

Celebrating Advent with

Jesse Tree



A 25 Day Devotional Guide Connecting the
Advent Season with God's Faithfulness

Celebrating Advent with the Jesse Tree Devotions

The idea for the Jesse Tree comes from Isaiah 11:1, “A shoot will spring forth from the stump of Jesse, and a branch out of his roots.” Through these devotions, we unfold the story of God in the Old Testament by connecting the Advent Season with the faithfulness of God. The shoot, a biblical symbol for newness out of discouragement, became the way to talk about the expected Messiah. It is a symbol of Jesus the Christ, who is the revelation of the grace and faithfulness of God.

Through the Old Testament, we see the struggle of God’s people to believe and trust in Him and of their need for a deliverer. We see a history of chosen people who would struggle to believe God and trust Him in the way they lived. We see the faithfulness of God who loves sinners - people made in His image who chose their own way - so much that He would make the way for them to return to Him. We see a promise keeping God who would continue to pursue His people. We see key people in and out of this history who loved Him and remained open to God and His Word. These key people were those who believed in God and were waiting for the promised Messiah.

Jesse Tree Schedule

Day - Scripture - Focus - Symbol



Day 1 | Isaiah 11:1-5
Shoot from Jesse
Stump with Branch



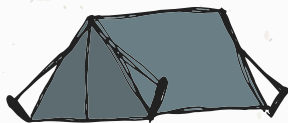
Day 2 | Genesis 1:26-31
Creation - World



Day 3 | Genesis 3:1-24
The Fall - Apple



**Day 4 | Genesis 6:11-14;
7:17-8:3; 9:8-17**
Noah - Ark and Rainbow



Day 5 | Genesis 12:1-8
Abram - Tent



Day 6 | Genesis 15:1-6
Abram and Sarai - Stars



Day 7 | Genesis 21:1-7
Sarah - Baby



Day 8 | Genesis 22:1-18
Isaac - Ram



**Day 9 | Genesis
28:10-22**
Jacob - Ladder



**Day 10 | Genesis 37:1-36;
50:15-21**
Joseph - Coat



**Day 11 | Deuteronomy
5:1-22**
Moses - Tablets



Day 12 | Joshua 2:1-21
Rahab - Rope



**Day 13 | Ruth 1:15-2:3,
4:13-17**
Ruth - Grain

Jesse Tree Schedule

Day - Scripture - Focus - Symbol



Day 14 | 2 Samuel 5:1-5
David - Crown



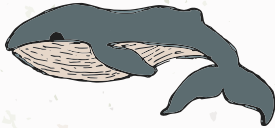
Day 15 | Isaiah 9:2-7
Prophets - Rose



Day 16 | 1 Kings 18:15-39
Elijah - Fire and Altar



Day 17 | Daniel 6
Daniel - Lion



Day 18 | Jonah 1-4
Jonah - Big Fish



Day 19 | Esther 4
Esther - Scepter



Day 20 | Isaiah 11:6-9
Peace - Dove



Day 21 | Micah 5:1-5
Bethlehem - City



Day 22 | Luke 1:26-38
Mary - Heart



Day 23 | Matthew 1:18-25
Joseph - Hammer



Day 24 | Luke 2:1-5
Journey - Sandals



Day 25 | Luke 2:6-21
Birth - Baby Jesus and Star

How to Celebrate with a Jesse Tree

The Jesse Tree can be a banner or a tree. This can be as simple or as elaborate as you would like to make it. The banner could be as simple as a poster with the ornaments colored and glued to the poster or clipped to a ribbon or string and hung on the wall. The tree can be a leafless branch set in a container decorated to look like a stump, an inexpensive small artificial tree, or some other creative tree to display the ornaments on.

The symbols that illustrate each devotion are made into ornaments that can be attached to the banner or the tree. These give a visual reminder of our family history as God's children - whatever age we may be. It gives a fun way to celebrate Jesus and keep Him central in the Advent Season. We look forward to the FBMaryville family celebrating this season together!

