **Benediction** is read by the pastor:

tions P In all your Advent preparations and waiting, remain watchful with your eyes on Christ, whose birth in a manger is but a promise of his coming again in glory. And may the blessing of God, Father, + Son consample and Holy Spirit be with you now and forever. Amen.

• The **Closing Song** is sung by the congregation to the tune Vom Himmel Hoch LM:

"From heav'n above to earth I come to bear good news to ev'ry home; Glad tidings of great joy I bring, whereof I now will say and sing:

"To you this night is born a child of Mary, chosen virgin mild; This little child of lowly birth shall be the joy of all the earth.

"This is the Christ, our God Most High, who hears your sad and bitter cry; He will himself your Savior be from all your sins to set you free.





FAMILY ADVENT WORSHIP SERIES

Service One: The Gift of Hope

• A Message is delivered by the pastor:

Note: You will need a large, empty box of Cheerios. As worshipers leave at the end of the service, let children pick their favorite kind of individual-boxed cereal to take home.

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P Please pray with me. Father, bless our worship as we gather together in this first week of Advent. Help us to live in the sure and certain hope you have given us of salvation through your Son. Fill our hearts with your Holy Spirit as we study your holy Word and claim the hope you have given us. In Jesus' name. Amen.

How many candles did we light on our Advent wreath today? (*Wait for response.*) We're going to call that candle the Candle of Hope. Just thinking of hope makes me hungry! Do you know what I wanted when I woke up this morning? I wanted a gigantic bowl of Cheerios filled to the top with nice cold milk. As I went into the kitchen I thought, "Oh, I hope we have some Cheerios." I reached into the cupboard and took out the box. Open the box and shake it upside down. Guess what happened? (*Wait for response.*) You're right. No matter how much I hoped, the box was empty.

Now I want you all to say something after me. Say, "I hope I will go to heaven." (*Let the people respond.*) You will go to heaven! That's because God's hope is way different from people's hope. The hope God gives us comes from his love for us—a love so strong that he let his own Son die for us to give us life forever with him.

God first gave his people hope over four thousand years ago. Adam and Eve disobeyed God and

brought sin into his perfect world. But God didn't leave Adam and Eve—and us—lost in sin. He promised that one day he would send his own son, Jesus, to crush Satan. Through the next two thousand years, God used his prophets to tell his people how his son would come. Isaiah said that a virgin would have a baby and name him Immanuel, which means "God with us." Micah said that Jesus would be born in the little town of Bethlehem. Through the years God's people lived in the hope that God's son would come to be their Messiah—their King and Savior who would forgive their sins. And he did come.

When it was almost time for baby Jesus to be born, God used angels to be his messengers. At the end of the service we will sing the first four verses of "From Heaven Above." We will sing the words of the angel talking to the shepherds the night Baby Jesus was born. Look at the words with me. (*If words are not on a screen, have parents point to the words in the bulletin or hymnal for their children to see.*) In verse 1, the angel says, "I have good news for you!" Repeat after me: good news. (*Allow the children to repeat the words* good news.) What is the good news the angel has to share? (*Allow the children to respond.*). In verse 2, the angel says, "To you this night is born a child." Say the word *child. (Allow the children to respond with the word* child.) Who is that child? (*Allow the children to respond.*) In verse 3, the angel says, "Jesus is your Savior." Say the word *Savior. (Allow the children to say the word* Savior) What does the word *Savior* mean to you? (*Allow the children to respond.*) In verse 4, the angel says you will'live "in his Kingdom." (*Allow the children to respond.*) You live in God's kingdom.") What does it mean to be "in his Kingdom." (*Allow the children to respond.*) You live in God's kingdom! The hope of God's people came true. Baby Jesus did come. He grew up and lived a perfect life for us. He died on the cross to pay for all the sins we do. He came alive just like we will one day.

Before Jesus went back to heaven to get our homes ready, he promised that one day he will come back to get us and take us home to heaven. Do you hope he will do that? (*Allow the children to respond.*) Will he do that? (*Allow the children to respond.*) That's the hope we live in now, four thousand years after God first gave his promise. We know that Jesus is with us every minute of every day and night and one day he will come to take us home. It might be tonight. It might be tomorrow. It might be in a hundred years. But he will come. That is our hope.

Have you ever stayed awake all night, praying for God to help you because you were worried or sick or afraid? You had hope that God would help you and he did. Sometimes we put our hope in the amount of money we have. We say, "I hope I have enough money to take care of this." Sometimes we put our hope in how smart we are. "Oh, I'll be able to figure this out by myself." Sometimes we put our hope in other people. "Mom and Dad will help me. The doctor will help me." And they will. But it is God who helps them and God who helps us. In times when we are weak and feel like giving up, God fills us with his strength and hope. We can trust him to make things right.

As we think about the candle of hope this Advent, we remember that Baby Jesus grew up to die on the cross and win us forgiveness and eternal life. We live in hope that he will come back on the Last Day to take us to heaven with him. Boys and girls, at the end of this service, I would like you to pick out your favorite box of little cereal to take home. When you eat your cereal tomorrow morning, remember that my hope for Cheerios did not come true. But the hope God gives us in Jesus to take care of us and take us to heaven will always be true.

Let's pray. Father, we thank you so much for giving us the hope of salvation and eternal life through your Son. Help us to share that hope with everyone we meet this Advent season. In Jesus' name. Amen.





FAMILY ADVENT WORSHIP SERIES

Service One: The Gift of Hope

Family Advent Craft: Clock of Hope

Theme Connect: *Hope* has become a word that we often misuse. Too often, we equate hope with wishing. "I hope I get everything on my Christmas list this year." "Thope the ______ win the Super Bowl this year." You get the idea. But, this isn't hope. Hope is not wishing with uncertainty. Hope is waiting with certainty. The people of Israel waited in hope for the promised Messiah. We now wait in hope for his return on the Last Day. We don't know when what we hope for will finally come, but we trust that it will come and so we wait patiently.

Waiting can be difficult. Sometimes, when people are waiting, especially if they are becoming impatient, they might start looking at a watch or clock. Watches and clocks are symbols of waiting. They are also common Christmas gifts. Today, we will make a clock that reminds us of the hope that we have in Christ. The Church has been waiting for Christ's return for almost two thousand years. We don't know when he will return, but we know the day will come. Until then, we wait patiently in hope.

Supplies

- 1 paper plate per craft
- 1 sheet of colored construction paper per craft
- 1 paper fastener per craft
- Scissors
- Crayons
- Optional Colored sticker dots (12 per craft)

Instructions

1. This is not just any ordinary clock. This is a Clock of Hope. When we look at this clock, we want to be reminded of the hope we have in Christ. So, to start, let's write this message on our plate. Using crayons, write the theme verse "I wait for the LORD, my soul waits, and in his word I hope. Psalm 130:5" across the front of your plate.



2. Now, it's time to make our clock hands. Using construction paper and scissors, cut out two hands for your clock, one longer and one shorter. Because this clock reminds us of hope, hands could be cut in the shape of crosses to point us to Christ.





4. A clock needs numbers. Using a crayon, write the numbers 1-12 on your clock. If you want, you can use colored sticker dots, writing your numbers on each dot.



5. Your Clock of Hope is now complete. If you'd like, you can color the rest of your clock. Just remember to use bright colors that remind you of the hope we have in Christ.



Alternative Crafts Options

While the following options do not match directly with the theme for the night, they might serve as good alternatives if you are looking for other options. These items can be found at www.orientaltrading. com.

"Hang Your Hope On Him – Ornament" – Item # IN-48/2007

"Fun Loop Watch Craft Kit" – Item # IN-13679110





FAMILY ADVENT WORSHIP SERIES

Service One: The Gift of Hope

Family onversation

- 1. What are some things that you have a difficult time waiting for?
- What is the difference between wishing and having hope? 2.

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3. How can you share the hope we have in Jesus Christ with someone this week? 331

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FAMILY ADVENT WORSHIP SERIES

Service Two: The Gift of Love



P As the people of God it is in anticipation that we gather and with expectation that we wait. We make our beginning in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.

Invocation

C Amen.

Lighting of the Advent Wreath

(Two purple candles of the Advent Wreath are lit at this time.)

P Prepare the way of the Lord.

C We light the first candle in hope,

P the hope of our coming Savior, Jesus.

G We light the second candle in love,

P the love that Jesus, our Savior, has for us.

C Prepare, then, the way of the Lord.

Song Wie Soll Ich Dich Empfangen 76 76 D

I lay in fetters, groaning; you came to set me free. I stood, my shame bemoaning; you came to honor me. A glorious crown you give me, a treasure safe on high That will not fail or leave me as earthly riches fly.

Love caused your incarnation; love brought you down to me. Your thirst for my salvation procured my liberty. Oh, love beyond all telling, that led you to embrace In love, all love excelling, our lost and fallen race.

Opening Litany

P People of God, Jesus is coming!

C Yes, Jesus is coming!

P At Christmas Jesus came as a baby.

C Yes, Jesus is coming!

P He comes from heaven above bringing hope, love, peace and life.

C Yes, Jesus is coming!

P He comes to save us from our sin.

C Yes, Jesus is coming!

P He brings forgiveness, grace and mercy.

G Yes, Jesus is coming!

P Lift heart, hands and voices. Get ready for him!

G Alleluia! Jesus is coming! We're ready for him!

Children's Motion Play

ℙ This is Advent! It is a special time of waiting. We come together as members of God's family, young and old, to celebrate how and why Jesus came. Let's talk about God's gift of love.

(Leader will say lines and perform motions. Children and adults will repeat the words and perform the motions.)

P Another gift, sent from above, (*point up to heaven*)

(Children and adults repeat words and motions.)

P is Jesus' special gift of love! (*hug self*)

(Children and adults repeat words and motions.)

P We walk in love like Jesus walks, (make two fingers "walk")

(Children and adults repeat words and motions.)

P and talk to others like he talks. (cup hands around mouth)

Children and adults repeat words and motions

P Faith and hope and love endure; (count with three fingers,

(Children and adults repeat words and motions.)

P love is number one—we're sure! (place hands on heart and then point up)

(Children and adults repeat words and motions.)

Opening Prayer

ℙ Jesus, Gift of Hope, you came to a stable in Bethlehem to become one with us. Jesus, Gift of Love, you were nailed on a cross at Calvary to take away our sin. Jesus, Gift of Peace, you walked the plains and hills of Galilee and Judea teaching us how to live. Jesus, Gift of Life, you rose from a tomb defeating death's power over us. Jesus, you came from heaven above and have ascended beyond the clouds to be our reigning Lord. During this Advent season, bless us with patience, perfect our faith, and, while we await the fulfillment of your promises, grant us confidence through your Word. Amen.

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Confession and Absolution

- Through Jesus, we live new lives and understand our sins through His sacrifice on the cross. God's Word reminds us that all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God and calls us to repentance. We speak our confession together.
- Lord God, our lives are filled with sin. We need the Savior to come. We confess that we have not loved you with our whole heart. We have failed to fulfill your desire for us to love one another. We have not followed the paths you have given us, choosing instead to follow our own. Lord God, our lives are filled with sin. We need the Savior to come. For our worry and hurrying this Advent season, forgive us. For the way we make this a season of shopping rather than waiting, forgive us. For seeking life from places other than in you, forgive us. Lord God, our lives are filled with sin. We need the Savior to come. Free us for joyful obedience, through the coming of Christ, our Lord, our Messiah, our Hope. Amen.
- People of God: Jesus Christ, our Lord, whose coming we announce in this season, is our righteousness. In Christ, your sins are forgiven. In Christ, you are made right with God.

C Thanks be to God!

> Let the earth now praise the Lord, who hath truly kept his Word And the sinners' Help and Friend now at last to us doth send.

> What the fathers most desired, what the prophet's heart inspired, What they longed for many a year, stands fulfilled in glory here.

Abram's promised great Reward, Zion's Helper, Jacob's Lord, Him of twofold race behold, truly came, as long foretold.

As your coming was in peace, quiet, full of gentleness, Let the same mind dwell in me which is yours eternally.

Then when you will come again as the glorious King to reign, I with joy will see your face, freely ransomed by your grace.

Scripture: John 3:13-17

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God loved the world so that he gave His only Son the lost to save, That all who would in him believe Should everlasting life receive.

Christ Jesus is the ground of faith, Who was made flesh and suffered death; All then who trust in him alone Are built on this chief cornerstone.

Video

Message

Family Advent Craft Presentation

Family Conversation

Offering

Offering Prayer

(Leader will say lines and perform motions. Children and adults will repeat the words and perform the motions.)

P God of wonder, we offer you these humble gifts, (All extend arms forward.)

(Children and adults repeat words and motions.)

P signs of your goodness and mercy. (All point hands to heaven.)

(Children and adults repeat words and motions.)

P Receive them with our gratitude, (All put hands over hearts.)

(Children and adults repeat words and motions.)

P that through us all people may know the riches of your gift of love in our Savior Jesus. (*Join hands with one another.*)

(Children and adults repeat words and motions.)

P Amen.

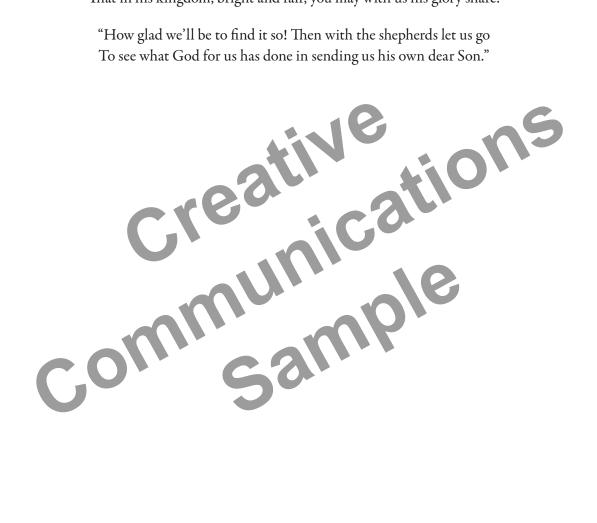
(Adults should help children perform the motions while singing the words with them.) Two little eyes to look to God. (Point to eyes.) Two little ears to hear his Word. (Point to ears.) Two little feet to walk in his ways. (Stomp feet.) Hands to serve him all my days. (Wave hands.) One little tongue to speak his truth. (Point to tongue.) One little heart for him in youth. (Cross arms over heart.) Take them, O Jesus, let them be (Hands held out.) Always willing, true to thee. (Point to heaven. Closing Prayer P Father, thank you for the words and music that express your greatest gift—the gift of Jesus Christ who brings salvation to the world. In Jesus' name. Amen. Song..... Away in a Manger 11 11 11 11 Away in a manger, no crib for a bed, The little Lord Jesus laid down his sweet head. The stars in the sky looked down where he lay The little Lord Jesus asleep on the hay. The cattle are lowing, the baby awakes, But little Lord Jesus, no crying he makes. I love thee, Lord Jesus! Look down from the sky, And stay by my cradle till morning is nigh. Be near my, Lord Jesus; I ask thee to stay Close by me forever and love me, I pray. Bless all the dear children in thy tender care, And take us to heaven to love with thee there. Benediction

🕑 In all your Advent preparations and waiting, remain watchful with your eyes on Christ, whose birth in a manger is but a promise of his coming again in glory. And may the blessing of God, Father, + Son and Holy Spirit be with you now and forever. Amen.

