



Open BEFORE Christmas



Children's Messages

Four Weeks of Advent
Christmas Eve or Day

- Open Your Eyes
- Open Your Ears
- Open Your Mouth
- Open Your Heart
- Open God's Gift

Open Your Eyes

A Children's Sermon for the First Week of Advent

Hello, everyone. Welcome to the season of Advent. It is the season when we prepare for the birth of Jesus on Christmas. Has anyone ever told you, "Don't open before Christmas"? Today I want you to go ahead and open something before Christmas. I want you to open your eyes!

Now you may be saying to yourself, "But my eyes are already open." That may be so, but I want you to really look with your eyes. I want you to really see what is around you that reminds you of Jesus. Let's play a little game of *I Spy* and see what we can see, OK?

I spy with my little eye something with four candles. *(Allow the children to respond.)* Yes, I see an Advent wreath. The flickering light of the candle for this first week in Advent reminds us that Jesus is the Light of the World. Jesus will be born on Christmas to take away the darkness of sin in our lives and replace it with the bright light of his love. Each candle on the Advent wreath marks one of the weeks in the season of Advent. All the candles will be lit when Christmas arrives.

I spy with my little eye something pointy. *(Allow the children to respond.)* Yes, it's a Christmas tree. A Christmas tree is something we see that reminds us of Jesus because it points to heaven, where Jesus came from. Jesus came from heaven, where he lived with God the Father, to be with us here on earth to save us. The Christmas tree is an evergreen, which signals for us that Jesus will be with us forever and ever. The Christmas tree also has little lights and decorations on it. We are little Gospel lights for Jesus, and we are to decorate the world with the beauty of his message of salvation.

I spy with my little eye something green and round. *(Allow the children to respond.)* You got it. It's a wreath that is put on a wall or a door at this time of year. It reminds us of Jesus because it is made up of branches. Jesus said that he is the vine and we are the branches. We are connected to Jesus like branches are connected to a tree. And since this wreath is a circle, it tells for us, too, that Jesus has no beginning and no end. He is everlasting.

I spy with my little eye a shape that is one up and down line and one side to side line. *(Allow the children to respond.)* Correct! I am looking at a cross. A cross reminds us that Jesus was born on Christmas to one day die on a cross. He took the punishment for our sins. We have forgiveness through him, and we have new life because he rose from the dead on Easter to open heaven's door for us. We keep our eyes peeled for his return to take us home with him.

Our Jesus is great. Do you see what I mean? Let's pray together.

Dear Lord, thank you for coming to earth to be born and shine with God's glory and reveal your salvation to all the world through your sinless life, suffering, death and resurrection. Keep our eyes open for signs of you as we watch for your coming again. Amen.

Activities for the First Week of Advent

Open Your Eyes

Look around your house. Are there decorations that help share the news that Jesus is coming? Draw a picture of one of those decorations here.

Scramble

Unscramble these items you may see that help remind us of Jesus.

RTSA _____

RWAHTE _____

ADCLN _____

ERTE _____

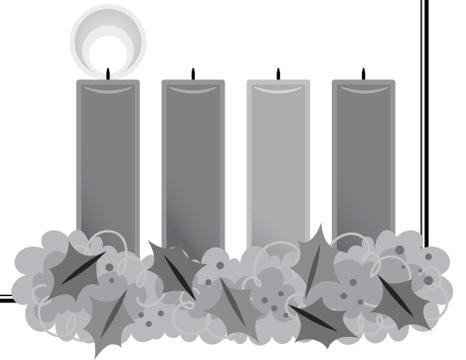
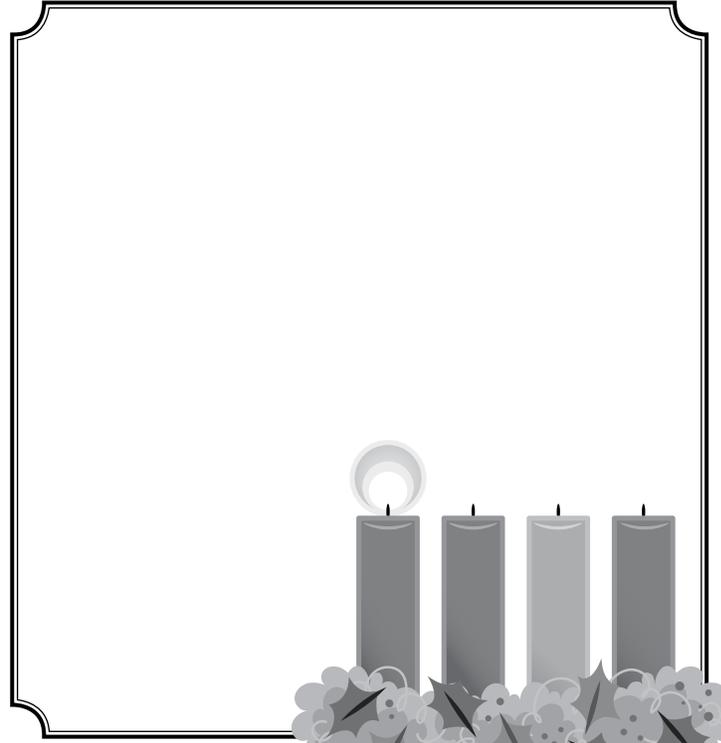
TGILSH _____