Day 1 | Shoot from Jesse

Scripture: Isaiah 11:1-5

God has a plan for everything. Long before Jesus was born there lived a man named Jesse. Jesse had seven sons; the youngest was named David. When David grew up, he became a great king of Israel. God had a plan for Jesse and for his son David, even before they were born.

Jesus was also part of Jesse and David's family tree, born many, many years after David. People waited a long time for the birth of the Savior. The season of Advent is a season of waiting for us, too. We wait for Christmas, the day we celebrate the birth of Jesus. It is hard to be patient, especially when we are waiting for something wonderful like Christmas! But it is important to learn to be patient, and to trust that God has a plan for us, too.

Talk About:

Why is it important to know God has a plan for us?

God often calls us to wait as He unfolds His plan for us. Why is waiting so hard?

Prayer: Dear God, we thank You that You have a plan for each of us. Help us to be patient as we wait for Jesus' birthday, and help us to keep our hearts and thoughts focused on Him.

Additional Scriptures:

Jeremiah 23:5

Romans 15:4-13



Day 2 | Creation

Scripture: Genesis 1:26-31

God is the creator of all things. God made the world and everything in it: the air and the water, the plants and the fish, the animals and the people. The people were made in His image and were made to have fellowship with Him.

When God finished creating the world, it was perfect - the people were perfect too. Adam and Eve were to care for the world God made and walk in perfect fellowship with Him. They loved and trusted God and each other with their whole hearts, and they cared for the garden God had given them to live in.

Talk About:

What must it have been like to completely trust God and care for the world He made? How can we show God we trust Him and continue to care for what He has made?

Prayer: Thank You, Creator God, for making our wonderful world and creating us in Your image.

Additional Scriptures:

John 1:1-3

Colossians 1:16



Day 3 | The Fall

Scripture: Genesis 3:1-24

Yesterday we read about the perfect world that God created, including perfect people. Today, we read in the Bible about Adam and Eve, and how they disobeyed God.

God had given them everything, and had only asked that they not eat the fruit of one special tree. But Adam and Eve did eat the fruit. Eating the fruit did not make them wise, it brought sin and confusion into the world.

God still loved Adam and Eve, but there are consequences for sin. The wages of sin is death and separation from God. God sent them out of the beautiful garden, and they had to work for their food. God also made a promise to Adam and Eve that one day, sin would be defeated.

Talk About:

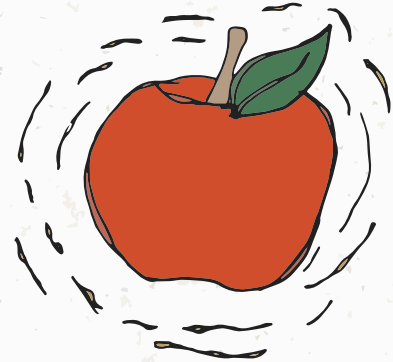
What is it called when we are disobedient to God?
Why did God have to punish Adam and Eve?

Prayer: Mighty God, help us to see when we mistrust You and how to trust You to avoid sin in our lives.

Additional Scriptures:

Romans 5:12,15,19

1 Corinthians 15:22



Day 4 | Noah

Scripture: Genesis 6:11-14; 7:17-8:3; 9:8-17

When people sin - think, say, or do things that go against God's rules - this sin separates them from God. There came a time when there was so much sin in the world that God decided to destroy mankind, but there was one man who was righteous in the sight of God, Noah. So God asked Noah to build an ark and to save his own family, as well as the animals. Then God sent rain and flooded the world, and God destroyed all the people and animals that were not on the ark.

When the flood was over and Noah and his family were safely on dry ground, God made a covenant, or a promise, with Noah. God promised not to send another flood that would destroy the world. As a sign of this promise, God put a rainbow in the sky.

