



Welcome!

Welcome to *Families Celebrate Advent & Christmas!* This deck of cards is full of rituals, prayers, reflections, and activities your family can use to celebrate the Advent and Christmas seasons. Begin using the cards on December 1, 2019, the first Sunday of Advent. The cards follow the church year and help you celebrate all the way through the Day of Epiphany on January 6, 2020.

Daily, Weekly, and Topical Cards

- Most cards are dated for a specific day on the calendar.
- Sundays have two cards each.
- Four cards present prayers to accompany lighting the Advent wreath, one for each week of Advent.
- Two undated topical cards introduce the Advent wreath and the twelve days of Christmas.

Using These Cards

- Keep these cards handy in a basket or bowl to look at again and again.
- Tuck favorite cards in a backpack or coat pocket.
- Punch a hole at the top of the card and hang with ribbon, yarn, or paper clips.
- Shuffle the cards, then put them back in church year order.
- Find all the cards with candles, animals, children, the color blue, stars, . . . what else?

Family Time Suggestions

- Gather around the Advent wreath, Christmas tree, or dinner table.
- Light candles and say the prayer from the weekly card.
- Look at the picture.
- Read the card text aloud.
- Talk about the question or try the activity.
- Look up Bible verses.
- Sing a favorite Advent song or Christmas carol.
- Skip cards when you need to—no guilt!



Tuesday, December 3

Jesus is coming and that will be great!

We let our light shine.

We watch and we wait.

Read Matthew 5:14-16. Waiting doesn't mean not doing anything. While we wait for Christmas to come, how can we let our light shine? Could we help nearby and faraway neighbors? How?



Second Week of Advent

Prayer at the Wreath

Light two candles on your wreath each day this week (December 8-14). Read Isaiah 9:6. Place your hand on the shoulder or elbow of the person next to you and say:

In the dark, do not fear.
Always know that God is near.
God is with you day and night,
in the dark and in the light.
Thank you, Mighty God,
for the gift of hope.
Amen.



Saturday, December 14

Simple mealtime prayers

Come, Lord Jesus, be our guest,
and let these gifts to us be blessed.

Amen.

Blessed be God who is our bread;
may all the world be clothed and fed.

May there be a goodly share
on every table everywhere.

Amen.

Give us today our daily bread.

Amen.



Sunday, December 15

Third Sunday of Advent

Sing the first stanza and refrain of “O come, O come, Emmanuel” (ELW 257). As you sing, listen carefully and do these actions when you hear or say these words: *come* (use your hand to beckon someone closer), *appear* (widen your eyes), and *rejoice* (clap hands twice).



Friday, December 20

Today the church remembers Katharina von Bora Luther, wife of reformer Martin Luther. Martin loved and depended on Katie, calling her "Lord Katie" and "morning star of Wittenberg." Katie loved God and people. She was smart, strong, and good at running businesses and managing the family's money. She also spoke up for others. Katie's last words in life were "I will stick to Christ as a burr sticks to cloth."



Tuesday, December 24

Christmas Eve

Today is the day we have been waiting for! What makes this day special and different for your family at home?
At church?

At different points today, stop and ask each other: What do you smell? What do you see? What do you hear? How do you feel? Where do you experience Jesus, God-with-us, in your Christmas Eve celebrations?



Saturday, December 28

Do you know the origin of the greeting “Merry Christmas”? A hint comes in an old Christmas carol, “God rest you merry, gentlemen.” Today *merry* means “happy” or “joyful,” but long ago it meant “peaceful” and “blessed.” So “God rest you merry” was like saying “God bless you and give you peace.”

Where can we share God’s peace with others each week?
(Answer: At church.)

Families Celebrate Advent & Christmas

Copyright © 2019 Augsburg Fortress.
All rights reserved. May not be reproduced
in any manner without prior written
permission from the publisher;
augsburgfortress.org/copyrights.

Scripture quotations from the New Revised
Standard Version Bible © 1989 Division of
Christian Education of the National Council
of the Churches of Christ in the USA.

Used by permission.

Art copyright © Carolina Farías;
www.carolinafarias.com.ar.

Printed in China

**Families Celebrate Advent & Christmas
2019-2020**

Acknowledgments

Writer: Elizabeth Hunter

Editor: Suzanne Burke

Cover and interior art: Carolina Farías

Cover and interior design: Eileen Engebretson