STAR, WREATH, CANDLE, TREE, LIGHTS



Look to see these names for Jesus hiding in this puzzle.

WONDERFUL
COUNSELOR
MIGHTY
GOD
EVERLASTING
FATHER
PRINCE
PEACE
IMMANUEL



H	E	I	D	G	I	N	G	F	G	T	M
N	V	O	A	P	M	B	I	A	V	E	R
J	E	S	E	Z	M	T	N	T	E	R	O
N	R	G	Y	Y	A	A	N	H	R	R	L
I	L	G	T	O	N	Y	S	E	G	I	E
G	A	Q	H	L	U	T	H	R	T	F	S
H	S	E	G	P	E	A	C	E	C	I	N
T	T	A	I	S	L	R	D	G	O	D	U
O	I	U	M	U	Z	J	G	V	N	D	O
X	N	R	N	D	D	F	W	E	K	F	C
O	G	P	R	I	N	C	E	L	D	S	I
C	W	O	N	D	E	R	F	U	L	V	X

Open Your Eyes

Coloring Sheet for the First Week of Advent



Color this Christmas tree. Look! The tree points to heaven!
Open your eyes to see other sights and symbols that point to Jesus.

*Lift up your heads, O gates! And be lifted up, O ancient doors, that the King of glory may come in.
Psalm 24:7*

Open Your Ears

A Children's Sermon for the Second Week of Advent

Hello, boys and girls. It is the second week of Advent, the season when we prepare for the birth of Jesus on Christmas. Has anyone ever told you, "Don't open before Christmas"? Well, I want you to go ahead and open something before Christmas. Last week I wanted you to open your eyes. Today I want you to open your ears!

There are lots of things that we hear at Christmastime, aren't there? I want you to think about some of them with me right now. I wonder if these sounds have special meaning to us in Advent.

One thing we hear at this time of year is Christmas music. What are some of your favorite Christmas songs? *(Allow the children to respond.)* Those are all very good ones. On the night Jesus was born, there was music too. It came from the angels who sang, "Gloria in excelsis Deo." This is a fancy way of saying, "Glory to God in the highest." They were praising God for Jesus. Open your ears and listen for Christmas music in the car or at home or in the shopping center, and think about the angels singing.

Another thing we hear in Advent is the ringing of bells. Sometimes we ring bells at the start of church, and sometimes we ring bells of different sizes together to play a special song in church. This collection of bells is called a bell choir. And maybe some of you have been a part of one of those. But what I want you to think about today is when you hear a person ringing a bell next to a red kettle asking for a donation to help people in need. Christmas is a time when we give to charities as a way of saying thank you to God for sending us Jesus. Open your ears to hear bells ringing, and think about giving some of your time, talent or treasure back to God for the gift of Jesus.

How many of you like to wrap presents? *(Allow the children to respond.)* Whether we like wrapping presents or not, at some point during these days and weeks, we will hear wrapping paper being rolled out, cut, folded and taped to decorate presents for people in our household or people we know in our church, school or community. Open your ears to hear the sound of wrapping paper in your house, and think of all the gifts being given and received. We give each other gifts because we love each other, and we give each other gifts because we are remembering that Jesus is the Greatest Gift of all.

Lastly, we listen for a baby's cry. That may sound a little funny. But when we hear a baby cry in church or maybe at a big gathering of relatives, it makes us think of the baby Jesus. He cried just like other human babies do. But Jesus was no ordinary baby. He was also the Son of God. He would one day cry out from the cross when he died to forgive our sins. Because Jesus came to earth as a little baby to save us, we can now cry, "Alleluia!" to our God for his goodness to us.

Dear Jesus, open our ears to hear the sounds of Christmas all around us, and help us to listen to you each time you call us to serve and follow you in our walk of faith. Amen.

Open God's Gift

Coloring Sheet for Christmas Eve or Day

*For God
so loved me,
he gave his
only Son!*



*And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory,
glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth. John 1:14*