God loves us and keeps His promises. Sin was judged, but not defeated, God would keep His promise and send His Son to defeat sin and death.

Talk About:

Can you name a promise that God has kept?
How have you seen God keep His promises?

Prayer: Thank You, Almighty God, for keeping Your promises.

Additional Scriptures:

Hebrews 9:15

Romans 6:23



Day 5 | Abram

Scripture: Genesis 12:1-8

Sometimes God asks us to do things that are hard. Sometimes God asks us to go places and do things we'd rather not do. God asked Abram to take a long trip, and to leave behind the place that Abram called home. Abram had to trust God and depend on Him. God made promises to Abram. God promised to bless Abram. God was going to make a people for Himself through Abram.

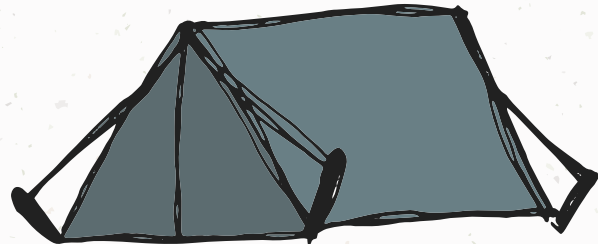
Abram still had problems and struggles, especially when he forgot to listen to God's directions, but God kept all of the promises He made to Abram.

Talk about:

Name some ways that God shows us what He wants us to do.
When and how have you depended on God?

Prayer: Holy God, help us to depend on You and do the things that You want us to do.

Additional Scripture:
Romans 4:18-25
Galatians 3:6-9



Day 6 | Abram and Sarai

Scripture: Genesis 15:1-6

God loves to make promises. Have you ever made a promise that was hard to keep? Has someone ever broken a promise they made to you? When that happens, we feel sad. The good news is that God never, ever breaks a promise!

God made a promise to Abram and his wife Sarai. Abram and Sarai had no children, and since they were almost 100 years old, they thought it was too late. But God promised Abram that he would have a son of his own. God invited Abram to come outside, look up into the night sky, and try to count the stars. God said, "Your family will be like that - there will be too many to count!" Abram believed in God's promises and had faith that it would happen.

When you look up into the sky, see how many stars you can count. Do you know there are many, many more stars beyond what we can see? God's promise was beyond what Abraham could "see" - could understand - but he trusted God.

Talk About:

What does it mean to trust God with what we cannot "see"?
What is hard for you that requires deep trust in God?

Prayer: Faithful God, thank You for being trustworthy and for always keeping Your promises.

Additional Scriptures:

Romans 4:18-25

Galatians 3:6-9



Day 7 | Sarah

Scripture: Genesis 21:1-7

Have you ever wanted something so much that you thought you would die if you didn't get it? It's so hard to be happy when we focus on the things we don't have, instead of the things we do have.

Sarah wanted a baby more than anything else, but even though she prayed a lot and tried everything she could think of, she didn't have a baby. When Sarah gave up trying to do things her own way, God made His promise to her a reality. God had promised Sarah her own son. God kept His promise.

When Sarah and Abraham's son was born they named him Isaac. Isaac means laughter. Sarah received great joy from God through the gift of her son Isaac. Sarah was very happy and grateful to God for keeping His promise to her.

Talk About:

Have you ever wanted something as much as Sarah wanted to have a baby? How has God blessed you and answered your prayers?

Prayer: Gracious God, thank You for listening to us and answering our prayers. Thank You for knowing what is best for us and thank You for giving us Jesus!



Day 8 | Isaac

Scripture: Genesis 22:1-18

We know that Isaac was special because he was the son of promise to Abraham. Abraham loved Isaac very much, but he loved God even more than Isaac. God tells us that we should love Him more than anyone else, but that is often hard for us to do.

