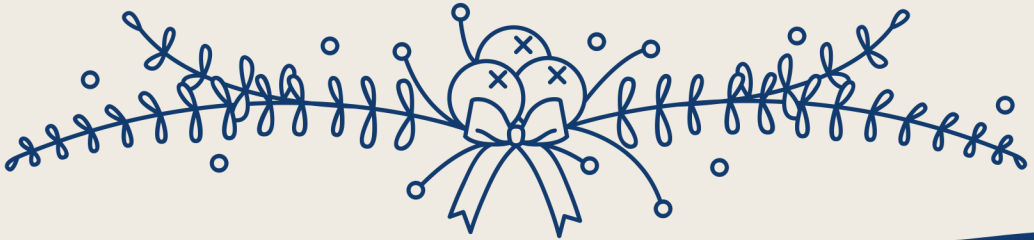
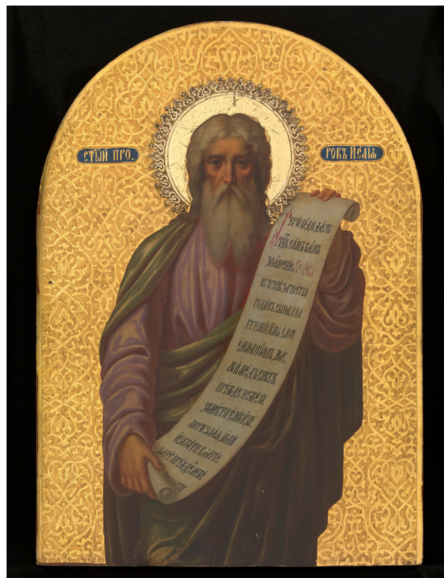


Holy-days at Home

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



Family Leadership Network
NEXT GENERATION LEADERSHIP INITIATIVE



Icon of the prophet, Isaiah
Late 19th century



Advent Preface

Because you sent your beloved Son to redeem us from sin and death, and to make us heirs in him of everlasting life; that when he shall come again in power and great glory to judge the world, we may without shame or fear rejoice to behold his appearing.

Prayers & Practices for Advent

4 weeks of fasting

Purple is for Preparation

We hope for light and behold, darkness and for brightness, but we walk in gloom.

Isaiah 59:9b

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 50 or 50:1-6

Week 3: Psalm 85

Week 2: Psalm 126

Week 4: Psalm 80:1-7

A Reading from Holy Scripture:

Week 1: 1 Thessalonians 3:6-13

Week 3: Philippians 4:4-9

Week 2: 1 Corinthians 4:1-7, 8-21

Week 4: Hebrews 10:1-10

Or "The Song of the Redeemed"

Respond by praying together: The Lord's Prayer

Collect of the week (found on pages 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 are sometimes observed with these themes:

Week 1: The Patriarchs

Week 2: The Prophets

Week 3: John the Baptist

Week 4: The Virgin Mary

The Patriarchs naturally focus on Abraham, our father in faith, and David, the ancestor in whose city Jesus was born. The Prophets give an opportunity to reflect on the way the birth of the Messiah was foretold. John who proclaimed the coming Savior, and Mary, who bore Him in her womb, complete the picture.

Common Advent practices involve lighting the Advent wreath weekly, fasting, prayer, and acts of generosity. Many attend a Lessons & Carols service in Advent and conclude Advent by participating in a candlelight vigil on the eve of Christmas.



O Antiphons

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

"This holy impatience has found expression in the beautiful antiphons which call Christ to come, and to come quickly. It is very natural for children to use the "O Antiphons" for their daily prayer at this time. We say them at the evening meal when the Advent wreath is lighted." - Florence Berger

December 16: **O Sapientia**

- O Wisdom from on High (Proverbs 8:1,22-32)

December 17: **O Adonai**

- O Lord of Might (Isaiah 43:1-7)

December 18: **O Radix Jesse**

- O Root of Jesse (Isaiah 11:1)

December 19: **O Clavis David**

- O Key of David (Isaiah 22:22)

December 20: **O Oriens**

- O Dayspring (Isaiah 9:2)

December 21: **O Rex Gentium**

- O Desire of Nations (Isaiah 9:6)

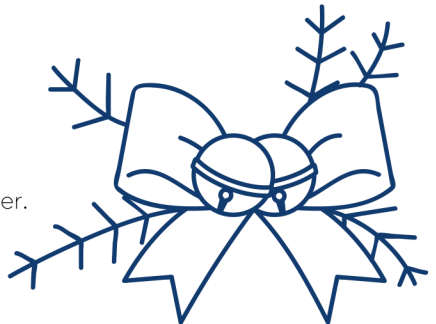
December 22: **O Emmanuel**

- O Come, Emmanuel (Isaiah 7:14)

December 23: **O Virgo Virginum**

- O Virgin of Virgins (Traditional)

O Virgin of virgins, how shall this be? For neither before thee was any like thee, nor shall there be after. Daughters of Jerusalem, why marvel ye at me? The thing which ye behold is a divine mystery.



