Little Lamb's Advent for Children



✶ Hope ✶ Peace ✶ Joy ✶ Love

First Presbyterian
Shreveport



A Guide for Parents & Caregivers

This Advent season, First Presbyterian Church of Shreveport is happy to provide this *Little Lamb Advent Guide* for use with the youngest members of your family. Please begin by sharing the following information with the child(ren) in your care. Then, once a week for each week in Advent, share the next candle's page with your child, using it as a spark for discussion and for better understanding about the reason for this special season.

You know your child best. We urge you to adjust the language and length of the conversation to what your child can understand best. Then, keep the picture for each week visible in your home as a reminder that you can use with your child to reinforce the special message for the week.

"Each Christmas Season we share the excitement of waiting for good things! Most of us have great things to look forward to throughout Advent. There is excitement in our waiting. Lots of us look forward to seeing our family that we don't get to see every day. We might look forward to some of our favorite foods that we enjoy only at this time of year. And many of us look forward to giving and receiving gifts. This is a great time to remind each other that the greatest gift we ever receive is Jesus. And that is the gift that Advent and Christmas is all about."

You will see that a little lamb is found on each week's page. Use that weekly image to remind your child that they are dearly loved and provided for, just like a little lamb is lovingly cared for by a good shepherd. This year's Children's Christmas Pageant, *The Lambs' Advent,* will reinforce the learning opportunities found in this booklet. Have fun!



Advent Week 1
✶ the Candle of Hope ✶

There are five candles that help us remember important things during the days before Christmas. We will light one per week in Church.

This week's candle is purple. We light the candle this first week to remind us that God promises good things for us and that we can always trust those promises. We call that trust "hope." We know, no matter what, God promises to continue to love us.

It also reminds us that in this time of waiting for Christmas that we call "Advent," that God's prophets foretold that the light of love and hope was coming into the world. It arrived when Jesus was born.

ASK YOUR CHILD TO REPEAT THIS SIMPLE PRAYER AFTER YOU:

Dear God, thank you for giving us hope.
Thank you for giving us good things all around us.
Help us always keep hope in our hearts
while we wait for Jesus. Amen.



Advent Week 2
✳ the Candle of Peace ✳

This is the second week in Advent, our time of waiting for Jesus' birth at Christmas. So this is the second candle that the church will light. It is called the candle of Peace. Like last week's Candle of Hope, it is purple. This candle reminds us that God always wants peace for all people, all creatures, and all of the many things God created. God wants peace for everyone.

Jesus' parents were traveling right before he was born and it was a hard journey, but God's special peace, a quiet reassurance in their hearts, was with them.

When we light this candle, we celebrate the peace that God promised the people when Jesus was born and that God still continues to promise to us today. God's promises of comfort and calm and happiness never stop.

ASK YOUR CHILD TO REPEAT THIS SIMPLE PRAYER AFTER YOU:

Dear God, We thank you for your promise of peace. We thank you for your comfort. We thank you that your love and comfort is for everyone and everything. Amen.



Advent Week 3
✳ the Candle of Joy ✳

This week's candle is pink. It reminds us that we are halfway to Christmas Eve. Our waiting of Advent is half over. Jesus is on the way but not here yet!

This candle helps us celebrate our joyful waiting for Jesus' birth. When we see the pink candle in church being lit, we can know that Jesus is getting closer. It is a very good feeling to know that all this waiting we do in Advent is moving along. We are over halfway to celebrating Jesus' birth in Bethlehem where the little lambs and the other animals were some of the first to greet him.

ASK YOUR CHILD TO REPEAT THIS SIMPLE PRAYER AFTER YOU:

Dear God, thank you for all of the joy we feel in our hearts today. Thank you for helping us wait. Sometimes waiting is hard, especially at Christmas! Thank you for being with us and giving us so many good things.



Advent Week 4
✶ the Candle of Love ✶

This week's candle is purple and is the candle of love. Angels came on the night that Jesus was born and told shepherds about the good news of God's love. So this Candle of Love reminds us of all of the love God has for us, loving us so much that he sent Jesus into the world. When we see this 4th candle lit in church, it reminds us of God's love and that we need to share that love with others.

The waiting we do, this Advent season, helps us remember that God wants us to love each other and love all people.

ASK YOUR CHILD TO REPEAT THIS SIMPLE PRAYER AFTER YOU:

Dear God, thank you for loving us.
Thank you for loving us so much you sent
Jesus to love us, too. Help us to love each other.
Help us remember Christmas is about love. Amen.



Christmas Eve
✶ the Christ Candle ✶

This last candle is called The Christ Candle. It is white. Christmas Eve is finally here! We made it! All the waiting for this Advent season is over. When we see this candle lit in church, it sits in the center of all the other four candles. It reminds us that Jesus is the center of the whole season. This candle represents Jesus, the light of the world, the light and love that God promised long, long ago. Now, all the other candles come together:

The Hope we share, God's Peace, our Joy, and God's Love have all been part of our waiting. Christmas is here!

ASK YOUR CHILD TO REPEAT THIS SIMPLE PRAYER AFTER YOU:

Dear God, you have helped us wait for Jesus. Thank you for hope. Thank you for Peace and the calm in our hearts. Thank you for the joy we feel because of all the good things around us. Thank you for loving us! Thank you for Jesus. He is finally here! Amen.