One day, God asked Abraham to take Isaac on a journey. Abraham obeyed. God asked Abraham to offer Isaac as a sacrifice, as a way of showing how much Abraham loved God. We don't know how Abraham felt, but we know that he obeyed God. He trusted that even though he was being asked to do something terrible, God would make everything right.

As he was getting ready to sacrifice Isaac, God sent an angel to stop Abraham and save Isaac's life. Then Abraham sacrificed the ram as a way of honoring God, and to thank Him for saving Isaac's life.

Talk About:

How has God protected you and provided for you?
In what ways is God asking you to trust Him with the hard things in life?

Prayer: Thank You, God, for being our constant and gracious provider and protector.

Additional Scriptures:

John 3:16

Hebrews 11:17-19



Day 9 | Jacob

Scripture: Genesis 28:10-22

Instead of waiting on God, Jacob had often tried to make his own way. He had done some deceptive things, but instead of saying he was sorry, Jacob ran away.

Jacob lived away from his family for many years, but now it was time to meet with his brother. He had to face up to the things he had done wrong many years before.

When Jacob ran away from his family, he may have thought that he was running away from God, too. God spoke to Jacob in a dream. God reminded Jacob of promises He had made to Jacob's father and grandfather, and those promises were meant for Jacob, too. Jacob thought that he had run away from God, but God was always with him.

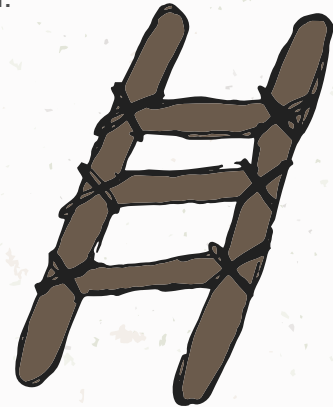
Talk About:

How do you know that God is always with you?
Can we run away or hide from God?

Prayer: Remind us each day, God, that You are with us.

Additional Scriptures:

John 1:51; 14:6



Day 10 | Joseph

Scripture: Genesis 37:1-36; 50:15-21

Joseph was loved very much by his father, Israel (Jacob) - maybe too much. Joseph's brothers hated him because they were jealous of their father's special love for Joseph.

They sold him to a man who made him a servant and even put him in prison. However, God had given Joseph a special gift of understanding dreams, and Joseph was able to use this special gift to help Pharaoh.

Pharaoh rewarded Joseph by giving him a very important job. While Joseph was doing his job, he again met his brothers, who did not recognize him. Instead of revenge, Joseph chose to forgive and help them. He knew God had been with him through everything, and that God was using this hardship in Joseph's life to do good things.

Talk About:

How can God use your hard times or relationships to do good things? Who do you need to forgive?

Prayer: God of forgiveness, help us to be forgiving even when it is hard to do.

Additional Scripture:

Romans 8:28

Acts 3:13-15



Day 11 | Moses

Scripture: Deuteronomy 5:1-22

God gave Moses and us a simple way to understand who He is and how to live as His people. God wants us to love and care for each other. To help us to understand how to care for each other, many years ago God gave Moses the ten best rules for living.

These rules are called the Ten Commandments, and they are still good rules for today. Not everybody likes to follow the rules. They think rules keep them from having fun. God gave us these rules not as a punishment, but as a way of helping us to show God that we are thankful for what He has done for us. God wants us to understand Him and His ways, and will help us to do the right thing by guiding us to the right path.

Talk About:

What rules help your family to live together and be happy?
How do the Ten Commandments act as the foundation for your family rules or family culture?

Prayer: Righteous God, thank You for loving us enough to give us rules to guide us.

Additional Scriptures:
Matthew 5:17



Day 12 | Rahab

Scripture: Joshua 2:1-21

The Israelites were ready to enter the land that God had promised them. They sent two men into the land to find out more about it. It was very dangerous to go into the land; if the people who ruled the land had found the two Israelites they would have been killed.