"From heav'n above to earth I come to bear good news to ev'ry home; Glad tidings of great joy I bring, whereof I now will say and sing:

"To you this night is born a child of Mary, chosen virgin mild; This little child of lowly birth shall be the joy of all the earth.

"He will on you the gifts bestow prepared by God for all below, That in his kingdom, bright and fair, you may with us his glory share.





FAMILY ADVENT WORSHIP SERIES

Service Two: The Gift of Love

Complete Script for Worship Leaders

• Pre-service Songs are sung by the congregation, following these guidelines:

The option for "Songs" is a creative invitation for participants to choose what to sing from a list of Advent-themed songs. This approach is especially effective with children, actively involving them in the flow of the worship service. This style of Advent worship for families also lends itself to involving Orff Instruments in your music selections. If your budget allows, consider purchasing a variety of these instruments for children and families to use during select worship songs.

Optional Advent "Song Choice" list (offer the same list each week or vary your list):

"God of Wonders" by Paul Baloche

"Here I Am to Worship" by Tim Hughes

"You Are Holy (Prince of Peace)" by Michael W. Smith

"O Come, Little Children" by Christoph von Schmid

"God Loves Me Dearly" by August Rische

"Soon and Very Soon" by Andrea Crouch

"Away in a Manger"

"O Come, All Ye Faithful"

"Jesus, Name Above All Names" by Naida Hearn

"Everlasting God (Strength Will Rise)" by Brenton Brown

"God with Us" by All Sons and Daughters

"Here Is Our King" by David Crowder Band

"Light of the World" by Matt Redman

"Comfort, Comfort Ye My People"

"My Hope Is Built on Nothing Less"

- A **Welcome** is read by the pastor or other worship leader:
- P Welcome to our Advent worship, a preparation for our Savior Jesus who comes from heaven above bringing the gifts of hope, love, peace and life 10
- A Video is presented on a screen:

Show: Angels Service Starter by iWorship

http://www.worshiphousemedia.com/mini-movies/42302/angels-service-starter

- An Invocation is read responsively by the pastor and the congregation:
- P As the people of God it is in anticipation that we gather and with expectation that we wait. We make our beginning in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.

C Amen.

- A Lighting of the Advent Wreath is read responsively by the pastor and the congregation:
- **P** The lighting of Advent candles dramatically depicts the growing expectation we have for the perfect gift that comes from heaven above, in Jesus Christ. This week we light two candles on the Advent wreath and consider God's gift of love.

(Two purple candles of the Advent Wreath are lit at this time.)

P Prepare the way of the Lord.

G We light the first candle in hope,

P the hope of our coming Savior, Jesus.

• We light the second candle in love,

P the love that Jesus, our Savior, has for us.

C Prepare, then, the way of the Lord.

• A **Song** is sung by the congregation to the tune Wie Soll Ich Dich Empfangen 76 76 D or you are welcome to use "Light One Candle" by Natalie Sleeth or to choose a different song from the "Song Choice" list at the beginning of this script:

> I lay in fetters, groaning; you came to set me free. I stood, my shame bemoaning; you came to honor me. A glorious crown you give me, a treasure safe on high That will not fail or leave me as earthly riches fly.

Love caused your incarnation; love brought you down to me. Your thirst for my salvation procured my liberty. Oh, love beyond all telling, that led you to embrace In love, all love excelling, our lost and fallen race.

worthe c • The **Opening Litany** is read responsively by the pastor and the congregation:

P People of God, Jesus is coming!

• Yes, Jesus is coming!

P At Christmas Jesus came as a baby

C Yes, Jesus is coming!

P He comes from heaven above bringing hope, love, peace and life.

• Yes, Jesus is coming!

P He comes to save us from our sin.

• Yes, Jesus is coming!

P He brings forgiveness, grace and mercy.

• Yes, Jesus is coming!

P Lift heart, hands and voices. Get ready for him!

• Alleluia! Jesus is coming! We're ready for him!

- The **Children's Motion Play** is spoken by the pastor line by line with motions and repeated line by line with motions by the children and adults.
- ℙ This is Advent! It is a special time of waiting. We come together as members of God's family, young and old, to celebrate how and why Jesus came. Let's talk about God's gift of love.

(Leader will say lines and perform motions. Children and adults will repeat the words and perform the motions.)

P Another gift, sent from above, (*point up to heaven*)

(Children and adults repeat words and motions.)

P is Jesus' special gift of love! (*hug self*)

(Children and adults repeat words and motions.)

P We walk in love like Jesus walks, (make two fingers "walk

(Children and adults repeat words and motions.

P and talk to others like he talks. (cup hands around mouth

(Children and adults repeat words and motions.)

P Faith and hope and love endure; (count with three fingers)

(Children and adults repeat words and motions.)

P love is number one—we're sure! (place hands on heart and then point up)

(Children and adults repeat words and motions.)

- The **Opening Prayer** is read by the pastor:
- P Jesus, Gift of Hope, you came to a stable in Bethlehem to become one with us. Jesus, Gift of Love, you were nailed on a cross at Calvary to take away our sin. Jesus, Gift of Peace, you walked the plains and hills of Galilee and Judea teaching us how to live. Jesus, Gift of Life, you rose from a tomb defeating death's power over us. Jesus, you came from heaven above and have ascended beyond the clouds to be our reigning Lord. During this Advent season, bless us with patience, perfect our faith, and, while we await the fulfillment of your promises, grant us confidence through your Word. Amen.

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- The **Confession and Absolution** is read responsively by the pastor and congregation:
- Through Jesus, we live new lives and understand our sins through His sacrifice on the cross. God's Word reminds us that all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God and calls us to repentance. We speak our confession together.
- Lord God, our lives are filled with sin. We need the Savior to come. We confess that we have not loved you with our whole heart. We have failed to fulfill your desire for us to love one another. We have not followed the paths you have given us, choosing instead to follow our own. Lord God, our lives are filled with sin. We need the Savior to come. For our worry and hurrying this Advent season, forgive us. For the way we make this a season of shopping rather than waiting, forgive us. For seeking life from places other than in you, forgive us. Lord God, our lives are filled with sin. We need the Savior to come. Free us for joyful obedience, through the coming of Christ, our Lord, our Messiah, our Hope. Amen.
- People of God: Jesus Christ, our Lord, whose coming we announce in this season, is our righteousness. In Christ, your sins are forgiven. In Christ, you are made right with God.

C Thanks be to God!

• A **Song** is sung by the congregation to the tune Nun Komm, Der Heiden Heiland 77 77 or you are welcome to choose a different song from the "Song Choice" list at the beginning of this script:

> Let the earth now praise the Lord, who hath truly kept his Word And the sinners' Help and Friend now at last to us doth send.



What the fathers most desired, what the prophet's heart inspired, What they longed for many a year, stands fulfilled in glory here.

Abram's promised great Reward, Zion's Helper, Jacob's Lord, Him of twofold race behold, truly came, as long foretold.

As your coming was in peace, quiet, full of gentleness, Let the same mind dwell in me which is yours eternally.

Then when you will come again as the glorious King to reign, I with joy will see your face, freely ransomed by your grace.

- The Scripture: John 3:13-17 is read by the pastor or other worship leader:
- P No one has ascended into heaven except he who descended from heaven, the Son of Man. And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whoever believes in him may have eternal life. For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that

whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him.

• A **Song** is sung by the congregation to the tune St. Crispin LM:

God loved the world so that he gave His only Son the lost to save, That all who would in him believe Should everlasting life receive.

Christ Jesus is the ground of faith, Who was made flesh and suffered death; All then who trust in him alone Are built on this chief cornerstone.

• A Video is presented on a screen.

Love Came Down by Creek Road Media

http://www.worshiphousemedia.com/mini-movies/42856/love-came-down

• A Message is delivered by the pastor:

Note: Cut a large heart from red paper. You will also need a small box to represent a manger. Or you may want to use "Manger on the Mantel" from Creative Communications. At the end of the service give each child a small plastic bag of yellow strips of paper (and a Manger on the Mantel, if you decide to use it).

Please pray with me. Father, we come together today to celebrate the great love you have given us through the birth of your Son. Let your love fill our hearts and spill over to one another as we learn about the great things you have done for us. In Jesus' name. Amen.

How many candles did we light on our Advent wreath today? What did we call the first candle last week? That's right, we called it the Candle of Hope. We're going to call the second candle the Candle of Love. *(Hold up your heart.)* I made you a Christmas card. Does it look like the Christmas cards you have at home? What makes it different? That's right, it looks more like a Valentine! I did that because God gave us his greatest gift of love on Christmas. *(Say the next words quickly and loudly, waiting just a short time for each response.)* "GOD SO LOVED THE WORLD." *(Allow a short pause for the children to repeat these words.)* "THAT HE GAVE HIS ONLY SON." *(Allow a short pause for the children to repeat these words.)* "THAT WHOEVER BELIEVES IN HIM." *(Allow a short pause for the children to repeat these words.)* "SHOULD NOT PERISH." *(Allow a short pause for the children to repeat these words.)* "Glow a short pause for the children to repeat these words.)" "Glow a short pause for the children to repeat these words.)"

You have just said the words of John 3:16 that describe the very best Christmas gift you will ever get.

God loves you and every person in this room and every person in the whole world so much that he sent his only Son to earth as a real baby. That baby would grow up as a real boy and go to school just like you do. He would live a perfect life in our place and then die on the cross to pay the punishment for our sins. Because you believe in that great gift of love, you will live forever in heaven with Jesus.

God's people had been believing in that promise for a long time. Ever since God gave the promise of Baby Jesus to Abraham, his love and kindness and peace have never failed us. God's love in Jesus is the pattern for how we live our lives. God fills us so full of his love that the love just spills over and helps us love the people around us. When people hurt our feelings, we forgive them, just as God forgives us. When people need our help, we help them, just as God helps us. When people need a friend, we ask them to be friends, just as Jesus is our Best Friend.

Hold up your small box (or Manger on the Mantel). Let's pretend that this box is the manger that Mary put baby Jesus in. Jesus loves us so much that he didn't mind giving up his home in heaven to lie in a manger in a cold stable. But we are going to fill this manger with straw for baby Jesus. Hold up a bag of yellow strips of paper. When you go home today you'll each get a bag of pretend straw. Put a box (or your Manger on the Mantel) in the middle of your kitchen table to be your pretend manger. You are going to see how God's love fills your home this week. Whenever you see someone doing something loving, put a piece of straw in the manger. (Use the names of people present and put a piece of "straw" in the manger for each example you mention.) Maybe you'll see Aiden make Emma's bed. Maybe you'll see Kaylee carry her plate to the sink all by herself. Maybe you'll hear your dad tell your mom, "Let me do the dishes tonight, dear." What if you and somebody else see the same loving thing? Will you push each other and shout, "I want to put the straw in!" No way! God's love will fill you up and you'll say, "You do it this time." See how soon your love fills up the manger and makes a warm, soft bed for Baby Jesus.

Do you know who the first people were to see Baby Jesus in the manger? That's right, the angel told the shepherds to run and find him. In the last verse of "From Heaven Above" we will sing about running with the shepherds to find Jesus. Let's read (or sing) it together:

How glad we'll be to find it so! Then with the shepherds let us go To see what God for us has done In sending us his own dear Son.

When people see your manger full of straw this week, explain how you are sharing God's love. Tell them that God gave you Baby Jesus as your best Christmas present. He grew up to die on the cross for you so that you can go to heaven. Let them play the manger game with you. God's love will fill the hearts of everyone who visits your home.

Let's pray. Dear God, our hearts overflow with your great love in sending Jesus to be our Savior. Help us to share that great love and good news with everyone we meet this week. In Jesus' name. Amen.

• The Family Advent Craft: Necklace of Love (or alternate craft) instruction sheets (see pp. 76-79 for reproducible handouts) are handed out for families to do now or on their own during the week:

Family Advent Craft: Necklace of Love

Theme Connect: "I love you." These words have become so common in our culture today that, at times, they may have lost their meaning. And yet, they are words that we so desperately need to hear, especially when it comes to God's love for us. The birth of Jesus is one of the greatest signs of God's love for us. The very Son of God took on human flesh. He left behind his home in heaven and became one of us. He came not as a wrathful judge to condemn the world for everything we have done wrong. Instead, Jesus came out of love in order that we might become children of God and have eternal life with him. As God's beloved children, we now share God's love with others.

When you think of a gift that expresses love, one of the first gifts that may come to mind is jewelry. Nothing says "I love you" like jewelry (or at least that's what the jewelers tells us). Today we will make jewelry. We will make a special necklace to remind us of God's gift of love shown to us in Christ.



Supplies

- An 18" piece of plastic cord or yarn per craft
- One Cross/Heart Charm per craft (Oriental Trading Co. has several options available.)
- An assortment of pony beads (red, green and white if you want seasonal colors).

Instructions

1. This week's craft is fairly simple. Begin by taking your cross/heart charm and centering it on your cord.



2. Now that your charm is centered on the cord, it's time to add beads. Depending on how many beads you have available, you can cover the entire cord in beads or simply place a few on each side of the charm. Remember, the more beads you use, the more fun it will be for the kids and the more time it will take to make the craft. Encourage kids to make patterns with their beads.



3. Once all beads are on the cord, tie the ends of the cord together. You now have a necklace of love. Share this nice piece of jewelry with someone who needs to know the love of Christ.



4. You could also have kids make two necklaces ... one for themselves and one to share with someone else.



Alternative Crafts Options

While the following options do not match directly with the theme for the night, they might serve as good alternatives if you are looking for other options. These items can be found at www.orientaltrading. com.

"Candy Cane Heart Ornament" – Item # IN-48/6280

"God's Greatest Gift Bracelet" - Item # IN-48/7281

• The Family Conversation Question Sheets (see p. 80 for reproducible handout) can be handed out or displayed on a screen and discussed among the families.

