



"ReAdventing" Advent: Letting Go of the Familiar and Finding the Divine

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What is Advent?

The word *advent* comes from the Latin *adventus* (Greek *parousia*) and means "coming" or "arrival." The season of Advent is focused on the coming of Jesus as Messiah (Christ or King). Our scripture readings, prayers, and activities not only prepare us spiritually for His first coming at Christmas but also for His eventual second coming.

Traditionally, the season of Advent begins four Sundays before Christmas and continues through December 24, Christmas Eve. For the year of 2020, Advent begins on Sunday, November 29. The Christmas season begins on Christmas Day, December 25, and continues through the Epiphany (the arrival of the Magi) on January 8.

How can we give up the familiar to find the Divine?



What does it look like for you and your family to create a meaningful Advent and Christmas in the midst of the unfamiliar? Keep any traditions you can and start some new ones. Here are some ideas.

- **Set up a nativity at home.** Put the three kings far away from the set. Each day let your children move the kings a step closer to the manger. Every day when your child does a good deed for someone else, let him or her put a piece of straw in the crib for baby Jesus. Let's see how comfy they can make his bed before Christmas!
- **Do a family or personal devotional during Advent.** We have written one called [Advent-urous: Seeking Jesus this Season](#) available on Amazon Kindle. We are leading a group through it on our [Advent-urous Facebook page](#) if you would like to join us.
- **Decorate earlier this year.** Have the kids help by making ornaments and other decorations.
- **Make a few of your gifts.**
- **Simplify** if you're overwhelmed by present realities of sickness or job loss.
 - Simple food, simple decorations, simple gift wrap, simple activities, simple games, simple presents.
- **Look for drive-through Christmas light displays.**
- **Set up a sacred space** in your home for quiet and reflection. Have everyone spend a few minutes there a few times a week. Add art supplies and a box where people can draw or write something that is meaningful to them or that they are thankful for this season. On Christmas Eve or Day look at them together.
- **If you're a musical family, play instruments and sing carols together.** Zoom/FaceTime it to the grandparents and other family or friends.
- **Memorize a Christmas poem** together as a family. Have the children present it.
- **Unplug this Christmas.** Try old-fashioned board games or word games. Mix the generations.

Remember, God brought Christmas down to just Mary and Joseph and Jesus so He could birth a deeper relationship with them and the Savior. **They let go of the familiar, but they found the Divine.**