Rahab saved the lives of two of God's people. She hid the two men in her house and then helped them to escape. She knew that God had promised the city of Jericho to Joshua and the Israelites, and she believed that God is a powerful God. Rahab had courage to honor God because she believed in God's power.

In return, the Israelites protected Rahab and her family. Rahab hung a red rope from the window of her house so that the Israelites would remember to protect her. God remembered Rahab and took care of her for the rest of her life.

Talk About:

Tell about a time when God gave you courage to help someone.

Prayer: Dear God, give us the courage to help others and hearts to declare who You are to others so they will believe in You too.

Additional Scriptures:
Hebrews 11:30-31



Day 13 | Ruth

Scripture: Ruth 1:15-2:3, 4:13-17

Ruth and Naomi had lost all the people they loved. Naomi's two sons - one was Ruth's husband - had died, and Naomi's husband had died too. Naomi had been living in Ruth's country, far from her family, and so Naomi decided to return to Bethlehem. Ruth could have stayed in her own country with her own family, but she chose to go to Bethlehem with Naomi.

Naomi was so sad that she thought that God had forgotten her. In the days of the Bible, most women couldn't get jobs, so women would go to the fields and take the grain that the farmers left behind. Ruth went to the field to gather grain, and there she met Boaz, a relative of Naomi's, who took care of them. Boaz and Ruth married and had a son, and Naomi was happy. She knew that God had not forgotten them, even when she had been sad.

Talk About:

Even though Naomi thought of her life as empty, God was fully with her. Is there anyone you know like Naomi that you could love in some special ways as a family?

Prayer: Holy God, thank You for being with us always. Please help us to always see Your goodness and share our blessings with others.

Additional Scriptures:
Matthew 1:1-5



Day 14 | David

Scripture: 2 Samuel 5:1-5

Although David was chosen by God to be king when he was a boy, he didn't become king until he was thirty years old. David was a good king because David listened to God and trusted Him. David served as king for forty years.

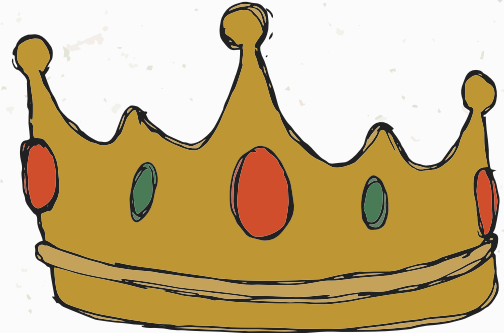
Being a king is an important job. Kings must be wise and strong; they must do what is good for the people of their land. Sometimes they must fight wars, but whenever possible they need to try to keep peace. Kings should protect their people like shepherds protect their sheep. David had been a shepherd, and then he became a king. God trusted him to take care of the people of Israel.

A very important King was to come from David's family, the King of Kings also known as The Good Shepherd. Jesus, the perfect King.

Talk About:

How do you see God caring for you?
Whom is God trusting you to take care of?

Prayer: Holy God, thank You for watching over us and protecting us.



Day 15 | Prophets

Scripture: Isaiah 9:2-7

Many years before Jesus was born, people called prophets would bring God's message to the people of Israel. The prophets reminded the people of what God wanted them to do. God wanted them to understand who He was and trust Him in the way they lived their lives. The prophets told the people to worship only the one true God.

The prophets also reminded people that God had promised a Savior. They also gave the people hope that no matter how bad things might be here on earth, God had not forgotten them. God was going to send a child who would grow to be the world's Savior. God gave the prophets many clues to share with His people about the Savior so the people would recognize Him when He came.

The rose ornament symbolizes the prophets' love and devotion for God.

Talk About:

What "clues" about Jesus do you get in the Isaiah 9:2-7 passage? God's Word speaks to us today. What truths from God's Word gives you hope in your walk with God?

Prayer: Father God, thank You for giving us Your Word and speaking to us through it.



