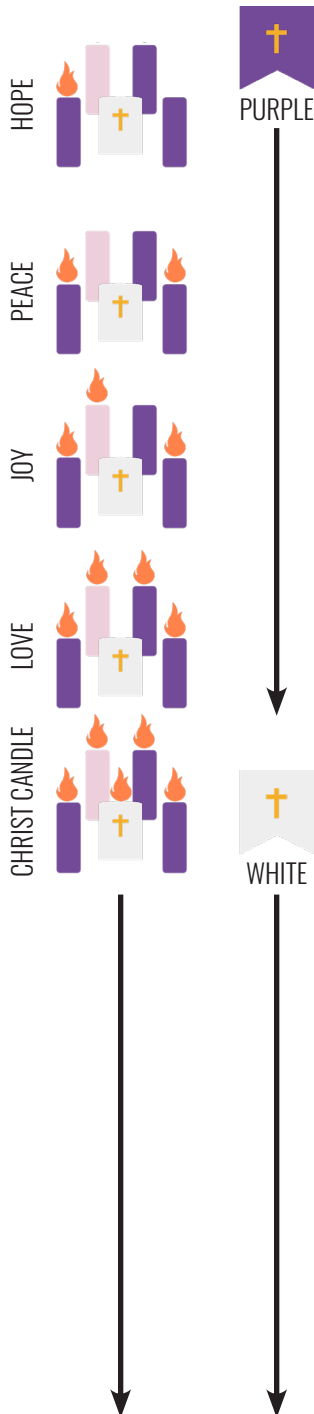


# ADVENT, CHRISTMAS, & EPIPHANY

## *A Guide for Pastors and Churches*



### **First Sunday of Advent**

*Always four Sundays before Christmas Day*

### **Second Sunday of Advent**

### **Third Sunday of Advent**

### **Fourth Sunday of Advent**

### **Christmas Day**

*Always December 25*

### **First Sunday after Christmas Day**

### **Second Sunday after Christmas Day**

*If January 5 or before*

### **Epiphany**

*Always January 6*

### **Sundays After Epiphany**

*Ordinary Time until Lent*

*Christ is coming...*

*Dim the lights; pray slowly and reflectively; solemn music (e.g., O Come, O Come Emmanuel); read the OT prophecies*

*Christ is coming...*

*See back of this handout for recommended Scripture readings and collects (prayers to collect/gather/focus the thoughts of God's people)*

*Christ is coming...*

*Consider preaching a series on Christ as the promised prophet, priest, and king, or on why Christ must come to bring true hope, peace, joy, and love*

*Christ is coming soon...*

*Also anticipate the second coming*

*Christ has come!*

*Flood the sanctuary with light; triumphant songs (Joy to the World); pull out all the stops!*

*Christ has come!*

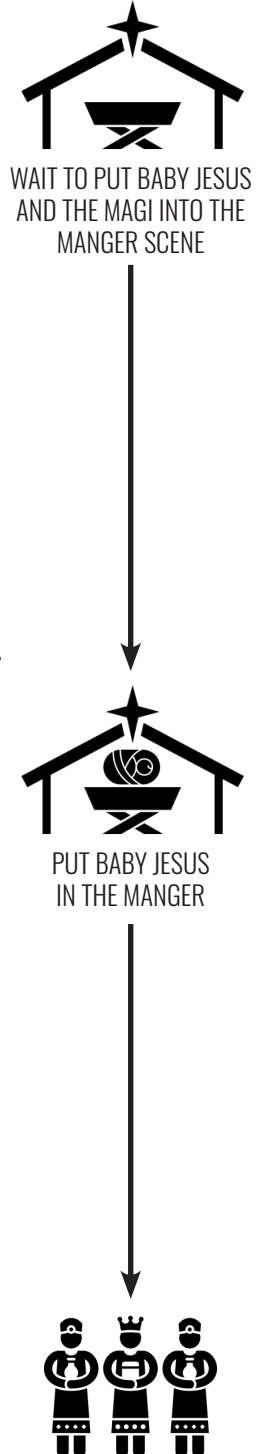
*Don't take down the decorations; keep singing Christmas songs!*

*Christ has come!*

*It's still Christmas! Christmas is a 12-day season of celebration!*

*Christ is the Light of the World!*

*The Messiah of Israel is the Savior of the Gentiles, of which the magi are the firstfruits; proclaim his universal salvation!*