Family Conversation

tions

- 1. How do you know that someone loves you?
- How do we know that God loves us? 2.
- consance 3. How can you share the love of God with someone this week?

- The **Offering** is gathered.
- The **Offering Prayer** is spoken by the pastor line by line with motions and repeated line by line with motions by the children and adults, as the offering is brought forward.

(Leader will say lines and perform motions. Children and adults will repeat the words and perform the motions.)

P God of wonder, we offer you these humble gifts, (*All extend arms forward.*)

(Children and adults repeat words and motions.)

P signs of your goodness and mercy. (All point hands to heaven.)

(Children and adults repeat words and motions.)

P Receive them with our gratitude, (All put hands over bearts.)

(Children and adults repeat words and motions.)

P that through us all people may know the riches of your gift of love in our Savior Jesus. (*Join hands with one another.*)

(Children and adults repeat words and motions.)

- P Amen.
- A **Song** is sung by the congregation with hand motions to the tune Two Little Eyes or you are welcome to choose a different song from the "Song Choice" list at the beginning of this script:

(Adults should help children perform the motions while singing the words with them.)

Two little eyes to look to God. (*Point to eyes.*) Two little ears to hear his Word. (*Point to ears.*) Two little feet to walk in his ways. (*Stomp feet.*) Hands to serve him all my days. (*Wave bands.*)

One little tongue to speak his truth. (Point to tongue.) One little heart for him in youth. (Cross arms over heart.) Take them, O Jesus, let them be (Hands held out.) Always willing, true to thee. (Point to heaven.) ns

- The **Closing Prayer** is read by the pastor:
- ₱ Father, thank you for the words and music that express your greatest gift—the gift of Jesus Christ who brings salvation to the world. In Jesus' name. Amen.
- A **Song** is sung by the congregation to the tune Away in a Manger 11 11 11 11 or you are welcome to choose a different song from the "Song Choice" list at the beginning of this script:

Away in a manger, no crib for a bed, The little Lord Jesus laid down his sweet head. The stars in the sky looked down where he lay. The little Lord Jesus asleep on the hay.

The cattle are lowing, the baby awakes, But little Lord Jesus, no crying he makes. I love thee, Lord Jesus! Look down from the sky, And stay by my cradle till morning is nigh.

Be near my, Lord Jesus; I ask thee to stay Close by me forever and love me, I pray. Bless all the dear children in thy tender care, And take us to heaven to love with thee there.

- The Benediction is read by the pastor:
- ▶ In all your Advent preparations and waiting, remain watchful with your eyes on Christ, whose birth in a manger is but a promise of his coming again in glory. And may the blessing of God, Father, + Son and Holy Spirit be with you now and forever. Amen.

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• The **Closing Song** is sung by the congregation to the tune Vom Himmel Hoch LM:

"From heav'n above to earth I come to bear good news to ev'ry home; Glad tidings of great joy I bring, whereof I now will say and sing:

"To you this night is born a child of Mary, chosen virgin mild; This little child of lowly birth shall be the joy of all the earth.

"He will on you the gifts bestow prepared by God for all below, That in his kingdom, bright and fair, you may with us his glory share.





Service Two: The Gift of Love

tion

• A Message is delivered by the pastor:

Note: Cut a large heart from red paper. You will also need a small box to represent a manger. Or you may want to use "Manger on the Mantel" from Creative Communications. At the end of the service give each child a small plastic bag of yellow strips of paper (and a Manger on the Mantel, if you decide to use it).

P Please pray with me. Father, we come together today to celebrate the great love you have given us through the birth of your Son. Let your love fill our hearts and spill over to one another as we learn about the great things you have done for us. In Jesus' name. Amen.

How many candles did we light on our Advent wreath today? What did we call the first candle last week? That's right, we called it the Candle of Hope. We're going to call the second candle the Candle of Love. *(Hold up your heart.)* I made you a Christmas card. Does it look like the Christmas cards you have at home? What makes it different? That's right, it looks more like a Valentine! I did that because God gave us his greatest gift of love on Christmas. *(Say the next words quickly and loudly, waiting just a short time for each response.)* "GOD SO LOVED THE WORLD." *(Allow a short pause for the children to repeat these words.)* "THAT HE GAVE HIS ONLY SON." *(Allow a short pause for the children to repeat these words.)* "THAT WHOEVER BELIEVES IN HIM." *(Allow a short pause for the children to repeat these words.)* "SHOULD NOT PERISH." *(Allow a short pause for the children to repeat these words.)* "Gllow a short pause for the children to repeat these words.)" "GOD NOT PERISH." *(Allow a short pause for the children to repeat these words.)*" "Gllow a short pause for the children to repeat these words.)" "Children to repeat these words.)" "Children to repeat these words.)"

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sent his only Son to earth as a real baby. That baby would grow up as a real boy and go to school just like you do. He would live a perfect life in our place and then die on the cross to pay the punishment for our sins. Because you believe in that great gift of love, you will live forever in heaven with Jesus.

God's people had been believing in that promise for a long time. Ever since God gave the promise of Baby Jesus to Abraham, his love and kindness and peace have never failed us. God's love in Jesus is the pattern for how we live our lives. God fills us so full of his love that the love just spills over and helps us love the people around us. When people hurt our feelings, we forgive them, just as God forgives us. When people need our help, we help them, just as God helps us. When people need a friend, we ask them to be friends, just as Jesus is our Best Friend.

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How glad we'll be to find it so! Then with the shepherds let us go To see what God for us has done In sending us his own dear Son.

When people see your manger full of straw this week, explain how you are sharing God's love. Tell them that God gave you Baby Jesus as your best Christmas present. He grew up to die on the cross for you so that you can go to heaven. Let them play the manger game with you. God's love will fill the hearts of everyone who visits your home.

Let's pray. Dear God, our hearts overflow with your great love in sending Jesus to be our Savior. Help us to share that great love and good news with everyone we meet this week. In Jesus' name. Amen.





Service Two: The Gift of Love

Family Advent Craft: Necklace of Love

Theme Connect: "I love you." These words have become so common in our culture today that, at times, they may have lost their meaning. And yet, they are words that we so desperately need to hear, especially when it comes to God's love for us. The birth of Jesus is one of the greatest signs of God's love for us. The very Son of God took on human flesh. He left behind his home in heaven and became one of us. He came not as a wrathful judge to condemn the world for everything we have done wrong. Instead, Jesus came out of love in order that we might become children of God and have eternal life with him. As God's beloved children, we now share God's love with others.

When you think of a gift that expresses love, one of the first gifts that may come to mind is jewelry. Nothing says "I love you" like jewelry (or at least that's what the jewelers tells us). Today we will make jewelry. We will make a special necklace to remind us of God's gift of love shown to us in Christ.



- Supplies
- An 18" piece of plastic cord or yarn per craft
- One Cross/Heart Charm per craft (Oriental Trading Co. has several options available.)
- An assortment of pony beads (red, green and white 1f you want seasonal colors).

Instructions

1. This week's craft is fairly simple. Begin by taking your cross/heart charm and centering it on your cord.



2. Now that your charm is centered on the cord, it's time to add beads. Depending on how many beads you have available, you can cover the entire cord in beads or simply place a few on each side of the charm. Remember, the more beads you use, the more fun it will be for the kids and the more time it will take to make the craft. Encourage kids to make patterns with their beads.



3. Once all beads are on the cord, tie the ends of the cord together. You now have a necklace of love. Share this nice piece of jewelry with someone who needs to know the love of Christ.



4. You could also have kids make two necklaces ... one for themselves and one to share with someone else.



"Candy Cane Heart Ornament" – Item # IN-48/6280

"God's Greatest Gift Bracelet" – Item # IN-48/7281

• The Family Conversation Question Sheets (see p. 80 for reproducible handout) can be handed out or displayed on a screen and discussed among the families.



Service Two: The Gift of Love



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- 1. How do you know that someone loves you?
- 2. How do we know that God loves us?

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3. How can you share the love of God with someone this week?

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Service Three: The Gift of Peace



P As the people of God it is in anticipation that we gather and with expectation that we wait. We make our beginning in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.

Invocation

C Amen.

Lighting of the Advent Wreath

(Two purple candles and one pink candle of the Advent Wreath are lit at this time.)

P Prepare the way of the Lord.

C We light the first candle in hope,

P the hope of our coming Savior, Jesus.

C We light the second candle in love,

P the love that Jesus, our Savior, has for us.

G We light this candle in peace,

P the peace that we have in Jesus, our Savior.

C Prepare, then, the way of the Lord.

Song.....

.....Chesterfield CM

Hark the glad sound! The Savior comes, the Savior promised long Let ev'ry heart prepare a throne and ev'ry voice a song.

He comes the pris'ners to release, in Satan's bondage held. The gates of brass before him burst, the iron fetters yield.

Our glad hosanna, Prince of Peace, thy welcome shall proclaim, And heav'n's eternal arches ring with thy beloved name.

Opening Litany

P People of God, Jesus is coming!

C Yes, Jesus is coming!

P At Christmas Jesus came as a baby.

C Yes, Jesus is coming!

P He comes from heaven above bringing hope, love, peace and life.

C Yes, Jesus is coming!

P He comes to save us from our sin.

C Yes, Jesus is coming!

P He brings forgiveness, grace and mercy.

C Yes, Jesus is coming!

P Lift heart, hands and voices. Get ready for him!

Alleluia! Jesus is coming! We're ready for him!

Children's Motion Play

P This is Advent! It is a special time of waiting. We come together as members of God's family, young and old to celebrate how and why Jesus came. Let's talk about God's gift of peace.

(Leader will say lines and perform motions. Children and adults will repeat the words and perform the motions.)

P When anger, hate and wars increase, *(shake both fists)*

(Children and adults repeat words and motions.)

P we still have Jesus' gift of peace. (fold hands in prayer,

(Children and adults repeat words and motions.

P For unto us on Christmas morn, (point to self)

(Children and adults repeat words and motions.)

P Jesus, Prince of Peace, was born. (rock "baby" in arms)

(Children and adults repeat words and motions.)

 \mathbb{P} The world has trouble, that we know, (*bide face in bands*)

(Children and adults repeat words and motions.)

P but God's peace gently falls like snow. (flutter fingers downward like snow falling)

(Children and adults repeat words and motions.)

Opening Prayer

P Jesus, Gift of Hope, you came to a stable in Bethlehem to become one with us. Jesus, Gift of Love, you were nailed on a cross at Calvary to take away our sin. Jesus, Gift of Peace, you walked the plains and hills of Galilee and Judea teaching us how to live. Jesus, Gift of Life, you rose from a tomb defeating death's power over us. Jesus, you came from heaven above and have ascended beyond the clouds to be our reigning Lord. During this Advent season, bless our impatience, perfect our faith, and, while we await the fulfillment of your promises, grant us confidence through your Word. Amen.

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Confession and Absolution

- Through Jesus, we live new lives and understand our sins through his sacrifice on the cross. God's Word reminds us that all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God and calls us to repentance. We speak our confession together.
- Lord God, our lives are filled with sin. We need the Savior to come. We confess that we have not loved you with our whole heart. We have failed to fulfill your desire for us to love one another. We have not followed the paths you have given us, choosing instead to follow our own. Lord God, our lives are filled with sin. We need the Savior to come. For our worry and hurrying this Advent season, forgive us. For the way we make this a season of shopping rather than waiting, forgive us. For seeking life from places other than in you, forgive us. Lord God, our lives are filled with sin. We need the Savior to come. Free us for joyful obedience, through the coming of Christ, our Lord, our Messiah, our Hope. Amen.
- People of God: Jesus Christ, our Lord, whose coming we announce in this season, is our righteousness. In Christ, your sins are forgiven. In Christ, you are made right with God.

C Thanks be to God!

> O come, O come, Emmanuel, and ransom captive Israel, That mourns in lonely exile here until the Son of God appear. Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.

O come, thou Key of David, come, and open wide our heav'nly home; Make safe the way that leads on high, and close the path to misery. Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.

O come, Desire of nations, bind in one the hearts of all mankind; Bid thou our sad divisions cease, and be thyself our King of Peace. Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.

Scripture: John 14:25-27

SongWie Soll Ich Dich Empfangen 76 76 D

O Lord, how shall I meet you, how welcome you aright? Your people long to greet you, my hope, my heart's delight! O kindle, Lord most holy, your lamp within my breast To do in spirit lowly all that may please you best. Love caused your incarnation; love brought you down to me. Your thirst for my salvation procured my liberty. Oh, love beyond all telling, that led you to embrace In love, all love excelling, our lost and fallen race.

Sin's debt, that fearful burden, cannot his love erase; Your guilt the Lord will pardon and cover by his grace. He comes, for you procuring the peace of sin forgiv'n, His children thus securing eternal life in heav'n.

Video

Message

Family Advent Craft Presentation

Family Conversation

Offering

tions Offering Prayer eader will say lines and perform motions. Children and adults will repeat the words and perform the motions.

P God of wonder, we offer you these humble gifts, (All extend arms forward.)

Children and adults repeat words and motions.)

P signs of your goodness and mercy. (All point hands to heaven.)

(Children and adults repeat words and motions.)

P Receive them with our gratitude, (All put hands over hearts.)

(Children and adults repeat words and motions.)

P that through us all people may know the riches of your gift of peace in our Savior Jesus. (Join hands with one another.)

(Children and adults repeat words and motions.)

P Amen.

(Adults should help children perform the motions while singing the words with them.)

Two little eyes to look to God. (Point to eyes.) Two little ears to hear his Word. (Point to ears.) Two little feet to walk in his ways. (Stomp feet.) Hands to serve him all my days. (Wave hands.)

One little tongue to speak his truth. (Point to tongue.) One little heart for him in youth. (Cross arms over heart.) Take them, O Jesus, let them be (Hands held out.) Always willing, true to thee. (Point to heaven.

Closing Prayer

P Father, thank you for the words and music that express your greatest gift—the gift of Jesus Christ who brings salvation to the world. In Jesus' name. Amen.

Song.....

St. Louis 86 86 76 86

O little town of Bethlehem, how still we see thee lie! Above thy deep and dreamless sleep the silent starts go by; Yet in thy dark streets shineth the everlasting light. The hopes and fears of all the years are met in thee tonight.

How silently, how silently the wondrous gift is giv'n! So God imparts to human hearts the blessings of his heav'n. No ear may hear his coming; but in this world of sin, Where meek souls will receive him, still the dear Christ enters in.

O holy Child of Bethlehem, descend to us, we pray; Cast out our sin, and enter in, be born in us today. We hear the Christmas angels the great glad tidings tell; O come to us, abide with us, our Lord Immanuel!