Day 16 | Elijah

Scripture: 1 Kings 18:15-39

The people of Israel had forgotten to worship God. Instead, they were worshipping a false god named Baal. God sent His prophet Elijah to remind the people about the one true God, but the people didn't want to listen to Elijah.

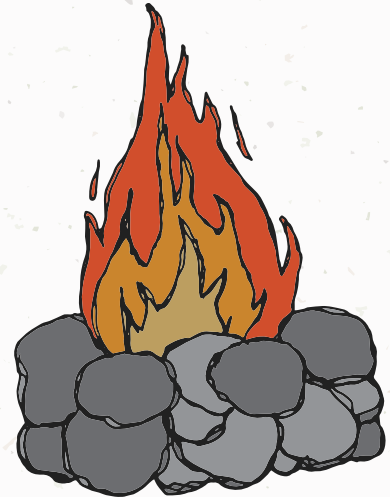
So Elijah showed the people God's power. He prepared a sacrifice, and the prophets of Baal prepared a sacrifice. The prophets of Baal prayed that their god would send fire to burn the sacrifice, but of course, nothing happened. When Elijah prayed, God sent fire. The Israelites had forgotten God until God showed them His power and might.

God still does miracles today, but we need to remember and trust God even if we don't see miracles. Our God is a great God; we need to praise Him at all times.

Talk About:

What do you know of God's power and might?
What are some things we can do to praise God?

Prayer: We praise You, powerful God, for all that You are and do for us.



Day 17 | Daniel

Scripture: Daniel 6

God wants to be the most important thing in our lives: more important than our family, more important than our things, more important than even our own lives. Daniel understood that; he worshiped God even when it might have cost him everything, even his own life.

It was against the law for Daniel to worship God, but Daniel knew that God is the only true God, and he would not stop worshiping God. Daniel was punished for breaking the law, and he was put in a pit with lions. God protected Daniel from becoming the lions' dinner. People learned of God's power because of Daniel, and many others worshiped God because Daniel had trusted and honored God.

Talk About:

Who or what are some things you love after God?
How does loving God most help us to love others better?

Prayer: Savior God, it is not always easy to love You more than anything else. Help us to trust and honor You each day.



Day 18 | Jonah

Scripture: Jonah 1-4

Jonah was one of God's special messengers, called a prophet. God asked Jonah to do a special and important job. Unfortunately, Jonah didn't want to do the job God asked him to do, and so he ran away.

Of course, God always knew where Jonah went; no one can run away from God. God was with Jonah on the storm-tossed ship, and God was with Jonah in the belly of the fish. God was with Jonah when he finally went to Nineveh to do the job God had asked Jonah to do.

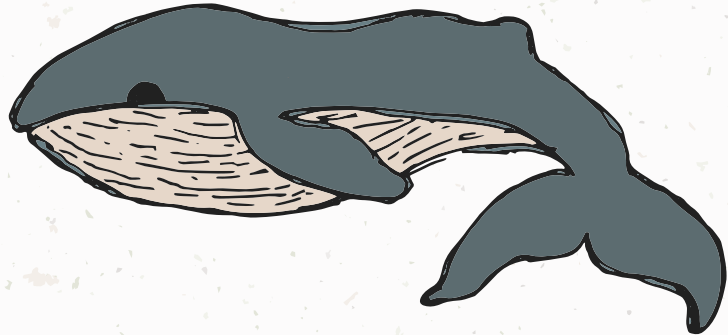
We can't run away from God. God wants us to obey Him, but even when we don't, God is still with us. God loves us at all times and in all places.

Talk About:

Have you ever tried to hide from God?
What have you learned about God from reading the book of Jonah?

Prayer: Loving God, thank You for watching over us in all things and for loving us when we try to run away from Your love.

