

REVERSE ADVENT CALENDAR

Preparing Our Hearts
for the Arrival of Christ



FAMILY & ADULT DEVOTIONALS
FOR DECEMBER 7–24

A Note for Parents

You are the most important spiritual teacher your child will ever have.

Not pastors. Not Sunday school leaders. Not programs. **You.**

And here's the good news:

You don't have to do it perfectly.

You don't have to be a Bible expert.

You don't have to have all the answers.

Your presence — and your love — matter more than perfection.

Mother Teresa once said, “*Not all of us can do great things. But we can do small things with great love.*”

That's exactly how this Reverse Advent Calendar is designed.

Small moments.

Simple practices.

Great love.

Nothing fancy. Nothing heavy. Just a few minutes each day to turn your family's attention toward the light of Jesus as we prepare for Christmas.

How to Use This Guide

You can use this booklet in whatever way fits your family, but here are a few gentle suggestions to help create a simple rhythm:

1. Morning Touchpoint

Read the Scripture and Big Idea before school.

Keep it light. Keep it short.

Then, in the car on the way, ask:

“What do you remember from our story this morning?”

2. Evening Wind-Down

Use the Question, Activity, and Prayer before bed.

Let this become a peace-filled ritual to settle little hearts.

3. Keep It Simple

If you miss a day, skip it and move on.

No guilt. No pressure.

Jesus is honored by your desire, not your perfection.

4. When Big Questions Come

Children are natural theologians.

If they ask something big – and they will – it's perfectly okay to say:

“That’s a great question. I need to think about that.”

And you’re always welcome to reach out; we’re here to help.

A Final Encouragement

However you use this, please hear this clearly:

You are shaping your child’s faith in ways they will carry for a lifetime.

Tiny seeds. Small conversations. Quick prayers whispered before school.

These are holy moments.

Walk through this guide with love – that’s what your children will remember most.

We’re so grateful to walk this Advent journey with you.

If you ever need support, ideas, or encouragement, we are here.

And as you use this guide to prepare for Christmas, we hope you’ll join us for our **Candlelight Christmas Eve Service** – a simple, beautiful moment to anchor your family’s December in the light and love of Jesus.

DECEMBER 7 – DAY 18

Read: Luke 1:1-4 – The Story We Can Trust

Big Idea: God’s story about Jesus is true, strong, and worth trusting.

Family Question: What do you love most about the Christmas story?

Activity: Look at a children’s Bible or a nativity set together. Talk about who’s in the story.

Prayer: Jesus, thank You for giving us a story we can trust.

DECEMBER 8 – DAY 17

Read: Luke 1:5-7 – Waiting Is Hard

Big Idea: Sometimes we wait a long time for God, but He never forgets us.

Family Question: What is something you’ve had to wait for?

Activity: Each person makes a “prayer star” – write or draw something you’re asking God for. Hang it somewhere.

Prayer: God, help us wait with hope.

DECEMBER 9 – DAY 16

Read: Luke 1:8-12 – God Shows Up

Big Idea: God can surprise us in the middle of our normal day.

Family Question: When has something good surprised you?

Activity: Play “Surprise Blessing.” Each person does one small surprise act of kindness for someone else in the family today.

Prayer: Lord, help us see You when You surprise us.

DECEMBER 10 – DAY 15

Read: Luke 1:13–17 – God Has Big Plans

Big Idea: God's plans for us are bigger and better than we know.

Family Question: What do you dream about doing when you grow up?

Activity: Have each child draw themselves doing something for God.

Prayer: God, show us Your good plans for our lives.

DECEMBER 11 – DAY 14

Read: Luke 1:18–25 – Sometimes We Need Quiet

Big Idea: God often speaks to our hearts when we slow down.

Family Question: When do you feel calm and quiet inside?

Activity: Two minutes of “quiet time” together—everyone takes slow breaths.

Prayer: Jesus, help us hear You in the quiet.

DECEMBER 12 – DAY 13

Read: Luke 1:26–29 – God Sees Ordinary People

Big Idea: God chooses regular people to do amazing things.

Family Question: What makes you special to God?

Activity: Draw or write “God made me special” and decorate with stickers.

Prayer: God, thank You for loving us just as we are.

DECEMBER 13 – DAY 12

Read: Luke 1:30–33 – Jesus Is the Forever King

Big Idea: Jesus' love and kingdom will never end.

Family Question: What does it mean that Jesus is our King?

Activity: Make simple paper crowns and write “Jesus Is King” on them.

