

First Week of Advent

Mary and Joseph

Note: Start this week with the reading! Then, do the next activity on the next day, and so on, until you have done them all.

Readings:

Luke 1:26-38

Matthew 1:18-24

Pray:

In your journal write a conversation between you and an angel. What message might God be sending you this week? Are there decisions to be made or situations in your life that make you afraid? Once you are done writing, prayerfully reread your conversation and spend time talking to God about what you wrote. If you need some help, see the example provided!

Create:

Word Art: Start with a basic outline of a stable on a piece of card stock. Choose scripture, Christmas song lyrics, or other words and phrases to fill in the outline. Erase the outline and let the words shape your art. Add color to your picture and whatever else you would like.

Share:

During the holiday season, we often go and visit friends and families. Be like the angel Gabriel, and go and share in the celebrating of Jesus' coming birth. You might go Christmas caroling at a neighbor's house or attend a holiday party at a friend's house. When you go, take these candy canes with you and share the joy of the season.

Reflect:

In your journal reflect on some news that you have heard recently that has surprised you? Was it a good surprise or a challenging surprise? What are you going to do in response to this surprise?

Prayer, Week One: Examples of Conversation

Example 1:

Angel: Hey, Sarah I know that you are scared to go to Youth Group on Sunday nights.

Sarah: I am! I am one of the youngest. All the other kids seem so much older and cooler than me. I'm too shy.

Angel: Youth Group is a great way to get to know people and everyone there loves me, just like you. Your Youth Minister will also be there to help you not be afraid.

Sarah: I don't have to be afraid because I know you are with me.

Example 2:

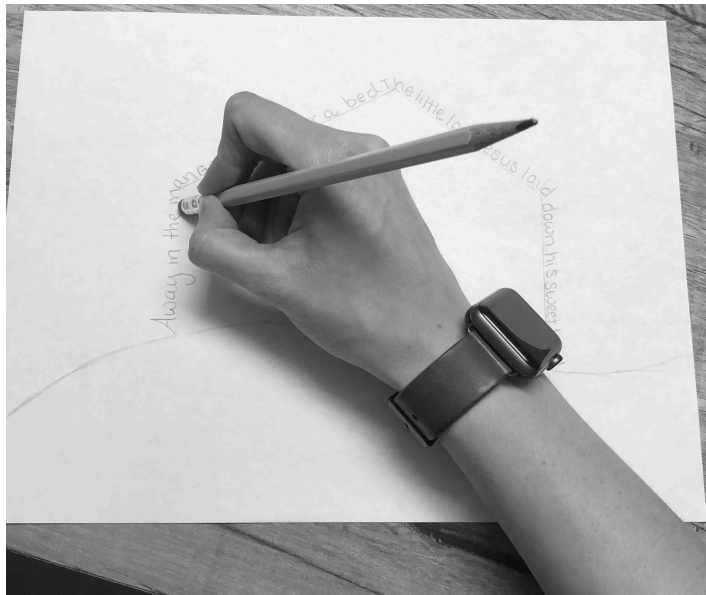
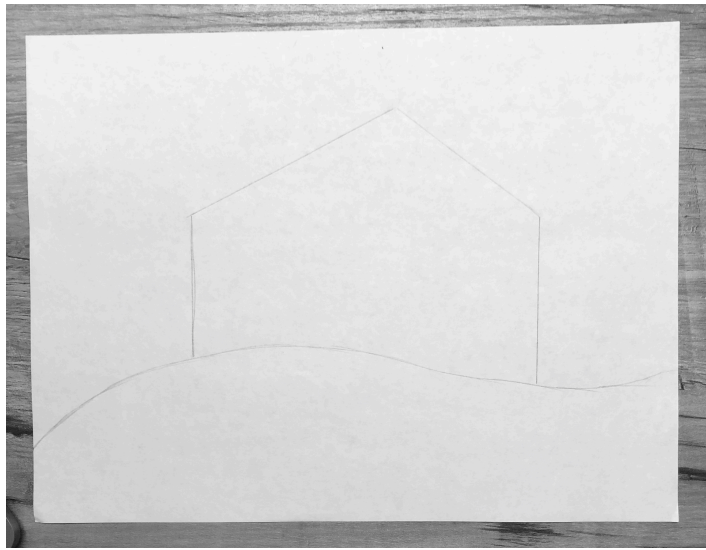
Angel: Ben, with your mom getting remarried, you have a special opportunity to help your new stepbrother learn how to navigate his new school. It's the same elementary school that you attended.

Ben: I'm really mad at my parents. I'd rather pretend like nothing is going to change. Maybe it will all go away.

Angel: I'm sorry. I know this hurts. God loves you so much, just like your parents do. Your stepbrother might also be upset, like you. His life is changing too.

Ben: I can try to show God's love to him, even if this isn't my choice.