Additional Scriptures:
Matthew 12:38-41



Day 19 | Esther

Scripture: Esther 4

God is at work in everything. Sometimes things don't seem to make any sense to us at all, but later we understand why God put us in a certain place at a certain time.

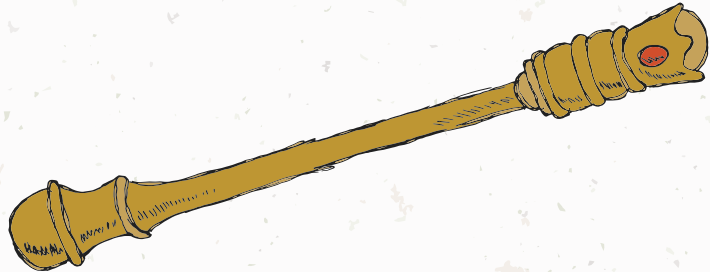
Esther was a beautiful young woman. God used her beauty to put her in place as the queen. Then Esther showed greater beauty by her willingness to put her own life at risk to try to save the Jewish people from death.

Esther's uncle told her of the danger to her and to her people, and he helped her to plan how to save their people. At first she didn't think she could help, but her uncle reminded her that everyone is important. God put Esther in the palace for a special job. God used her to rescue His people.

Talk About:

Does God have a special job for you?
How can you trust Him to lead you?

Prayer: All-knowing God, open our eyes to the special plans You have for us.



Day 20 | Peace

Scripture: Isaiah 11:6-9

Animals are one of God's great gifts to us. God made each animal unique. Many of them are gentle, but many others can hurt us or other animals. Most animals only hurt others when they are hungry or frightened.

Before Adam and Eve sinned, all of the animals got along with each other. There was no danger. God created a peaceful kingdom, but sin changed things.

Someday God will restore peace to the world. There will be no hunger or fear, and all of the animals will get along again. They will not hurt each other, and we will not hurt them. In a peaceful world, all of God's children will get along too. There will be no more war and no more pain. What a wonderful world that will be!

Talk About:

How can you be a peacemaker?

What will make God's Kingdom a kingdom of peace?

Prayer: Loving God, help us to understand and know the peace that comes from loving and trusting You.



Day 21 | Bethlehem

Scripture: Micah 5:1-5

Often God does things that surprise us. God chose the small town of Bethlehem for the birthplace of Jesus. In Bible times, most rulers in important families were born in bigger cities, but Jesus was born into an ordinary family in a small village.

God chose Bethlehem many years before Jesus was born. Even though the prophet Micah wrote that Bethlehem would be the place where the Savior would be born, the little town of Bethlehem wasn't ready for the birth of Jesus when the time came. The world may have not been ready to make room for God's Son, but God made a place for Him.

The day when we celebrate Jesus' birth will soon be here. We need to make our hearts ready.

Talk About:

How are you getting ready to celebrate Jesus' birth?
What is most important about Christmas to you?

Prayer: Eternal God, help us to always be ready for You. Help us to celebrate You every day.

Additional Scriptures:

Luke 2:1-20

Matthew 2:1-6



Day 22 | Mary

Scripture: Luke 1:26-38

God had a special job for someone. God had an earthly home picked out for His Son, Jesus. Jesus was going to need a mother who was thoughtful, discerning, strong, and loving.

God chose Mary to be Jesus' mother. God sent an angel to talk to Mary. Mary wasn't sure how she could be the mother of Jesus, but Mary trusted God. Mary knew that she was an ordinary girl with an extraordinary God. The angel reminded Mary that God would be with her.

God was giving her a difficult and important job, but she knew that God would guide her. Mary loved God and wanted to do whatever she could to serve Him. Mary said yes with a joyful heart.

Talk About:

Talk about some things that have happened to you or others that seem impossible.

Prayer: Thank You, God, that nothing is impossible with You.



Day 23 | Joseph

Scripture: Matthew 1:18-25

Yesterday we talked about Jesus' mother, Mary. Jesus also had an earthly father named Joseph, who was a carpenter.