Benediction

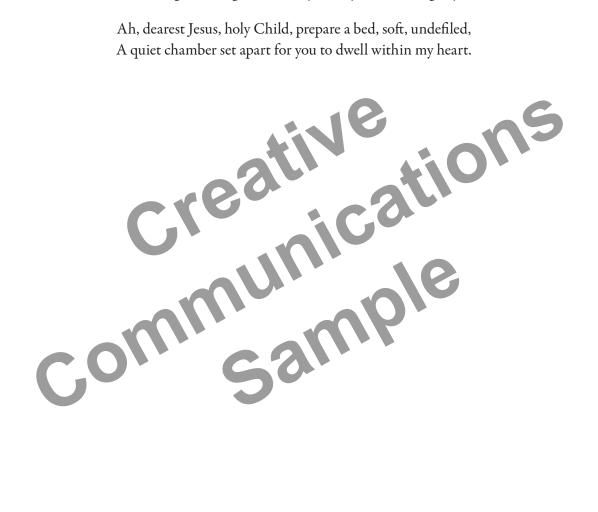
🕑 In all your Advent preparations and waiting, remain watchful with your eyes on Christ, whose birth in a manger is but a promise of his coming again in glory. And may the blessing of God, Father, + Son and Holy Spirit be with you now and forever. Amen.

"From heav'n above to earth I come to bear good news to ev'ry home; Glad tidings of great joy I bring, whereof I now will say and sing:

"To you this night is born a child of Mary, chosen virgin mild; This little child of lowly birth shall be the joy of all the earth.

"He will on you the gifts bestow prepared by God for all below, That in his kingdom, bright and fair, you may with us his glory share."

Ah, dearest Jesus, holy Child, prepare a bed, soft, undefiled,





Service Three: The Gift of Peace

Complete Script for Worship Leaders

• Pre-service Songs are sung by the congregation, following these guidelines:

Songs are sung by the congregation, following these guidelines:

The option for "Songs" is a creative invitation for participants to choose what to sing from a list of Advent-themed songs. This approach is especially effective with children, actively involving them in the flow of the worship service. This style of Advent worship for families also lends itself to involving Orff Instruments in your music selections. If your budget allows, consider purchasing a variety of these instruments for children and families to use during select worship songs.

Optional Advent "Song Choice" list (offer the same list each week or vary your list):

"God of Wonders" by Paul Baloche

"Here I Am to Worship" by Tim Hughes

"You Are Holy (Prince of Peace)" by Michael W. Smith

"O Come, Little Children" by Christoph von Schmid

"God Loves Me Dearly" by August Rische

"Soon and Very Soon" by Andrea Crouch

"Away in a Manger"

"O Come, All Ye Faithful"

"Jesus, Name Above All Names" by Naida Hearn

"Everlasting God (Strength Will Rise)" by Brenton Brown

"God with Us" by All Sons and Daughters

"Here Is Our King" by David Crowder Band

"Light of the World" by Matt Redman

"Comfort, Comfort Ye My People"

"My Hope Is Built on Nothing Less"

- A Welcome is read by the pastor or other worship leader:
- P Welcome to our Advent worship, a preparation for our Savior Jesus who comes from heaven above bringing the gifts of hope, love, peace and life.
- A Video is presented on a screen:

Show: Celebrate The Savior Christmas Intro by Motion Worship

http://www.worshiphousemedia.com/mini-movies/48726/celebrate-the-savior-christmas-intro

- An Invocation is read responsively by the pastor and the congregation:
- P As the people of God it is in anticipation that we gather and with expectation that we wait. We make our beginning in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.

C Amen.

- A Lighting of the Advent Wreath is read responsively by the pastor and the congregation:
- The lighting of Advent candles dramatically depicts the growing expectation we have for the perfect gift that comes from heaven above, in Jesus Christ. This week we light three candles on the Advent wreath and consider God's gift of peace.

(Two purple candles and one pink candle of the Advent Wreath are lit at this time.)

P Prepare the way of the Lord.

C We light the first candle in hope,

P the hope of our coming Savior, Jesus.

C We light the second candle in love,

P the love that Jesus, our Savior, has for us.

• We light this candle in peace,

P the peace that Jesus, our Savior, gives to the world.

C Prepare, then, the way of the Lord.

• A **Song** is sung by the congregation to the tune Chesterfield CM or you are welcome to use "Light One Candle" by Natalie Sleeth or choose a different song from the "Song Choice" list at the beginning of this script:

Hark the glad sound! The Savior comes, the Savior promised long; Let ev'ry heart prepare a throne and ev'ry voice a song.

He comes the pris'ners to release, in Satan's bondage held. The gates of brass before him burst, the iron fetters yield.

Our glad hosanna, Prince of Peace, thy welcome shall proclaim, And heav'n's eternal arches ring with thy beloved name.

- The **Opening Litany** is read responsively by the pastor and the congregation:
- P People of God, Jesus is coming!

C Yes, Jesus is coming!

P At Christmas Jesus came as a baby.

C Yes, Jesus is coming!

P He comes from heaven above bringing hope, love, peace and life.

C Yes, Jesus is coming!

P He comes to save us from our sin.

C Yes, Jesus is coming!

P He brings forgiveness, grace and mercy.

FHA7

G Yes, Jesus is coming!

🕑 Lift heart, hands and voices. Get ready for him!

- Alleluia! Jesus is coming! We're ready for him!
- A **Children's Motion Play** is spoken by the pastor line by line with motions and repeated line by line with motions by the children and adults, as the offering is brought forward.
- ▶ This is Advent! It is a special time of waiting. We come together as members of God's family, young and old, to celebrate how and why Jesus came. Let's talk about God's gift of peace.

(Leader will say lines and perform motions. Children and adults will repeat the words and perform the motions.)

P When anger, hate and wars increase, *(shake both fists)*

(Children and adults repeat words and motions.)

P we still have Jesus' gift of peace. (fold hands in prayer)

(Children and adults repeat words and motions.)

P For unto us on Christmas morn, (point to self)

Children and adults repeat words and motions.

P Jesus, Prince of Peace, was born. (rock "baby" in arms

(Children and adults repeat words and motions.)

P The world has trouble, that we know, (*hide face in hands*)

(Children and adults repeat words and motions.)

D but God's peace gently falls like snow. *(flutter fingers downward like snow falling)*

(Children and adults repeat words and motions.)

• The **Opening Prayer** is read by the pastor:

Desus, Gift of Hope, you came to a stable in Bethlehem to become one with us. Jesus, Gift of Love, you were nailed on a cross at Calvary to take away our sin. Jesus, Gift of Peace, you walked the plains and hills of Galilee and Judea teaching us how to live. Jesus, Gift of Life, you rose from a tomb defeating

ons

death's power over us. Jesus, you came from heaven above and have ascended beyond the clouds to be our reigning Lord. During this Advent season, bless our impatience, perfect our faith, and, while we await the fulfillment of your promises, grant us confidence through your Word. Amen.

- The **Confession and Absolution** is read responsively by the pastor and congregation:
- Through Jesus, we live new lives and understand our sins through his sacrifice on the cross. God's Word reminds us that all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God and calls us to repentance. We speak our confession together.
- Lord God, our lives are filled with sin. We need the Savior to come. We confess that we have not loved you with our whole heart. We have failed to fulfill your desire for us to love one another. We have not followed the paths you have given us, choosing instead to follow our own. Lord God, our lives are filled with sin. We need the Savior to come. For our worry and hurrying this Advent season, forgive us. For the way we make this a season of shopping rather than waiting, forgive us. For seeking life from places other than in you, forgive us. Lord God, our lives are filled with sin. We need the Savior to come. Free us for joyful obedience, through the coming of Christ, our Lord, our Messiah, our Hope. Amen.
- P People of God: Jesus Christ, our Lord, whose coming we announce in this season, is our righteousness. In Christ, your sins are forgiven. In Christ, you are made right with God.

C Thanks be to God!

• A **Song** is sung by the congregation to the tune Veni Emmanuel LM and refrain or you are welcome to choose a different song from the "Song Choice" list at the beginning of this script:

O come, O come, Emmanuel, and ransom captive Israel, That mourns in lonely exile here until the Son of God appear. Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.

O come, thou Key of David, come, and open wide our heav'nly home; Make safe the way that leads on high, and close the path to misery. Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel. O come, Desire of nations, bind in one the hearts of all mankind; Bid thou our sad divisions cease, and be thyself our King of Peace. Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.

- The Scripture: John 14:25-27 is read by the pastor or other worship leader:
- These things I have spoken to you while I am still with you. But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he will teach you all things and bring to your remembrance all that I have said to you. Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. Not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid.
- A **Song** is sung by the congregation to the tune Wie Soll Ich Dich Empfangen 76 76 D:

O Lord, how shall I meet you, how welcome you aright? Your people long to greet you, my hope, my heart's delight! O kindle, Lord most holy, your lamp within my breast To do in spirit lowly all that may please you best.

Love caused your incarnation; love brought you down to me. Your thirst for my salvation procured my liberty. Oh, love beyond all telling, that led you to embrace In love, all love excelling, our lost and fallen race.

Sin's debt, that fearful burden, cannot his love erase; Your guilt the Lord will pardon and cover by his grace. He comes, for you procuring the peace of sin forgiv'n, His children thus securing eternal life in heav'n.

• A Video is presented on a screen.

Love Came Down by Creek Road Media

http://www.worshiphousemedia.com/mini-movies/42856/love-came-down

• A **Message** is delivered by the pastor:

Note: You will need a teddy bear or other stuffed animal.

Please pray with me. Father, we thank you again for the gifts of love and of hope that you have blessed us with this Advent season and throughout our lives. Send your Holy Spirit to be our teacher as we find the peace that only you can give through the redeeming love of your Son. In Jesus' name. Amen. (Hold your teddy bear behind your back. Say the first sentence in each pair as if you are extremely frightened. During the second sentence hug your teddy bear and speak as if you feel extremely peaceful.)

A big storm is coming! I feel peaceful.

I don't have any money to buy food! I feel peaceful.

A big, growly bear is chasing me! I feel peaceful.

Why are you laughing? It's funny to talk about being frightened and worried and peaceful at the same time, isn't it? Hugging my teddy bear felt good, but can he really bring me peace? Today our third candle reminds us of the special kind of peace that Jesus gives us.

Without Jesus we would be at war with God. Does that sound strange? It's true. We would sin all the time and not care. God would be angry with us and want to punish us. But as God promised Abraham and all the people in the Old Testament times, he would send his own son Jesus to die on the cross and take the punishment for our sin. It is Jesus' blood that heals our relationship with God and gives us peace.

During the last talk Jesus had with his disciples before he died on the cross, he gave them and us the gift of peace. He said the Holy Spirit would be our teacher as we learn about his special kind of peace. It is not the kind of peace that the world gives. Sometimes we say, "Oh, the Christmas tree is shining so brightly, I feel so peaceful." We climb into bed with our warm blankets and hug our teddy bear and think, "I am so peaceful." The kind of peace that Jesus gives us is the peace that stays with us in happy times and troubled times. If someone we love is sick, Jesus' peace helps us remember that he is taking good care of that person. If someone dies, we will feel sad and miss him or her, but we will have peace because we know the person is in heaven with Jesus. If scary news on the TV frightens us, Jesus reminds us that he will help our parents keep us safe and we feel his peace.

The last verse we will sing of "From Heaven Above" gives us a beautiful picture of Jesus' kind of peace. Let's look at it together.

Ah, dearest Jesus, holy Child, Prepare a bed, soft, undefiled.

Undefiled means we don't want anything sinful or bad or scary in this bed.

A quiet chamber set apart For you to dwell within my heart. We are asking Jesus to live in our heart, as if our heart was a quiet, soft bed for him. Soon we will celebrate Baby Jesus as he lay in his first manger bed. He would grow up to die on the cross for us. Because of that special gift we are at peace with God. Jesus lives within our hearts and fills them with the special peace that only he can give.

Put one of your favorite stuffed animals under the Christmas tree when you get home today. Hold him when you talk about Jesus' kind of peace with your family this week. If someone is having trouble remind him or her that Jesus' peace will help. If your family is having a great time looking at Christmas lights or doing something that is really fun, thank Jesus for bringing peace to the world.

Let's pray.

Ah, dearest Jesus, holy Child, Prepare a bed, soft, undefiled; A quiet chamber set apart For you to dwell within my heart.

Amen.

• The Family Advent Craft: Peace Candle Votive (or alternate craft) instruction sheets (see pp. 107-111 for reproducible handouts) are handed out for families to do now or on their own during the week:

Advent Craft

Theme Connect: "I just need some peace and quiet." "Peace, dude!" "I pray for world peace." Unfortunately, the world's notion of peace often falls short of the peace that we truly need ... peace with God. In Christ, we find that peace, having been forgiven of our sins and made right in the eyes of God.

Peace Candle V

Another common Christmas gift given every year is a candle. Candles, especially scented ones, are supposed to create a peaceful atmosphere. Today we will make a candle votive that will not only create a peaceful atmosphere in the room, but more importantly, will point others to the peace we have in Christ.



- 1 glass candle votive per craft ٠
- A variety of tissue paper •
- "Hodge podge" (a mixture of glue and water) •
- Paint brushes •
- Baby wipes (to clean sticky fingers) •
- Newspaper to protect your tables •

Instructions

 To begin our craft, we need to tear up some tissue paper. This will be just the beginning of the fun. Later, we'll get to play with glue! For now, pick the colors of tissue paper that you would like to use and tear your tissue paper into small squares and strips. We'll be putting a cross on our votive, so make sure you pick one color specifically for your cross.



2. Once your tissue paper has been torn, dip your paint brush in your glue/water mixture and paint a cross shape on one side of your votive. Using the tissue paper that you have chosen for your cross, stick your paper to your votive.



3. Once you have your cross, it's time to add the rest of your tissue paper. Using a brush, paint the rest of your votive with the glue/water mixture. Stick your tissue paper to your votive. Have fun with it, making patterns with your colors.



4. Once your votive is covered in tissue paper, it's time to seal it. Using your brush, paint the outside of your tissue paper with the glue/water mixture.



5. You now have a Peace Candle Votive. When you place a candle inside and light it, it should reflect a variety of colors around the room. As you look at it, see the cross and remember the peace we have in Christ.



Alternative Crafts Options

While the following option does not match directly with the theme for the night, it might serve as a good alternative if you are looking for another option. This item can be found at www.orientaltrading. com.

"Sleeping Baby Jesus Ornament" – Item # IN-13712554

• The Family Conversation Question Sheets (see p. 112 for reproducible handout) can be handed out or displayed on a screen and discussed among the families.