Week One Create: Word Art Example



Second Sunday of Advent

Elizabeth and Zachariah

Note: Start this week with the reading! Then, do the next activity on the next day, and so on, until you have done them all.

Read:

Luke 1:5-25

Pray:

The scripture text tells us that Zachariah became mute for many months. I wonder what he thought during this time. Sometimes, we don't realize how important something is until we don't have it. Use your ability to speak to say a prayer out loud. Use the common prayer model ACTS as a guide.

A: Adoration: Begin by praising God. Name a few wonderful things that God has done.

C: Confession: Share with God ways that you have struggled to make good decisions.

T: Thanksgiving: Give thanks for God's forgiveness and eternal love.

S: Supplication: Ask God for help in your life or for someone in your life.

Create:

Make a short skit (writing) or video (on your phone, tablet, or computer) that tells this part of the Advent story. Be creative and share it with someone when you are done.

Share:

Plug into the mission ministries at your church. This might be collecting food for your food pantry, clothing for your clothes closet, or Christmas gifts for families who cannot afford to buy gifts this year. If this is not possible, find a ministry in your community and ask how you can support their mission!

Reflect:

In your journal, reflect on doubt. What do you think about doubt? What do you doubt? Why do you doubt? How can our faith and doubt work together to strengthen our belief?

Third Sunday of Advent

John the Baptist

Note: Start this week with the reading! Then, do the next activity on the next day, and so on, until you have done them all.

Read:

John 1:1-18

Pray:

While Christmas is far from over, John the Baptist draws us to think about what happens after Jesus' birth and how we live as Christ-followers. Read this prayer written by Howard Thurman. Rewrite it in your journal. As you write, talk with God. What could the work of Christmas look like for you this year?

When the Song of the Angels Is Stilled

When the song of the angels is stilled,
When the star in the sky is gone,
When the kings and the princes are home,
When the shepherds are back with their flocks,
The work of Christmas begins:
To find the lost,
To heal the broken,
To feed the hungry,
To release the prisoner,
To rebuild the nations,
To bring peace among people,
To make music in the heart.

Create:

Use a piece of cardstock and your favorite color markers to create a Christmas card! As you work, let yourself be creative. Consider what John the Baptist's personal Christmas cards might have looked like and what they might have said. Save your card to use in **Share** later in the week.

Share:

Be like John the Baptist and send some good news! Write a note on the card you made and send it to someone who needs some extra hope in his or her life. This might be a member of your family, a neighbor, or someone on your church's "Homebound" list.

Reflect:

In your journal reflect on the significance of people in your life who have prepared you or helped you prepare for something big/important, like John the Baptist. Who is a friend or family member who you see as a mentor? What are the best things about them? What have they helped or done for you? Who can you be a mentor to?

Fourth Sunday of Advent

Jesus

Note: Start this week with the reading! Then, do the next activity on the next day, and so on, until you have done them all.

Read:

Luke 2:6-15

Pray:

Ask someone to pray with you. Thank God for this person and ask for God's care, guidance, and love for them. When you have finishing prayer for them, ask them to pray for you in the same way. Share the time together with your loved one and with God.

Create:

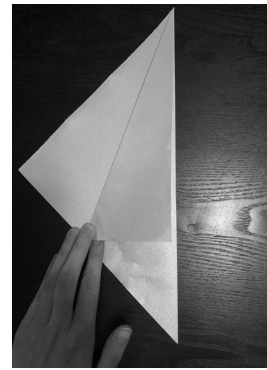
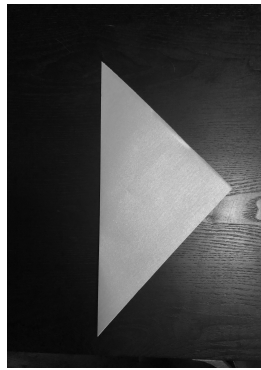
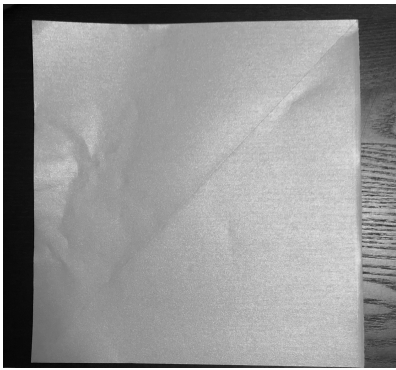
Using two sheets of paper, fold a star. Follow the directions provided. As you fold reflect, on the "guiding stars" in your own life. Who or what are they? Where are they leading you?

Share:

Gather your household together and make them mugs of hot chocolate. Read Luke 2:6-15 together. Share with one another how you are thankful, how you are hopeful for the coming year, and one way you have seen or experienced God's presence this Advent season.

Reflect:

In your journal think about past Christmas seasons. What is a favorite Advent or Christmas memory from the past? Describe it in as much details as you can. Give thanks for this memory



Week Four Create: Instructions