God sent an angel to talk to Joseph in a dream. The angel explained that God had chosen Mary, and that Mary's baby would be very special.

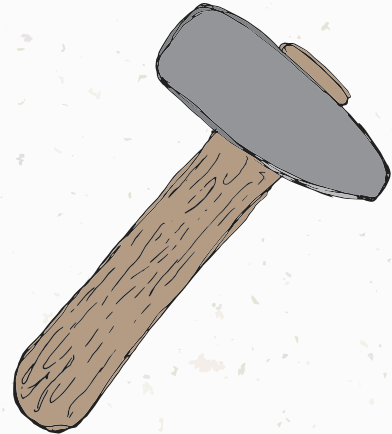
When Joseph woke up, he knew that he and Mary were a part of God's plan. Joseph knew that God was calling him to love and care for Mary and God's Son, Jesus.

Talk About:

Name some ways that God speaks to us.
How is God using you to love and care for others?

Prayer: God, who calls us, help us to hear Your voice.

Additional Scriptures:
Jeremiah 33:14-15



Day 24 | Journey

Scripture: Luke 2:1-5

Sometimes taking a trip is fun, like when we go on vacation. Sometimes it's not so fun, like when we go to the doctor when we're sick. But usually when we're on a journey, whether a short trip or a long one, we experience something new. We learn things on a journey.

Mary and Joseph went on a journey. If we were to take the same journey by car it wouldn't take very long, but because Mary and Joseph were walking, it took a long time.

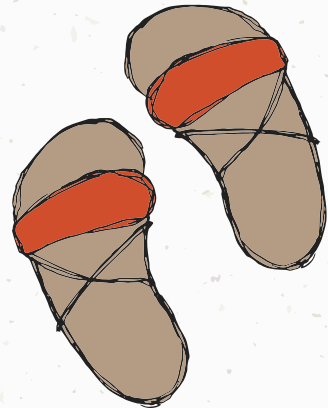
They had to go to Bethlehem because the country's ruler said they had to. But it was all part of God's plan. Mary and Joseph were continuing to learn about God's plan for them on their journey with Him.

Talk About:

What new journeys did you take this past year?
How did you see God's love and care of you on these journeys?

Prayer: Guide our journeys wherever they take us, holy God.
Help us to grow in our love for You every day.

Additional Scriptures:
Micah 5:2



Day 25 | Birth

Scripture: Luke 2:6-21

Our waiting is over! Jesus is born! The star is shining, the angels are singing, the shepherds are worshipping. Our savior is here!

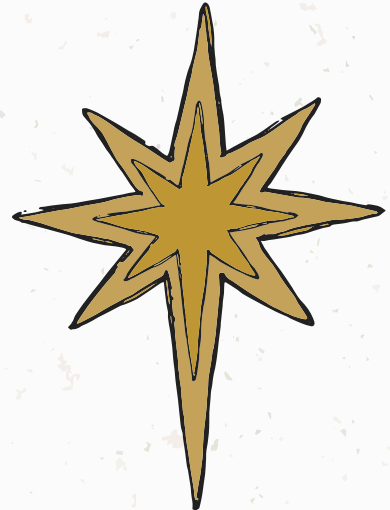
When sin first came into the world, God made a promise. Even when God's people forgot about Him, God didn't forget about His people and His promises. God guided His people, protected His people, and loved His people, even though they were sinful. God was faithful, and today we celebrate the promises that are fulfilled in Jesus.

Talk About:

What is your favorite part of the Christmas story? Why?

Prayer: Thank You, God of the universe, for the most wonderful gift of Your Son, Jesus. Help us to treasure You and celebrate the gift of Jesus everyday - not just today!

Merry Christmas! Our Savior Jesus is born!





7110 State Route 162 | Maryville, IL 62062
618.667.8221 | fbmaryville.org