Family Conversation

- 1. What are some things that you find peaceful?
- 2. If you had to describe the peace that Jesus gives us, how would you describe it?
- 3. How can you share the peace we have in Christ with someone else this week?
- The **Offering** is gathered.
- The Offering Prayer is spoken by the pastor line by line with motions and repeated

line by line with motions by the children and adults, as the offering is brought forward.

(Leader will say lines and perform motions. Children and adults will repeat the words and perform the motions.)

₱ God of wonder, we offer you these humble gifts, (All extend arms forward.)

(Children and adults repeat words and motions.)

P signs of your goodness and mercy. (All point hands to heaven.)

(Children and adults repeat words and motions.)

P Receive them with our gratitude, (All put hands over hearts.)

(Children and adults repeat words and motions.)

P that through us all people may know the riches of your gift of peace in our Savior Jesus. *(Join hands with one another.)*

(Children and adults repeat words and motion

- P Amen.
- A **Song** is sung by the congregation with hand motions to the tune Two Little Eyes or you are welcome to choose a different song from the "Song Choice" list at the beginning of this script:

Adults should help children perform the motions while singing the words with them.)

Two little eyes to look to God. (*Point to eyes.*) Two little ears to hear his Word. (*Point to ears.*) Two little feet to walk in his ways. (*Stomp feet.*) Hands to serve him all my days. (*Wave hands.*)

One little tongue to speak his truth. (*Point to tongue.*) One little heart for him in youth. (*Cross arms over heart.*) Take them, O Jesus, let them be (*Hands held out.*) Always willing, true to thee. (*Point to heaven.*)

• The **Closing Prayer** is read by the pastor:

P Father, thank you for the words and music that express your greatest gift—the gift of Jesus Christ

who brings salvation to the world. In Jesus' name. Amen.

• A **Song** is sung by the congregation to the tune St. Louis 86 86 76 86 or you are welcome to choose a different song from the "Song Choice" list at the beginning of this script:

O little town of Bethlehem, how still we see thee lie! Above thy deep and dreamless sleep the silent starts go by; Yet in thy dark streets shineth the everlasting light. The hopes and fears of all the years are met in thee tonight.

How silently, how silently the wondrous gift is giv'n! So God imparts to human hearts the blessings of his heav'n. No ear may hear his coming; but in this world of sin, Where meek souls will receive him, still the dear Christ enters in.

O holy Child of Bethlehem, descend to us, we pray; Cast out our sin, and enter in, be born in us today. We hear the Christmas angels the great glad tidings tell; O come to us, abide with us, our Lord Immanuel!

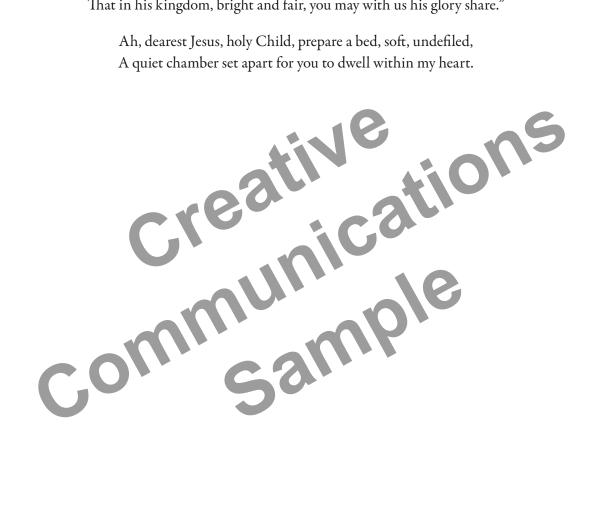
- The **Benediction** is read by the pastor:
- In all your Advent preparations and waiting, remain watchful with your eyes on Christ, whose birth in a manger is but a promise of his coming again in glory. And may the blessing of God, Father, + Son and Holy Spirit be with you now and forever. Amen.

• The **Closing Song** is sung by the congregation to the tune Vom Himmel Hoch LM:

"From heav'n above to earth I come to bear good news to ev'ry home; Glad tidings of great joy I bring, whereof I now will say and sing:

"To you this night is born a child of Mary, chosen virgin mild; This little child of lowly birth shall be the joy of all the earth.

"He will on you the gifts bestow prepared by God for all below, That in his kingdom, bright and fair, you may with us his glory share."





Service Three: The Gift of Peace

• A Message is delivered by the pastor:

Note: You will need a teddy bear or other stuffed animal.

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Please pray with me. Father, we thank you again for the gifts of love and of hope that you have blessed us with this Advent season and throughout our lives. Send your Holy Spirit to be our teacher as we find the peace that only you can give through the redeeming love of your Son. In Jesus' name. Amen.

(Hold your teddy bear behind your back. Say the first sentence in each pair as if you are extremely frightened. During the second sentence hug your teddy bear and speak as if you feel extremely peaceful.)

A big storm is coming! I feel peaceful.

I don't have any money to buy food! I feel peaceful.

A big, growly bear is chasing me! I feel peaceful.

Why are you laughing? It's funny to talk about being frightened and worried and peaceful at the same time, isn't it? Hugging my teddy bear felt good, but can he really bring me peace? Today our third candle reminds us of the special kind of peace that Jesus gives us.

Without Jesus we would be at war with God. Does that sound strange? It's true. We would sin all the time and not care. God would be angry with us and want to punish us. But as God promised Abraham and all the people in the Old Testament times, he would send his own son Jesus to die on the cross and take the punishment for our sin. It is Jesus' blood that heals our relationship with God and gives us peace.

During the last talk Jesus had with his disciples before he died on the cross, he gave them and us the gift of peace. He said the Holy Spirit would be our teacher as we learn about his special kind of peace. It is not the kind of peace that the world gives. Sometimes we say, "Oh, the Christmas tree is shining so brightly, I feel so peaceful." We climb into bed with our warm blankets and hug our teddy bear and think, "I am so peaceful." The kind of peace that Jesus gives us is the peace that stays with us in happy times and troubled times. If someone we love is sick, Jesus' peace helps us remember that he is taking good care of that person. If someone dies, we will feel sad and miss him or her, but we will have peace because we know the person is in heaven with Jesus. If scary news on the TV frightens us, Jesus reminds us that he will help our parents keep us safe and we feel his peace.

The last verse we will sing of "From Heaven Above" gives us a beautiful picture of Jesus' kind of peace. Let's look at it together.

Ah, dearest Jesus, holy Child, Prepare a bed, soft, undefiled.

Undefiled means we don't want anything sinful or bad or scary in this bed.

A quiet chamber set apart For you to dwell within my heart.

We are asking Jesus to live in our heart, as if our heart was a quiet, soft bed for him. Soon we will celebrate Baby Jesus as he lay in his first manger bed. He would grow up to die on the cross for us. Because of that special gift we are at peace with God. Jesus lives within our hearts and fills them with the special peace that only he can give.

Put one of your favorite stuffed animals under the Christmas tree when you get home today. Hold him when you talk about Jesus' kind of peace with your family this week. If someone is having trouble remind him or her that Jesus' peace will help. If your family is having a great time looking at Christmas lights or doing something that is really fun, thank Jesus for bringing peace to the world. Let's pray.

Ah, dearest Jesus, holy Child, Prepare a bed, soft, undefiled; A quiet chamber set apart For you to dwell within my heart.

Amen.





Service Three: The Gift of Peace



Theme Connect: "I just need some peace and quiet." "Peace, dude!" "I pray for world peace." Unfortunately, the world's notion of peace often falls short of the peace that we truly need ... peace with God. In Christ, we find that peace, having been forgiven of our sins and made right in the eyes of God.

Another common Christmas gift given every year is a candle. Candles, especially scented ones, are supposed to create a peaceful atmosphere. Today we will make a candle votive that will not only create a peaceful atmosphere in the room, but more importantly, will point others to the peace we have in Christ.



- 1 glass candle votive per craft ٠
- A variety of tissue paper •
- "Hodge podge" (a mixture of glue and water) •
- Paint brushes •
- Baby wipes (to clean sticky fingers) •
- Newspaper to protect your tables •

Instructions

 To begin our craft, we need to tear up some tissue paper. This will be just the beginning of the fun. Later, we'll get to play with glue! For now, pick the colors of tissue paper that you would like to use and tear your tissue paper into small squares and strips. We'll be putting a cross on our votive, so make sure you pick one color specifically for your cross.



- 2. Once your tissue paper has been torn, dip your paint brush in your glue/water mixture and paint a cross shape on one side of your votive. Using the tissue paper that you have chosen for your cross, stick your paper to your votive.
- 3. Once you have your cross, it's time to add the rest of your tissue paper. Using a brush, paint the rest



of your votive with the glue/water mixture. Stick your tissue paper to your votive. Have fun with it, making patterns with your colors.



4. Once your votive is covered in tissue paper, it's time to seal it. Using your brush, paint the outside of your tissue paper with the glue/water mixture.



5. You now have a Peace Candle Votive. When you place a candle inside and light it, it should reflect a variety of colors around the room. As you look at it, see the cross and remember the peace we have in Christ.



Alternative Crafts Options

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> "Sleeping Baby Jesus Ornament" – Item # IN-13712554 ,ar

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FAMILY ADVENT WORSHIP SERIES

Service Three: The Gift of Peace

Family (Jonversation

1. What are some things that you find peaceful?

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- 2. If you had to describe the peace that Jesus gives us, how would you describe it?
- 3. How can you share the peace we have in Christ with someone else this week? **San**í

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FROM
EAVEN ABOVE
FAMILY ADVENT WORSHIP SERIES
Service Four: The Gift of Life
Index Order of Service
Complete Script For Worship Leaders
Message
Family Advent Craft
Family Conversation



FAMILY ADVENT WORSHIP SERIES

Service Four: The Gift of Life



P As the people of God it is in anticipation that we gather and with expectation that we wait. We make our beginning in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.

Invocation

C Amen.

Lighting of the Advent Wreath

(All four candles of the Advent Wreath are lit at this time.)

P Prepare the way of the Lord.

C We light the first candle in hope,

P the hope of our coming Savior, Jesus.

G We light the second candle in love,

P the love that Jesus, our Savior, has for us.

G We light the third candle in peace,

P the peace that Jesus, our Savior, gives to the world.

(We light the fourth candle in life,

P the life that is the light of all humankind..

C Prepare, then, the way of the Lord.

Song.....

...Milwaukee 88 88 88 66

Lift up your heads, ye mighty gates! Behold, the King of glory waits. The King of kings is drawing near; the Savior of the world is here. Life and salvation he doth bring; therefore rejoice and gladly sing. To God the Father raise your joyful songs of praise.

Fling wide the portals of your heart; make it a temple set apart From earthly use for heav'n's employ, adorned with prayer and love and joy. So shall your Sov'reign enter in and new and nobler life begin. To God alone be praise for word and deed and grace!

Redeemer, come and open wide my heart to thee; here, Lord, abide! O enter with thy grace divine; thy face of mercy on me shine. Thy Holy Spirit guide us on until our glorious goal is won. Eternal praise and fame we offer to thy name.

Opening Litany

P People of God, Jesus is coming!

C Yes, Jesus is coming!

P At Christmas Jesus came as a baby.

O Yes, Jesus is coming!

P He comes from heaven above bringing hope, love, peace and life.

C Yes, Jesus is coming!

P He comes to save us from our sin.

C Yes, Jesus is coming!

P He brings forgiveness, grace and mercy.

O Yes, Jesus is coming!

P Lift heart, hands and voices. Get ready for him!

• Alleluia! Jesus is coming! We're ready for him!

Children's Motion Pla

P This is Advent! It is a special time of waiting. We come together as members of God's family, young and old, to celebrate how and why Jesus came. Let's talk about God's gift of life.

(Leader will say lines and perform motions. Children and adults will repeat the words and perform the motions.)

P Our Lord from heaven to earth came down (point up, then point down)

(Children and adults repeat words and motions.)

P so we one day would wear life's crown. (*place imaginary crown on your head*)

(Children and adults repeat words and motions.)

P The tree of life has fruit to give; (*pretend to bite fruit*)

(Children and adults repeat words and motions.)

P Jesus calls, "Come, eat, and live." (*wave hand in a "come" motion*)

(Children and adults repeat words and motions.)

P All God's gifts are ours for free, (cup hands to receive gifts)

(Children and adults repeat words and motions.)

P and life is ours eternally! (open arms wide to celebrate)

(Children and adults repeat words and motions.)

Opening Prayer

P Jesus, Gift of Hope, you came to a stable in Bethlehem to become one with us. Jesus, Gift of Love, you were nailed on a cross at Calvary to take away our sin. Jesus, Gift of Peace, you walked the plains and hills of Galilee and Judea teaching us how to live. Jesus, Gift of Life, you rose from a tomb defeating death's power over us. Jesus, you came from heaven above and have ascended beyond the clouds to be our reigning Lord. During this Advent season, bless our impatience, perfect our faith, and, while we await the fulfillment of your promises, grant us confidence through your Word. Amen.

Confession and Absolution

- P Through Jesus, we live new lives and understand our sins through his sacrifice on the cross. God's Word reminds us that all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God and calls us to repentance. We speak our confession together.
- Lord God, our lives are filled with sin. We need the Savior to come. We confess that we have not loved you with our whole heart. We have failed to fulfill your desire for us to love one another. We have not followed the paths you have given us, choosing instead to follow our own. Lord God, our lives are filled with sin. We need the Savior to come. For our worry and hurrying this Advent season, forgive us. For the way we make this a season of shopping rather than waiting, forgive us. For seeking life from places other than in you, forgive us. Lord God, our lives are filled with sin. We need the Savior to come. Free us for joyful obedience, through the coming of Christ, our Lord, our Messiah, our Hope. Amen.
- P People of God: Jesus Christ, our Lord, whose coming we announce in this season, is our righteousness. In Christ, your sins are forgiven. In Christ, you are made right with God.

C Thanks be to God!

Song Puer Nobis LM

On Jordan's bank the Baptist's cry announces that the Lord is nigh; Awake and hearken, for he brings glad tidings of the King of kings.

Then cleansed be ev'ry life from sin; make straight the way for God within, And let us all our hearts prepare for Christ to come and enter there. Lay on the sick thy healing hand and make the fallen strong to stand; Show us the glory of thy face till beauty springs in ev'ry place.

Scripture: Romans 6:20-23

The advent of our King our prayers must now employ, And we must hymns of welcome sing in strains of holy joy.

As judge, on clouds of light, he soon will come again And his true members all unite with him in heav'n to reign.

All glory to the Son, who comes to set us free, With Father, Spirit, ever one through all eternity.

Family Conversation

Family Advent Craft Presentation

Offering

Offering Prayer

(Leader will say lines and perform motions. Children and adults will repeat the words and perform the motions.)

