

Holy-days at Home

Prayers and practices for Advent,
Christmas & Epiphany
Year B
Created by Rev. Leah Wall



Family Leadership Network
NEXT GENERATION LEADERSHIP INITIATIVE

Prayers & Practices for Advent

4 weeks of fasting

Purple is for Preparation

Show, O heavens, from above, and let the skies rain down righteousness;
let the earth open, that salvation may sprout forth.

Isaiah 45:8

Advent Family Prayer

In the wilderness prepare the way of the Lord; make straight in the desert a highway for our God.

Isaiah 40:3

Our King and Savior now draws near: *

O Come, let us adore him.

Respond with a Psalm:

Week 1: Psalm 80: 1-7

Week 3: Psalm 126

Week 2: Psalm 85

Week 4: Psalm 132: 8-19

A Reading from Holy Scripture:

Week 1: 1 Corinthians 1:1-9

Week 3: Isaiah 65:17-25

Week 2: 2 Peter 3:8-18

Week 4: Luke 1:26-38

Or "The Song of the Redeemed"

Respond by praying together: The Lord's Prayer

Collect of the week (found on page 598-599):

Almighty God, give us grace to cast away the works of darkness, and put on the armor of light, now in the time of this mortal life in which your Son Jesus Christ came to visit us in great humility; that in the last day, when he shall come again in his glorious majesty, to judge both the living and the dead, we may rise to the life immortal; through him who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, now and for ever. Amen.

The Song of the Redeemed

magna et mirabilia

O ruler of the universe, Lord God,
great deeds are they that you have done, *
surpassing human understanding.

Your ways are ways of righteousness and truth, *
O King of all the ages.

Who can fail to do you homage, Lord,
and sing the praises of your Name? *
for you only are the Holy One.

All nations will draw near and fall down before you, *
because your just and holy works have been revealed.

Revelation 15:3-4



Practices

The four weeks of Advent typically are observed with the themes of:
Hope, Peace, Joy (Gaudate, pink candle) & Love

Common Advent practices involve lighting the advent wreath weekly, fasting, prayer, and acts of generosity. Additionally, there is a traditional lessons and carols service. The board book "From Eden to Bethlehem" is a child friendly version of this service.

Beginning December 16, the "O Antiphons" found in the Calendar of Holy Days (page 712) can be used by reading the prophecy that is listed & singing the appropriate verse of the hymn "O Come, O Come, Emmanuel".

We do not wait only in anticipation only for the coming of a "birthday", but in work and prayer, examining our own hearts and lives to see if there is any darkness in us where Christ can "be born in us this day".

Prayers & Practices for Christmas

12 days: December 25 - January 5

White is for Celebration

His goings forth are from long ago, from the days of eternity.

Micah 5:2

Christmastide Family Prayer

Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people.
For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord.

Luke 2:10-11

Alleluia, to us a child is born: *

O come, let us adore him. Alleluia.

Respond with a Psalm (choose 1):

Psalm 96

Psalm 97

Psalm 84

Psalm 98

Psalm 147:12-20

Psalm 8

A Reading from Holy Scripture:

Behold, the dwelling place of God is with man. He will dwell with them, and they will be his people, and God himself will be with them as their God.

Revelation

21:3

Respond by praying together: The Lord's Prayer

Collect of the week (found on pages 600 - 601):

Almighty God, you have given your only-begotten Son to take our nature upon him, and to be born of a pure virgin: Grant that we, who have been born again and made your children by adoption and grace, may daily be renewed by your Holy Spirit; through Jesus Christ our Lord, to whom with you and the same Spirit be honor and glory, now and for ever. Amen.



Practices

The twelve days of Christmas begin with a vigil on Christmas Eve. This day you will know that the Lord will come and save us: and in the morning, you will see His glory.

Common Christmas practices involve lighting the Christ Candle on Christmas morning and every day through Christmas. After the advent candles & greenery are put away, the Christ candle can continue to be used until Good Friday.

Other practices include a Christmas Eve candlelight vigil, singing of carols and feasting and observing Christmas lights. Consider opening gifts throughout the 12 days of Christmas, or extending the celebration in other ways.