Prayers & Practices for Christmas

12 days: December 25 - January 5

White is for Celebration

Then his own arm brought salvation, his righteousness upheld him.

Isaiah 59:16b

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 98

Psalm 147:12-20

Psalm 84

Psalm 8

A Reading from Holy Scripture:

Matthew

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. Isaiah 25:9b "This is the LORD for whom we have waited; Let's rejoice and be glad in His salvation."

Common Christmas practices involve lighting the Christ Candle on Christmas morning and every day through Christmastide. 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, feasting, or 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).

... 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.

From the proper Preface for Christmas (BCP page 152)

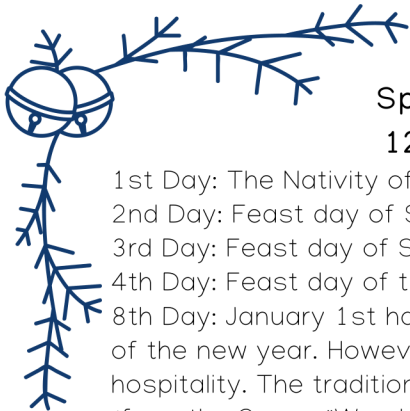


Recommended reading for Advent & Christmas:

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)



Special moments in the 12 Days of Christmas:

1st Day: The Nativity of our Lord Jesus Christ

2nd Day: Feast day of St. Stephen the deacon

3rd Day: Feast day of St. John the apostle

4th Day: Feast day of the Holy Innocents

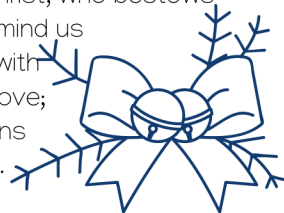
8th Day: January 1st has not always been observed as the first day of the new year. However, it is, traditionally, a time of celebration and hospitality. The traditional English drink for this season was Wassail (from the Saxon "Was haile", meaning "to your health").

9th Day: Feast of the Circumcision and Holy Name of Our Lord Jesus Christ

12th Day: Many concluded Christmastide with a bonfire using their Christmas tree and greenery. This is a festive and powerful reminder of the spiritual great light that has come into the world and a foreshadowing of what will come as we continue to journey through the life of Christ in the church's liturgical year.

A prayer at the bonfire:

O God, who once sent heavenly flames upon Elijah's offering, guided the Israelites through the wilderness with a fiery pillar, led the wise men from the East to the abode of Wisdom through a brilliant star, spoke to Moses through a burning bush, and fulfilled the prophecy of John the Forerunner by sending Christ, who bestows both the Holy Spirit and the fire of passion through baptism: remind us of the true Light who came into the world, and who ignites us with the Holy Spirit to lead us on our pilgrimage with the fire of his Love; through Jesus Christ, the Light of the world, who lives and reigns with you and the same Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.



Prayers & Practices for Epiphany

January 6 - Ash Wednesday

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

So they shall fear the name of the Lord from the west, and his glory from the rising of the sun. Isaiah 59:19

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 96

Psalm 113

Psalm 71:11-20

Psalm 85

A Reading From Holy Scripture:

Luke 1:68-79 or other of your choice or using the lectionary (pages 718 and following)

Respond by praying together: The Lord's Prayer

Collect:

(a new 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 forever. Amen.

Practices

A common Epiphany practice is the blessing of the house. We do this in 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" or having the Magi arrive, finally, at our home nativity scenes.

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, and how He is interceding for us still. As a church, we are inspired on World Mission Sunday.

As families, we might consider how to be increasingly hospitable: both by giving and receiving in joy. By continuing our giving and receiving of hospitality during Epiphany, we also continue in the footsteps of the Magi and their search for the Christ child, we celebrate the joy of Jesus' appearance, and we find God at a surprisingly familiar place: the table.

We may continue to use the Christ Candle from our Advent observation until Good Friday as a reminder as we continue to pray:

"Let this not be an end to Christmas joy but rather a beginning,
beckoning us toward the future,
toward a life of worshipping You."

from: To Light their Way by Kayla Craig



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.



The Magi Journeying
James Tissot





Family Leadership Network
NEXT GENERATION LEADERSHIP INITIATIVE



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using the 2019 BCP: Anglican Liturgy Press (Year C where applicable)
by Rev. Leah Wall UnlessAGrainFalls@Gmail.com