P God of wonder, we offer you these humble gifts, (All extend arms forward.)

(Children and adults repeat words and motions.)

P signs of your goodness and mercy. (*All point hands to heaven.*)

(Children and adults repeat words and motions.)

P Receive them with our gratitude, (All put hands over hearts.)

(Children and adults repeat words and motions.)

P that through us all people may know the riches of your gift of life in our Savior Jesus. (*Join hands with one another.*)

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(Children and adults repeat words and motions.)

P Amen.

Song Two Little Eyes 88 99

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... This Little Gospel Light of Mine

(Adults should help children perform the motions while singing the words with them.)

Two little eyes to look to God. (*Point to eyes.*) Two little ears to hear his Word. (*Point to ears.*) Two little feet to walk in his ways. (*Stomp feet.*) Hands to serve him all my days. (*Wave hands.*)

One little tongue to speak his truth. (Point to tongue.) One little heart for him in youth. (Cross arms over heart.) Take them, O Jesus, let them be (Hands held out.) Always willing, true to thee. (Point to heaven.

Closing Prayer

P Father, thank you for the words and music that express your greatest gift—the gift of Jesus Christ who brings salvation to the world. In Jesus' name. Amen.

Song.....

This little Gospel light of mine, I'm going to let it shine. This little Gospel light of mine, I'm going to let it shine. This little Gospel light of mine, I'm going to let it shine, Let it shine all the time, let it shine.

> All around the neighborhood, I'm going to let it shine. All around the neighborhood, I'm going to let it shine. All around the neighborhood, I'm going to let it shine, Let it shine all the time, let it shine.

Hide it under a bushel, No! I'm going to let it shine. Hide it under a bushel, No! I'm going to let it shine. Hide it under a bushel, No! I'm going to let it shine. Let it shine all the time, let it shine.

Benediction

■ In all your Advent preparations and waiting, remain watchful with your eyes on Christ, whose birth in a manger is but a promise of his coming again in glory. And may the blessing of God, Father, + Son and Holy Spirit be with you now and forever. Amen.

Closing Song	
"From heav'n above to earth I	come to bear good news to ev'ry home;
Glad tidings of great joy I bi	ing, whereof I now will say and sing:
"To you this night is born a	a child of Mary, chosen virgin mild;
This little child of lowly bi	rth shall be the joy of all the earth.
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	estow prepared by God for all below,
That in his kingdom, bright ar	nd fair, you may with us his glory share.
"This is the Christ, our God Mos	t High, who hears your sad and bitter cry;
He will himself your Savior	be from all your sins to set you free."
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FAMILY ADVENT WORSHIP SERIES

Service Four: The Gift of Life

Complete Script for Worship Leaders

• Pre-service Songs are sung by the congregation, following these guidelines:

Songs are sung by the congregation, following these guidelines:

The option for "Songs" is a creative invitation for participants to choose what to sing from a list of Advent-themed songs. This approach is especially effective with children, actively involving them in the flow of the worship service. This style of Advent worship for families also lends itself to involving Orff Instruments in your music selections. If your budget allows, consider purchasing a variety of these instruments for children and families to use during select worship songs.

Optional Advent "Song Choice" list (offer the same list each week or vary your list):

"God of Wonders" by Paul Baloche

"Here I Am to Worship" by Tim Hughes

"You Are Holy (Prince of Peace)" by Michael W. Smith

"O Come, Little Children" by Christoph von Schmid

"God Loves Me Dearly" by August Rische

"Soon and Very Soon" by Andrea Crouch

"Away in a Manger"

"O Come, All Ye Faithful"

"Jesus, Name Above All Names" by Naida Hearn

"Everlasting God (Strength Will Rise)" by Brenton Brown

"God with Us" by All Sons and Daughters

"Here Is Our King" by David Crowder Band

"Light of the World" by Matt Redman

"Comfort, Comfort Ye My People"

"My Hope Is Built on Nothing Less"

- A Welcome is read by the pastor or other worship leader:
- P Welcome to our Advent worship, a preparation for our Savior Jesus who comes from heaven above bringing the gifts of hope, love, peace and life.
- A Video is presented on a screen:

Show: We Are Waiting by All Sons & Daughters for iWorship

http://www.worshiphousemedia.com/worship-tracks/56859/we-are-waiting

- An **Invocation** is read responsively by the pastor and the congregation:
- P As the people of God it is in anticipation that we gather and with expectation that we wait. We make our beginning in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.

C Amen.

- A Lighting of the Advent Wreath is read responsively by the pastor and the congregation:
- The lighting of Advent candles dramatically depicts the growing expectation we have for the perfect gift that comes from heaven above, in Jesus Christ. This week we light four candles on the Advent wreath and consider God's gift of life.

(All four candles of the Advent Wreath are lit at this time.)

- ${\bf P}\,$ Prepare the way of the Lord.
- We light the first candle in hope,

P the hope of our coming Savior, Jesus.

C We light the second candle in love,

P the love that Jesus, our Savior, has for us.

G We light the third candle in joy,

P the joy that we have in Jesus, our Savior.

C We light the fourth candle in peace,

P the peace that Jesus, our Savior, gives to the world.

C Prepare, then, the way of the Lord.

• A **Song** is sung by the congregation to the tune Milwaukee 88 88 88 66 or you are welcome to use "Light One Candle" by Natalie Sleeth or choose a different song from the "Song Choice" list at the beginning of this script:

Lift up your heads, ye mighty gates! Behold, the King of glory waits. The King of kings is drawing near; the Savior of the world is here. Life and salvation he doth bring; therefore rejoice and gladly sing. To God the Father raise your joyful songs of praise.

Fling wide the portals of your heart; make it a temple set apart From earthly use for heav'n's employ, adorned with prayer and love and joy. So shall your Sov'reign enter in and new and nobler life begin. To God alone be praise for word and deed and grace!

Redeemer, come and open wide my heart to thee; here, Lord, abide! O enter with thy grace divine; thy face of mercy on me shine. Thy Holy Spirit guide us on until our glorious goal is won. Eternal praise and fame we offer to thy name.

• The **Opening Litany** is read responsively by the pastor and the congregation:

P People of God, Jesus is coming!

C Yes, Jesus is coming!

P At Christmas Jesus came as a baby.

O Yes, Jesus is coming!

P He comes from heaven above bringing hope, love, peace and life.

• Yes, Jesus is coming!

P He comes to save us from our sin.

C Yes, Jesus is coming!

P He brings forgiveness, grace and mercy.

G Yes, Jesus is coming!

🕑 Lift heart, hands and voices. Get ready for him!

G Alleluia! Jesus is coming! We're ready for him!

- A **Children's Motion Play** is spoken by the pastor line by line with motions and repeated line by line with motions by the children and adults.
- P This is Advent! It is a special time of waiting. We come together as members of God's family, young and old, to celebrate how and why Jesus came. Let's talk about God's gift of life.

(Leader will say lines and perform motions. Children and adults will repeat the words and perform the motions.)

P Our Lord from heaven to earth came down (point up, then point down)

(Children and adults repeat words and motions.)

P so we one day would wear life's crown. (place imaginary crown on your head)

(Children and adults repeat words and motions.)

₱ The tree of life has fruit to give; (pretend to bite fruit)

(Children and adults repeat words and motions.)

P Jesus calls, "Come, eat, and live." *(wave hand in a "come" motion)*

(Children and adults repeat words and motions.)

P All God's gifts are ours for free, (cup hands to receive gifts)

(Children and adults repeat words and motions.)

P and life is ours eternally! (open arms wide to celebrate)

P The **Opening Prayer** is read by the pastor:

- P Jesus, Gift of Hope, you came to a stable in Bethlehem to become one with us. Jesus, Gift of Love, you were nailed on a cross at Calvary to take away our sin. Jesus, Gift of Peace, you walked the plains and hills of Galilee and Judea teaching us how to live. Jesus, Gift of Life, you rose from a tomb defeating death's power over us. Jesus, you came from heaven above and have ascended beyond the clouds to be our reigning Lord. During this Advent season, bless our impatience, perfect our faith, and, while we await the fulfillment of your promises, grant us confidence through your Word. Amen.
- The **Confession and Absolution** is read responsively by the pastor and congregation:
- P Through Jesus, we live new lives and understand our sins through his sacrifice on the cross. God's Word reminds us that all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God and calls us to repentance. We speak our confession together.
- Lord God, our lives are filled with sin. We need the Savior to come. We confess that we have not loved you with our whole heart. We have failed to fulfill your desire for us to love one another. We have not followed the paths you have given us, choosing instead to follow our own. Lord God, our lives are filled with sin. We need the Savior to come. For our worry and hurrying this Advent season, forgive us. For the way we make this a season of shopping rather than waiting, forgive us. For seeking life from places other than in you, forgive us. Lord God, our lives are filled with sin. We need a Savior to come. Free us for joyful obedience, through the coming of Christ, our Lord, our Messiah, our Hope. Amen.
- People of God: Jesus Christ, our Lord, whose coming we announce in this season, is our righteousness. In Christ, your sins are forgiven. In Christ, you are made right with God.

C Thanks be to God!

• A **Song** is sung by the congregation to the tune Puer Nobis LM or you are welcome to choose a different song from the "Song Choice" list at the beginning of this script:

On Jordan's bank the Baptist's cry announces that the Lord is nigh; Awake and hearken, for he brings glad tidings of the King of kings.

Then cleansed be ev'ry life from sin; make straight the way for God within, And let us all our hearts prepare for Christ to come and enter there.

Lay on the sick thy healing hand and make the fallen strong to stand; Show us the glory of thy face till beauty springs in ev'ry place.

- The Scripture: Romans 6:20-23 is read by the pastor or other worship leader:
- ▶ For when you were slaves of sin, you were free in regard to righteousness. But what fruit were you getting at that time from the things of which you are now ashamed? For the end of those things is death. But now that you have been set free from sin and have become slaves of God, the fruit you get leads to sanctification and its end, eternal life. For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.
- A **Song** is sung by the congregation to the tune St. Thomas SM:

The advent of our King our prayers must now employ, And we must hymns of welcome sing in strains of holy joy.

As judge, on clouds of light, he soon will come again And his true members all unite with him in heav'n to reign.

All glory to the Son, who comes to set us free, With Father, Spirit, ever one through all eternity.

• A Video is presented on a screen.

Joy To The World by Igniter Media

http://www.worshiphousemedia.com/mini-movies/56269/joy-to-the-world

• A Message is delivered by the pastor:

Note: You will need two boxes with lids of the same size. If you are worshiping in a small room large shoe boxes will work. If you are in a large hall or your sanctuary, you will need large boxes, such as those that have contained reams of paper. Leave one box empty. Fill the second box with flashlights and penlights. Turn all the flashlights and penlights on just before the service begins. Tell someone the cue words you will use so he or she knows when to turn the church lights off and on again. If you are in your sanctuary you will also need people to put out the Advent candles and unplug the Christmas tree. You may want to give each child a small flashlight or penlight as the children leave the service or before the singing of "This Little Gospel Light of Mine."

Please pray with me. Father, as we prepare to celebrate the birth of your Son we thank you for blessing us with your hope, love and peace. Today we rejoice in the life Jesus won for us—life with him here on earth and life forever with him in heaven. We pray in his holy name. Amen.

How does our Advent wreath look today? All four candles are lit! The fourth candle reminds us of the life Jesus gives us. You know, I should feel happy to share that message with you. But this morning I woke up feeling gloomy and I've been feeling gloomy all day. Even though Christmas is so close, I'm just not ready. I still have to buy some presents and the stores are so crowded and you can't find a parking place at the mall. And all the people in the stores are kind of crabby. And what if I don't get

ns

the presents I want? That would really make me gloomy. Since I feel gloomy I think you should have to feel gloomy, too. I'm going to open this box of darkness. *(All the lights go out.)*

It made a lot of darkness, didn't it? Now we all feel gloomy. This is how we would feel all the time if we didn't have Jesus. Without Jesus we would have no hope or love or peace. We would be lost in our sins and have no happiness. We would have to die because that is God's punishment for sin. We wouldn't even have Christmas because Jesus is Christmas! Since God promised Abraham that Jesus would one day be born to be our Savior from sin, God's people waited and waited. Sometimes they were gloomy and sad, waiting for Jesus to come. But Jesus did come 2,000 years later on the first Christmas. Let me open my box of light. Jesus' light shines through the darkness. Does the light make you feel better? (*Ask a child to come up and read John 1:4-5 by flashlight.*) Jesus came and the gloomy waiting was over. (*All the lights go on.*)

Jesus' light brings us life. Now he lives with us here on earth. We don't have to feel gloomy and worry about our sins. Jesus came to die on the cross for us and win forgiveness for our sins. We will have a wonderful Christmas because we are celebrating the life of that little baby who came to win us life. And because Jesus became a real baby and grew up to be a real man, he was able to die on the cross for us. But that doesn't leave us sad and gloomy either. Because Jesus rose from the dead and came alive again, just like we will.

Let's take a look at verse 3 in "From Heaven Above." Read (or sing) it with me.

"This is the Christ, our God Most High, Who hears your sad and bitter cry; He will himself your Savior be From all your sins to set you free."

The angel tells the shepherds and us not to be sad. Jesus has come to set us free from our sins. Now we live with Jesus. When we feel worried or afraid he is here to help us. If someone we love is sick we can pray to Jesus to make him or her well. If we feel lonesome we know that Jesus is our best friend. Every day we can thank Jesus for being with us all day and all night. We can tell everyone we know about the awesome life that Jesus brings. And one day we will live in heaven with Jesus. We won't need flashlights or lamps or the sun because Jesus will be our light forever.

I'm going to give each of you a small flashlight to take home. Ask your parents if you can shine your flashlight in a dark room, or even in the darkness outside. Let it remind you that Jesus came to bring you light and life. Use your flashlight to tell your friends that they don't have to feel gloomy and afraid, like they are always in the dark. Jesus came to bring them light and life. Life with Jesus is the best Christmas present you can get!

Please pray with me. Welcome to earth, Jesus. We thank you that your life and death brings us new life with you here on earth and life forever with you in heaven. No one could get a better Christmas present. We pray in your name. Amen.

• The Family Advent Craft: Resurrection Chia Pet (or alternate craft) instruction sheets (see pp. 140-145 for reproducible handouts) are handed out for families to do now or on their own during the week:

Family Advent Craft: Resurrection Chia Pet

Theme Connect: If there is one of God's gifts that we too often take for granted, it would be life. We wake up to it every day. We live in a world that just assumes life will happen. We live in a world that does not always recognize how precious the gift of life is. In reality, life is something we can never take for granted. Those who have lost loved ones have learned the painful reality that life is a precious gift. Thanks be to God in Christ that his gift of life will never end! Because of Christ's resurrection from death, we now enjoy new life in Christ, and we trust that, someday, all the dead in Christ will rise to eternal life with him!