WAIT TO PUT BABY JESUS AND THE MAGI INTO THE MANGER SCENE

PUT BABY JESUS IN THE MANGER

ADD THE MAGI TO THE MANGER SCENE

## Collects

First  
Sunday  
of Advent

*Almighty God, give us grace that we may cast away the works of darkness, and put upon us the armor of light, now in the time of this mortal life in which thy 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 quick and the dead, we may rise to the life immortal; through him who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Ghost, one God, now and for ever. Amen.*

Second  
Sunday of  
Advent

*Blessed Lord, who has caused all holy Scriptures to be written for our learning; grant that we may in such wise hear them, read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest them, that by patience and comfort of your holy word, we may embrace and ever hold fast the blessed hope of everlasting life, which you have given us in our Savior Jesus Christ. Amen.*

Third  
Sunday  
of Advent

*Lord Jesus Christ, at your first coming you sent your messenger to prepare your way before you; grant that the ministers and stewards of your mysteries may likewise prepare and make ready your way, by turning the hearts of the disobedient to the wisdom of the just, that at your second coming to judge the world, we may be found an acceptable people in your sight, who lives and reigns with the Father and the Holy Spirit, ever one God, world without end. Amen.*

Fourth  
Sunday  
of Advent

*O Lord, raise up, we pray you, your power, and come among us, and with great might help us; that whereas, through our sins and wickedness, we are sore let and hindered in running the race that is set before us, your bountiful grace and mercy may speedily help and deliver us, through the satisfaction of your Son our Lord; to whom with you and the Holy Spirit be honor and glory, world without end. Amen.*

Christmas  
Day

*Almighty God, you have given us your only begotten Son to take our nature upon him, and as at this time to be born of a pure Virgin; grant that we, being regenerate, and made your children by adoption and grace, may daily be renewed by your Holy Spirit, through the name our Lord Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with you and the same Spirit, ever one God, world without end. Amen.*

First  
Sunday  
After  
Christ-  
mas  
Day

*Pray the Collect for Christmas Day*

Second  
Sunday  
After  
Christ-  
mas  
Day

*O Lord, we beseech you, mercifully to receive the prayers of your people who call upon you; and grant that they may both perceive and know what things they ought to do, and also may have grace and power faithfully to fulfill the same through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.*

The  
Epiphany

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

## Readings

Isaiah 64:1–9  
Psalm 80:1–7, 17–19  
1 Corinthians 1:3–9  
Mark 13:24–37

*Readings from the Revised  
Common Lectionary*

Isaiah 40:1–11  
Psalm 85:1–2, 8–13  
2 Peter 3:8–15a  
Mark 1:1–8

*For Year A and  
Year C readings, visit  
lectionary.library.vanderbilt.edu*

Isaiah 61:1–4, 8–11  
Psalm 126 *or*  
Luke 1:46b–55  
1 Thessalonians  
5:16–24  
John 1:6–8, 19–28

2 Samuel 7:1–11, 16  
Luke 1:46b–55 *or*  
Psalm 89:1–4,  
19–26  
Romans 16:25–27  
Luke 1:26–38

Isaiah 9:2–7 *or* 62:6–12 *or* 52:7–10  
Psalm 96 *or* 97 *or* 98  
Titus 2:11–14 *or* 3:4–7 *or* Heb. 1:1–4 (5–12)  
Luke 2:1–14 (15–20) *or* John 1:1–14

**Creed:** Athanasian  
(*always Nicene otherwise*)

Isaiah 61:10–62:3  
Psalm 148  
Galatians 4:4–7  
Luke 2:22–40

Jeremiah 31:7–14  
Psalm 147:12–20  
Ephesians 1:3–14  
John 1:(1–9), 10–18

Isaiah 60:1–6  
Psalm 72:1–7, 10–14  
Ephesians 3:1–12  
Matthew 2:1–12

## Hymns

“Come, Thou Long  
Expected Jesus”

“O Come, O Come  
Emmanuel”

“Of the Father’s  
Love Begotten”

“Joyful, Joyful, We  
Adore You”

*Visit [holypojoys.org/  
advent-playlist](http://holypojoys.org/advent-playlist)  
for more music*



*The word “Christmas” means “Lord’s Supper on Christ’s Day.” The primary way that we celebrate Christ’s assumption of a human body for us and for our salvation is by participating in his body in the bread of the Lord’s Supper (1 Cor. 10:16).*



SCAN THIS QR CODE FOR  
AN INTRODUCTION TO  
THE CHURCH CALENDAR,  
AND FOR LINKS TO MORE  
RESOURCES FOR  
CELEBRATING ADVENT AS  
A CHURCH AND FAMILY