If you use a nativity scene, the Jesus figure could be added to the scene on Christmas morning. The Magi can begin to follow the star from across the house or room to arrive & worship Jesus at Epiphany (January 6).

From the proper Preface for Christmas (BCP page 152)

... you gave Jesus Christ, your only Son, to be born for us; who, by the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary his mother, was made truly man, yet without the stain of sin, that we might be cleansed from sin and given the right to become your children.

Recommended reading for Advent & Christmas:

From Eden to Bethlehem by Danielle Hitchen (age birth+)

Look! A Child's guide to Advent & Christmas by Laura Alary (age 6+)

To Dance with God by Gertrud Mueller Nelson (for grown-ups)

Prayers & Practices for Epiphany

January 6 - Ash Wednesday

Liturgical color after the 1st Sunday is green: ordinary time

...to be a light to lighten the Gentiles...

Epiphany Family Prayer

From the rising of the sun to its setting my name will be great among the nations, and in every place incense will be offered to my name, and a pure offering. For my name will be great among the nations, says the Lord of hosts.

Malachi

1:11

-or-

Nations shall come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your rising. Isaiah 60:3

Respond with a Psalm using the lectionary beginning on page 738 or choose from the following:

Psalm 72: 1-11

Psalm 89:20-29

Psalm 63:1-9

Psalm 130

Psalm 111

Psalm 42:1-7

A Reading From Holy Scripture:

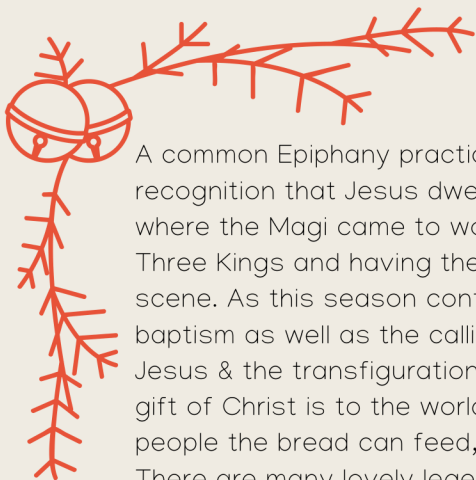
Luke 1:68-79 or other of your choice or using the lectionary (pg 738f)

Respond by praying together: The Lord's Prayer

Collect:

(one for each week is found on pages 601 - 604)

O God, by the leading of a star you manifested your only Son to the peoples of the earth: Lead us, who know you now by faith, to your presence, where we may see your glory face to face; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.



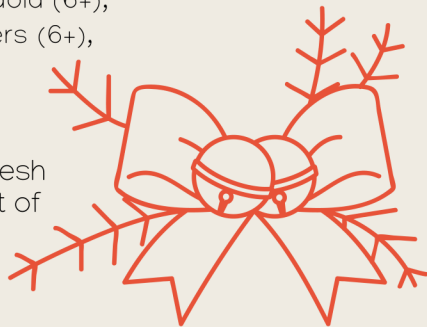
Practices

A common Epiphany practice is the blessing of the house. This is a recognition that Jesus dwells in our homes just as truly as he dwelt where the Magi came to worship. Other practices include singing We Three Kings and having the Magi arrive, finally, at our home nativity scene. As this season continues, the church remembers Jesus' baptism as well as the calling of the disciples, the many miracles of Jesus & the transfiguration. We consider the mystery of how vast the gift of Christ is to the world, how far His voice can reach, how many people the bread can feed, how He is interceding for us still. There are many lovely legends in storybooks that reflect the way our imaginations are spurred by the idea that, for those with eyes to see, anyone could meet the Christ. "Their courage gives our questing hearts a voice to seek, to find, to worship, to rejoice." Malcom Guite

Some imaginative reading for epiphany:

The Last Straw by Frederick Thury (4+), Follow the Star by Rachel Brown (5+), Dance in the Desert by Madeleine L'Engle (5+), The Legend of Old Befana by Tomie DePaola (6+), The Greatest Gift retold by Susan Summers (6+), The Third Gift by Linda Sue Park (6+), The Gift of the Magi O Henry (6+)

Jesus Christ our Lord ... took on our mortal flesh to reveal his glory; that he might bring us out of darkness and into his own glorious light.





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