We've saved a creative and classic Christmas gift for the last week of Advent ... the chia pet! Chia pets might be kind of silly, but they are also an excellent reminder of life. You hardly have to care for a chia pet. It just grows and grows. Today we are going to make our own caterpillar chia pets. Caterpillars turn into butterflies, a traditional symbol of the Resurrection and the life that we have in Christ. As kids watch their chia pet grow, they will be reminded of the gift of life that we have in Christ.



- 1 cut portion of nylon stockings per craft •
- 1 foam tray per craft •
- Chia or wheatgrass seeds •
- Potting soil •
- 1 Tablespoon per table •
- 1 Measuring cup or scoop per table •
- 1 bowl of water per table •
- Googly eyes •
- Pipe cleaners .
- Rubber bands •
- Scissors .
- Tacky Glue .

Instructions

1. To begin, take your nylon stocking and dip it in water. Get it very wet.



2. Use a Tablespoon to pour seed inside your wet stocking. Roll the seeds around so that they are spread out and stick to the inside of your stocking. Do your best to cover the entire inside surface.



3. Seeds can't grow without dirt. Fill your stocking with approximately one cup of soil.



4. Tie off the open end of your stocking.

5. Squeeze the dirt in your stocking, spreading it out to make a worm/caterpillar shape.



6. If you'd like, you can make body segments using rubber bands.



7. You're almost done. Glue googly eyes on your head. Using pipe cleaners, add antennae, legs, or whatever else you might want to add.



8. Your chia caterpillar is done. Place it on the foam tray, take it home, and make sure you water it each day. Watch it grow and be reminded of the gift of life that we have in Christ.



Alternative Crafts Option

While the following options do not match directly with the theme for the night, they might serve as good alternatives if you are looking for other options. These items can be found at www.orientaltrading. com.

"He Lives Cross Craft Kit" – Item # IN-48/5017

"Good News Butterfly Magnets" – Item # IN-13626465

• The Family Conversation Question Sheets (see p. 146 for reproducible handout) can be handed out or displayed on a screen and discussed among the families.



- 1. What are some common symbols for life?
- 2. How can you share the life we have in Christ with someone else this week?

- The **Offering** is gathered.
- The **Offering Prayer** is spoken by the pastor line by line with motions and repeated line by line with motions by the children and adults, as the offering is brought forward.

(Leader will say lines and perform motions. Children and adults will repeat the words and perform the motions.)

P God of wonder, we offer you these humble gifts, (*All extend arms forward.*)

(Children and adults repeat words and motions.)

P signs of your goodness and mercy. (All point hands to heaven.)

(Children and adults repeat words and motions.)

P Receive them with our gratitude, (All put hands over bearts.)

(Children and adults repeat words and motions.)

P that through us all people may know the riches of your gift of life in our Savior Jesus. (Join hands with one another.)

(Children and adults repeat words and motions.)

- P Amen.
- A **Song** is sung by the congregation with hand motions to the tune Two Little Eyes or you are welcome to choose a different song from the "Song Choice" list at the beginning of this script:

(Adults should help children perform the motions while singing the words with them.)

Two little eyes to look to God. (*Point to eyes.*) Two little ears to hear his Word. (*Point to ears.*) Two little feet to walk in his ways. (*Stomp feet.*) Hands to serve him all my days. (*Wave bands.*)

One little tongue to speak his truth. (Point to tongue.) One little heart for him in youth. (Cross arms over heart.) Take them, O Jesus, let them be (Hands held out.) Always willing, true to thee. (Point to heaven.) ns

- The **Closing Prayer** is read by the pastor:
- ₱ Father, thank you for the words and music that express your greatest gift—the gift of Jesus Christ who brings salvation to the world. In Jesus' name. Amen.
- A **Song** is sung by the congregation to the tune This Little Gospel Light of Mine or you are welcome to choose a different song from the "Song Choice" list at the beginning of this script:

This little Gospel light of mine, I'm going to let it shine. This little Gospel light of mine, I'm going to let it shine. This little Gospel light of mine, ions I'm going to let it shine, Let it shine all the time, let it shine. All around the neighborhood, I'm going to let it shine. All around the neighborhood I'm going to let it shine. All around the neighborhood, I'm going to let it shine, Let it shine all the time, let it shine Hide it under a bushel, No! I'm going to let it shine. Hide it under a bushel, No! I'm going to let it shine. Hide it under a bushel, No! I'm going to let it shine. Let it shine all the time, let it shine.

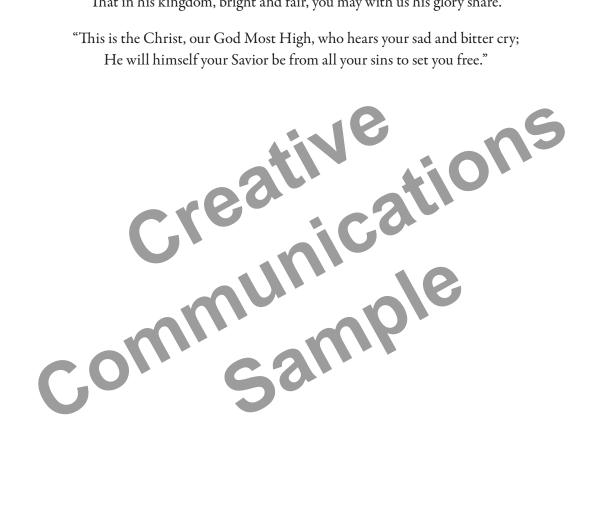
- The **Benediction** is read by the pastor:
- ℙ In all your Advent preparations and waiting, remain watchful with your eyes on Christ, whose birth in a manger is but a promise of his coming again in glory. And may the blessing of God, Father, + Son and Holy Spirit be with you now and forever. Amen.

• The **Closing Song** is sung by the congregation to the tune Vom Himmel Hoch LM:

"From heav'n above to earth I come to bear good news to ev'ry home; Glad tidings of great joy I bring, whereof I now will say and sing:

"To you this night is born a child of Mary, chosen virgin mild; This little child of lowly birth shall be the joy of all the earth.

"He will on you the gifts bestow prepared by God for all below, That in his kingdom, bright and fair, you may with us his glory share.





FAMILY ADVENT WORSHIP SERIES

Service Four: The Gift of Life

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• A Message is delivered by the pastor:

Note: You will need two boxes with lids of the same size. If you are worshiping in a small room large shoe boxes will work. If you are in a large hall or your sanctuary, you will need large boxes, such as those that have contained reams of paper. Leave one box empty. Fill the second box with flashlights and penlights. Turn all the flashlights and penlights on just before the service begins. Tell someone the cue words you will use so he or she knows when to turn the church lights off and on again. If you are in your sanctuary you will also need people to put out the Advent candles and unplug the Christmas tree. You may want to give each child a small flashlight or penlight as the children leave the service or before the singing of "This Little Gospel Light of Mine."

Please pray with me. Father, as we prepare to celebrate the birth of your Son we thank you for blessing us with your hope, love and peace. Today we rejoice in the life Jesus won for us—life with him here on earth and life forever with him in heaven. We pray in his holy name. Amen.

How does our Advent wreath look today? All four candles are lit! The fourth candle reminds us of the life Jesus gives us. You know, I should feel happy to share that message with you. But this morning I woke up feeling gloomy and I've been feeling gloomy all day. Even though Christmas is so close, I'm just not ready. I still have to buy some presents and the stores are so crowded and you can't find a parking place at the mall. And all the people in the stores are kind of crabby. And what if I don't get the presents I want? That would really make me gloomy. Since I feel gloomy I think you should have to feel gloomy, too. I'm going to open this box of darkness. (*All the lights go out.*)

It made a lot of darkness, didn't it? Now we all feel gloomy. This is how we would feel all the time if we didn't have Jesus. Without Jesus we would have no hope or love or peace. We would be lost in our sins and have no happiness. We would have to die because that is God's punishment for sin. We wouldn't even have Christmas because Jesus is Christmas! Since God promised Abraham that Jesus would one day be born to be our Savior from sin, God's people waited and waited. Sometimes they were gloomy and sad, waiting for Jesus to come. But Jesus did come 2,000 years later on the first Christmas. Let me open my box of light. Jesus' light shines through the darkness. Does the light make you feel better? (*Ask a child to come up and read John 1:4-5 by flashlight.*) Jesus came and the gloomy waiting was over. (*All the lights go on.*)

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Let's take a look at verse 3 in "From Heaven Above." Read (or sing) it with me.

"This is the Christ, our God Most High, Who hears your sad and bitter cry; He will himself your Savior be From all your sins to set you free."

The angel tells the shepherds and us not to be sad. Jesus has come to set us free from our sins. Now we live with Jesus. When we feel worried or afraid he is here to help us. If someone we love is sick we can pray to Jesus to make him or her well. If we feel lonesome we know that Jesus is our best friend. Every day we can thank Jesus for being with us all day and all night. We can tell everyone we know about the awesome life that Jesus brings. And one day we will live in heaven with Jesus. We won't need flashlights or lamps or the sun because Jesus will be our light forever.

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Please pray with me. Welcome to earth, Jesus. We thank you that your life and death brings us new life with you here on earth and life forever with you in heaven. No one could get a better Christmas present. We pray in your name. Amen.





FAMILY ADVENT WORSHIP SERIES

Service Four: The Gift of Life

Family Advent Craft: Resurrection Chia Pet

Theme Connect: If there is one of God's gifts that we too often take for granted, it would be life. We wake up to it every day. We live in a world that just assumes life will happen. We live in a world that does not always recognize how precious the gift of life is. In reality, life is something we can never take for granted. Those who have lost loved ones have learned the painful reality that life is a precious gift. Thanks be to God in Christ that his gift of life will never end! Because of Christ's resurrection from death, we now enjoy new life in Christ, and we trust that, someday, all the dead in Christ will rise to eternal life with him!

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- 1 Measuring cup or scoop per table •
- 1 bowl of water per table •
- Googly eyes •
- Pipe cleaners •
- Rubber bands
- Scissors •
- Tacky Glue •

Instructions

1. To begin, take your nylon stocking and dip it in water. Get it very wet.



2. Use a Tablespoon to pour seed inside your wet stocking. Roll the seeds around so that they are spread out and stick to the inside of your stocking. Do your best to cover the entire inside surface.



3. Seeds can't grow without dirt. Fill your stocking with approximately one cup of soil.



- 4. Tie off the open end of your stocking.
- 5. Squeeze the dirt in your stocking, spreading it out to make a worm/caterpillar shape.



6. If you'd like, you can make body segments using rubber bands.



7. You're almost done. Glue googly eyes on your head. Using pipe cleaners, add antenna, legs, or whatever else you might want to add.



8. Your chia caterpillar is done. Place it on the foam tray, take it home, and make sure you water it each day. Watch it grow and be reminded of the gift of life that we have in Christ.



Alternative Crafts Options

While the following options do not match directly with the theme for the night, they might serve as good alternatives if you are looking for other options. These items can be found at www.orientaltrading. com.

"He Lives Cross Craft Kit" – Item # IN-48/5017

"Good News Butterfly Magnets" - Item # IN-13626465





FAMILY ADVENT WORSHIP SERIES

Service Four: The Gift of Life

- Family Conversation
- 1. What are some common symbols for life?
- 2. How can you share the life we have in Christ with someone else this week?

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FAMILY ADVENT WORSHIP SERIES

Music Guide	ons
Service 1 (The Gift of Hope)	
Service 2 (The Gift of Love) Service 3 (The Gift of Peace)	
Service 4 (The Gift of Life)	



FAMILY ADVENT WORSHIP SERIES

Service One: The Gift of Hope

Music Guide	ns
Freu Dich Sehr 87 87 77 88 (Lighting of Candles)	
Freu Dich Sehr 87 87 77 88 (Confession and Absolution)	152-153
Jefferson 87 87 D	
Two Little Eyes	
Gott Ist Die Liebe 55 54 and refrain.	
Vom Himmel Hoch LM	160-162



• A Song is sung by the congregation to the tune Freu Dich Sehr 87 87 77 88 or you are welcome to use "Light One Candle" by Natalie Sleeth or to choose a different song from the "Song Choice" list at the beginning of this script:

> "Comfort, comfort ye my people, speak ye peace," thus saith our God; "Comfort those who sit in darkness, mourning 'neath their sorrows' load. Speak ye to Jerusalem of the peace that waits for them; Tell her that her sins I cover an her warfare now is over."

Make ye straight what long was crooked; make the rougher places plain.





• A Song is sung by the congregation to the tune Freu Dich Sehr 87 87 77 88 or you are welcome to choose a different song from the "Song Choice" list at the beginning of this script:

> Hark, the herald's voice is crying in the desert far and near, Calling sinners to repentance, since the Kingdom how is here. O that warning cry obey! Now prepare for God a way; Let the valleys rise to meet him and the hills bow down to greet him.

Yea, her sins our God will pardon, blotting out each dark misdeed;

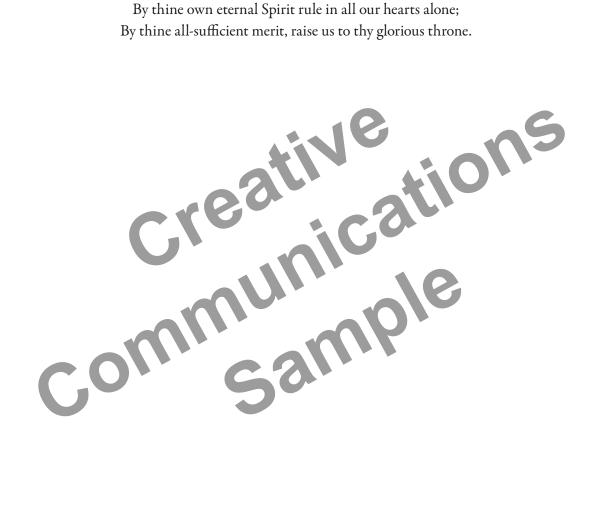




• A Song is sung by the congregation to the tune Jefferson 87 87 D:

Come, thou long-expected Jesus, born to set thy people free; From our fears and sins release us; let us find our rest in thee. Israel's Strength and Consolation, hope of all the earth thou art; Dear desire of ev'ry nation, joy of ev'ry longing heart.