Prayer: King Jesus, rule in our hearts.

DECEMBER 14 – DAY 11

Read: Luke 1:34–38 – Mary Says Yes

Big Idea: God invites us to trust Him, just like Mary did.

Family Question: What is something hard to say “yes” to?

Activity: Each person says one small way they want to say “yes” to God this week.

Prayer: Lord, help us say yes to You.

DECEMBER 15 – DAY 10

Read: Luke 1:39–45 – Joy Jumps Inside Us

Big Idea: Being with other believers brings joy.

Family Question: Who brings happiness to your heart?

Activity: Send a quick thank-you video/message to someone who makes you smile.

Prayer: God, thank You for friends who fill us with joy.

DECEMBER 16 – DAY 9

Read: Luke 1:46–50 – God Turns Things Around

Big Idea: God cares for people who feel small or forgotten.

Family Question: How could we help someone who needs kindness?

Activity: Do one hidden kindness today—don’t tell anyone who did it.

Prayer: Jesus, help us show Your love to others.

DECEMBER 17 – DAY 8

Read: Luke 1:51–55 – God Has Always Been Faithful

Big Idea: God keeps His promises – always.

Family Question: When have you seen God take care of our family?

Activity: Create a “God Is Faithful” chain: each person writes one blessing on a strip of paper. Link the strips.

Prayer: God, thank You for taking care of us.

DECEMBER 18 – DAY 7

Read: Luke 1:56–58 – Joy Spreads

Big Idea: When God blesses us, we can bless others.

Family Question: How can we share God’s joy today?

Activity: Choose one neighbor, teacher, or friend to bless—send a card, bake cookies, or pray for them.

Prayer: Lord, make us joyful people who share Your love.

DECEMBER 19 – DAY 6

Read: Luke 1:59–64 – A New Name, A New Purpose

Big Idea: God gives each of us a purpose.

Family Question: What do you think God created you to do?

Activity: Write each child’s name on a card and around it write words describing their gifts.

Prayer: God, show us how You want to use our gifts.

DECEMBER 20 – DAY 5

Read: Luke 1:67–75 – Freedom to Love God

Big Idea: God sets us free so we can love and serve Him.

Family Question: What makes you feel brave?

Activity: Each child draws a “courage shield”—symbols of things that help them trust God.

Prayer: Jesus, help us follow You with courage.

DECEMBER 21 – DAY 4

Read: Luke 1:76–80 – Getting Ready for Jesus

Big Idea: God prepares our hearts to meet Jesus.

Family Question: How can we get ready for Jesus this week?

Activity: Each person lights a candle (or turns on a small flashlight if safer) and says one thing they want Jesus to shine His light on.

Prayer: Lord, prepare our hearts for Your coming.

DECEMBER 22 – DAY 3

Read: Luke 2:1–5 – A Hard Trip

Big Idea: Mary and Joseph’s journey was tough, but God was with them.

Family Question: When has something felt hard for you?

Activity: Use a map or globe to point out Bethlehem. Talk about how far Mary and Joseph traveled.

Prayer: Jesus, be with us when life feels hard.

DECEMBER 23 – DAY 2

Read: Luke 2:6–7 – Making Room for Jesus

Big Idea: Jesus was born in a small, simple place – God shows up where we make room.

Family Question: How can we make room for Jesus in our hearts?

Activity: Clean one small area together (toy box, shelf, bedroom corner) as a symbol of “making room.”

Prayer: Lord, help us make space for You.

DECEMBER 24 – DAY 1

Read: Luke 2:8–14 – Jesus Brings Light

Big Idea: Jesus came to bring peace, joy, and light to the whole world.

Family Question: What do you want to thank Jesus for tonight?

Activity: Turn off the lights and light one candle. Let each person say one thing Jesus brings to their life.

Prayer: Jesus, Light of the World, shine in our home and fill us with Your peace. Amen.

Join Us for Candlelight Christmas Eve

Christmas Eve is the night when the whole story comes together – the shepherds, the angels, the manger, and the Light who shines in our darkness.

We'd love for you and your family to join us for a peaceful, beautiful candlelight service as we celebrate the birth of Jesus.

December 24 • 4:30 PM

Nursery available

Children receive candles or glow sticks (safe option for little hands)

Carols, Scripture, and a message of hope

Whether this is your family's yearly tradition or your very first time, you belong here.

Let Christmas Eve become one of the “small things done with great love” that your children will remember for years.

For more information about how to plan you visit go to
www.fumcbossier.org/christmas