Born thy people to deliver, born a child and yet a King, Born to reign in us forever, now thy gracious kingdom bring. By thine own eternal Spirit rule in all our hearts alone; By thine all-sufficient merit, raise us to thy glorious throne.





• A **Song** is sung by the congregation with hand motions to the tune Two Little Eyes or you are welcome to choose a different song from the "Song Choice" list at the beginning of this script:

(Adults should help children perform the motions while singing the words with them.)

Two little eyes to look to God. (*Point to eyes.*) Two little ears to hear his Word. (*Point to ears.*) Two little feet to walk in his ways. (*Stomp feet.*) Hands to serve him all my days. (*Wave hands.*)

One little tongue to speak his truth. (*Point to tongue.*) One little heart for him in youth. (*Cross arms over heart.*) Take them, O Jesus, let them be (*Hands held out.*) Always willing, true to thee. (*Paintu beaven.*)



• A **Song** is sung by the congregation to the tune Gott Ist Die Liebe 55 54 and refrain or you are welcome to choose a different song from the "Song Choice" list at the beginning of this script:

God loves me dearly, Grants me salvation, God loves me dearly, Loves even me. Therefore I'll say again: God loves me dearly, God loves me dearly, Loves even me.

He sent forth Jesus, My dear Redeemer, He sent forth Jesus And set me free. Therefore I'll say again: God loves me dearly, God loves me dearly, Loves even me. tions

Jesus, my Savior, Himself did offer; Jesus, my Savior, Paid all I owed. Therefore I'll say again: God loves me dearly, God loves me dearly, Loves even me.

Now I will praise you, O love Eternal; Now I will praise you All my life long. Therefore I'll say again: God loves me dearly, God loves me dearly, Loves even me.

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• The **Closing Song** is sung by the congregation to the tune Vom Himmel Hoch LM:

"From heav'n above to earth I come to bear good news to ev'ry home; Glad tidings of great joy I bring, whereof I now will say and sing:

"To you this night is born a child of Mary, chosen virgin mild; This little child of lowly birth shall be the joy of all the earth.

"This is the Christ, our God Most High, who hears your sad and bitter cry; He will himself your Savior be from all your sins to set you free.







Service Two: The Gift of Love

Music Guide	ns
Wie Soll Ich Dich Empfangen 76 76 D.	
Nun Komm, Der Heiden Heiland 77 77	
St. Crispin LM	
Two Little Eyes	
Away in a Manger 11 11 11 11	
Vom Himmel Hoch LM	







• A **Song** is sung by the congregation to the tune Wie Soll Ich Dich Empfangen 76 76 D or you are welcome to use "Light One Candle" by Natalie Sleeth or to choose a different song from the "Song Choice" list at the beginning of this script:

> I lay in fetters, groaning; you came to set me free. I stood, my shame bemoaning; you came to honor me. A glorious crown you give me, a treasure safe on high That will not fail or leave me as earthly riches fly.

Love caused your incarnation; love brought you down to me. Your thirst for my salvation procured my liberty.





• A **Song** is sung by the congregation to the tune Nun Komm, Der Heiden Heiland 77 77 or you are welcome to choose a different song from the "Song Choice" list at the beginning of this script:

> Let the earth now praise the Lord, who hath truly kept his Word And the sinners' Help and Friend now at last to us doth send.

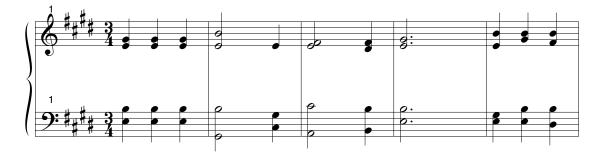
> What the fathers most desired, what the prophet's heart inspired, What they longed for many a year, stands fulfilled in glory here.

Abram's promised great Reward, Zion's Helper, Jacob's Lord, Him of twofold race behold, truly came, as long foretold.

As your coming was in peace, quiet, full of gentleness, Let the same mind dwell in me which is yours eternally.

Then when you will come again as the glorious King to reign, I with joy will see your face, freely ransomed by your grace.

Tune St. Crisp	in LM
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• A **Song** is sung by the congregation to the tune St. Crispin LM:

God loved the world so that he gave His only Son the lost to save, That all who would in him believe Should everlasting life receive.

Christ Jesus is the ground of faith, Who was made flesh and suffered death; All then who trust in him alone



Tune	Гwo	Littl	e Eye	es
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• A **Song** is sung by the congregation with hand motions to the tune Two Little Eyes or you are welcome to choose a different song from the "Song Choice" list at the beginning of this script:

(Adults should help children perform the motions while singing the words with them.)

Two little eyes to look to God. (*Point to eyes.*) Two little ears to hear his Word. (*Point to ears.*) Two little feet to walk in his ways. (*Stomp feet.*) Hands to serve him all my days. (*Wave hands.*)

One little tongue to speak his truth. (Point to tongue.) One little heart for him in youth. (Cross arms over beart.) Take them, O Jesus, let them be (Hands beld out.) Always willing, true to thee. (Point to heaven.)



• A Song is sung by the congregation to the tune Away in a Manger 11 11 11 11 or you are welcome to choose a different song from the "Song Choice" list at the beginning of this script:

> Away in a manger, no crib for a bed, The little Lord Jesus laid down his sweet head. The stars in the sky looked down where he lay. The little Lord Jesus asleep on the hay.

The cattle are lowing, the baby awakes, But little Lord Jesus, no crying he makes. I love thee, Lord Jesus! Look down from the sky, And stay by my cradle till morning is nigh.

Be near my, Lord Jesus; I ask thee to stay Close by me forever and love me, I pray. - there Bless all the dear children in thy tender care, And take us to heaven to love with thee there.

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ons



• The **Closing Song** is sung by the congregation to the tune Vom Himmel Hoch LM:

"From heav'n above to earth I come to bear good news to ev'ry home; Glad tidings of great joy I bring, whereof I now will say and sing:

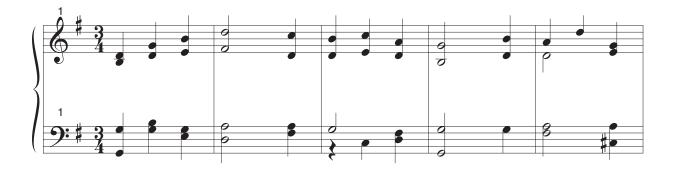
"To you this night is born a child of Mary, chosen virgin mild; This little child of lowly birth shall be the joy of all the earth.

"He will on you the gifts bestow prepared by God for all below, That in his kingdom, bright and fair, you may with us his glory share.











• A **Song** is sung by the congregation to the tune Chesterfield CM or you are welcome to use "Light One Candle" by Natalie Sleeth or choose a different song from the "Song Choice" list at the beginning of this script:

> Hark the glad sound! The Savior comes, the Savior promised long; Let ev'ry heart prepare a throne and ev'ry voice a song.

He comes the pris'ners to release, in Satan's bondage held. The gates of brass before him burst, the iron fetters yield.

Our glad hosanna, Prince of Peace, thy welcome shall proclaim,









• A Song is sung by the congregation to the tune Veni Emmanuel LM and refrain or you are welcome to choose a different song from the "Song Choice" list at the beginning of this script:

> O come, O come, Emmanuel, and ransom captive Israel, That mourns in lonely exile here until the Son of God appear. Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.

O come, thou Key of David, come, and open wide our heav'nly home; Make safe the way that leads on high, and close the path to misery. Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.

O come, Desire of nations, bind in one the hearts of all mankind; Bid thou our sad divisions cease, and be thyself our King of Peace.





• A **Song** is sung by the congregation to the tune Wie Soll Ich Dich Empfangen 76 76 D:

O Lord, how shall I meet you, how welcome you aright? Your people long to greet you, my hope, my heart's delight! O kindle, Lord most holy, your lamp within my breast To do in spirit lowly all that may please you best.

Love caused your incarnation; love brought you down to me. Your thirst for my salvation procured my liberty. Oh, love beyond all telling, that led you to embrace In love, all love excelling, our lost and fallen race.

Sin's debt, that fearful burden, cannot his love erase; Your guilt the Lord will pardon and cover by his grace. He comes, for you procuring the peace of sin forgiv'n, His children thus securing eternal life in heav'n.

Tune	Гwo	Littl	e Eye	es
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• A **Song** is sung by the congregation with hand motions to the tune Two Little Eyes or you are welcome to choose a different song from the "Song Choice" list at the beginning of this script:

(Adults should help children perform the motions while singing the words with them.)

Two little eyes to look to God. (*Point to eyes.*) Two little ears to hear his Word. (*Point to ears.*) Two little feet to walk in his ways. (*Stomp feet.*) Hands to serve him all my days. (*Wave hands.*)

One little tongue to speak his truth. (Point to tongue.) One little heart for him in youth. (Cross arms over heart.) Take them, O Jesus, let them be (Hands beld out.) Always willing, true to thee. (Painto heaven.)







• A **Song** is sung by the congregation to the tune St. Louis 86 86 76 86 or you are welcome to choose a different song from the "Song Choice" list at the beginning of this script:

O little town of Bethlehem, how still we see thee lie! Above thy deep and dreamless sleep the silent starts go by; Yet in thy dark streets shineth the everlasting light. The hopes and fears of all the years are met in thee tonight.

How silently, how silently the wondrous gift is giv'n! So God imparts to human hearts the blessings of his heav'n. No ear may hear his coming; but in this world of sin, Where meek souls will receive him, still the dear Christ enters in.

O holy Child of Bethlehem, descend to us, we pray; Cast out our sin, and enter in, be born in us today. We hear the Christmas angels the great glad tidings tell; O come to us, abide with us, our Lord Immanuel!

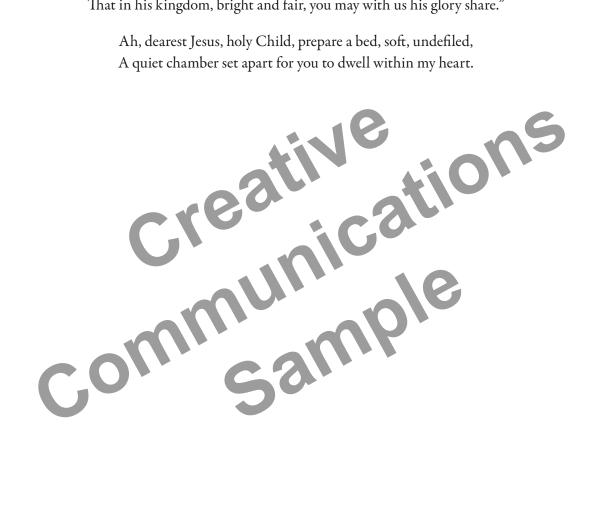


• The **Closing Song** is sung by the congregation to the tune Vom Himmel Hoch LM:

"From heav'n above to earth I come to bear good news to ev'ry home; Glad tidings of great joy I bring, whereof I now will say and sing:

"To you this night is born a child of Mary, chosen virgin mild; This little child of lowly birth shall be the joy of all the earth.

"He will on you the gifts bestow prepared by God for all below, That in his kingdom, bright and fair, you may with us his glory share."









• A **Song** is sung by the congregation to the tune Milwaukee 88 88 88 66 or you are welcome to use "Light One Candle" by Natalie Sleeth or choose a different song from the "Song Choice" list at the beginning of this script:

Lift up your heads, ye mighty gates! Behold, the King of glory waits. The King of kings is drawing near; the Savior of the world is here. Life and salvation he doth bring; therefore rejoice and gladly sing. To God the Father raise your joyful songs of praise.

Fling wide the portals of your heart; make it a temple set apart From earthly use for heav'n's employ, adorned with prayer and love and joy. So shall your Sov'reign enter in and new and nobler life begin. To God alone be praise for word and deed and grace!

Redeemer, come and open wide my heart to thee; here, Lord, abide! O enter with thy grace divine; thy face of mercy on me shine. Thy Holy Spirit guide us on until our glorious goal is won. Eternal praise and fame we offer to thy name:

Tune	Puer	Nobi	s LN	Л
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• A **Song** is sung by the congregation to the tune Puer Nobis LM or you are welcome to choose a different song from the "Song Choice" list at the beginning of this script:

> On Jordan's bank the Baptist's cry announces that the Lord is nigh; Awake and hearken, for he brings glad tidings of the King of kings.

Then cleansed be ev'ry life from sin; make straight the way for God within, And let us all our hearts prepare for Christ to come and enter there.

Lay on the sick thy healing hand and make the fallen strong to stand; Show us the glory of thy face till beauty springs in ev'ry place.







• A **Song** is sung by the congregation to the tune St. Thomas SM:

The advent of our King our prayers must now employ, And we must hymns of welcome sing in strains of holy joy.

As judge, on clouds of light, he soon will come again And his true members all unite with him in heav'n to reign.

All glory to the Son, who comes to set us free, With Father, Spirit, ever one through all eternity.



Tune	Гwo	Littl	e Eye	es
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• A **Song** is sung by the congregation with hand motions to the tune Two Little Eyes or you are welcome to choose a different song from the "Song Choice" list at the beginning of this script:

(Adults should help children perform the motions while singing the words with them.)

Two little eyes to look to God. (*Point to eyes.*) Two little ears to hear his Word. (*Point to ears.*) Two little feet to walk in his ways. (*Stomp feet.*) Hands to serve him all my days. (*Wave hands.*)

One little tongue to speak his truth. (Point to tongue.) One little heart for him in youth. (Cross arms over beart.) Take them, O Jesus, let them be (Hands beld out.) Always willing, true to thee. (Point to heaven.)









• A **Song** is sung by the congregation to the tune This Little Gospel Light of Mine or you are welcome to choose a different song from the "Song Choice" list at the beginning of this script:

This little Gospel light of mine, I'm going to let it shine. This little Gospel light of mine, I'm going to let it shine. This little Gospel light of mine, I'm going to let it shine, Let it shine all the time, let it shine.

All around the neighborhood, I'm going to let it shine. jons All around the neighborhood, I'm going to let it shine. All around the neighborhood, I'm going to let it shine, Let it shine all the time, let it shine. Hide it under a bushel, No! I'm going to let it shine. Hide it under a bushel, No! I'm going to let it shine, Hide it under a bushel, No! I'm going to let it shine. .0 Let it shine all the time, let it shine.



• The **Closing Song** is sung by the congregation to the tune Vom Himmel Hoch LM:

"From heav'n above to earth I come to bear good news to ev'ry home; Glad tidings of great joy I bring, whereof I now will say and sing:

"To you this night is born a child of Mary, chosen virgin mild; This little child of lowly birth shall be the joy of all the earth.

"He will on you the gifts bestow prepared by God for all below, That in his kingdom, bright and fair, you may with us his glory share.

