

DECEMBER 6-12

FOR PARENTS

We began our 90 days of Bible reading with God's mighty acts of Creation and the beautiful garden where everything was good. The epic story of our need for salvation began with the eating of the fruit. Now John's vision faces us toward God's reconciling of all things to God.

The Holy Spirit filled the first Christians with joy by revealing what Jesus had done for us. The Spirit inspired them to understand and proclaim the gospel, and to live a new life together in thanksgiving to God. The Spirit unites us into a new community called the church.

We are the church: the people who believe the good news about Jesus, who are baptized, and who share in the Lord's Supper. Through these means of grace, the Spirit renews us so that we may serve God in love.

We know this good news through reading the Bible and hearing it taught and preached. The Holy Spirit inspired those who wrote the Bible and helps us rely on its promises today.

KID CONNECTION

Heaven is hard to explain and the Bible doesn't say a lot about it, except we that will be with God and there will be no pain or suffering. Allow your child to use his/her imagination and wonder together what it might be like. We can help children see that Jesus calls us to help the kingdom of God happen now. The church is an outpost of the kingdom of heaven. (Note that the gospel writers use kingdom of God and kingdom of heaven interchangeably.)

Heaven is our true home, a world of love. There we will at last see face to face what we now only glimpse as through a distant mirror. Our deepest, truest delights in this life are only a dim foreshadowing of the delights that await us in heaven.

REMEMBER 1 THING

I belong to my faithful Savior Jesus Christ, who died and rose again for my sake, so that nothing will ever separate me from God's love.

READING PLAN

Day	Chapter Titles	Scripture
	From <i>Read and Learn Bible</i> <i>* find these stories on website</i>	
12/6	Paul and Silas in Philippi	Acts 16:16-40
12/7	One Church*; You Are Part of the Body of Christ *	1 Corinthians 12:12-31; Ephesians 4:1-16
12/8	A Letter from a Friend *	2 Timothy 1:1-7
12/9	You Can Do It *	Hebrews 12:1-2
12/10	Loving Heart Helps Others *	James 1:19-27; 2:1-7
12/11	A New World	Revelation 1; 22:8-21
Sunday	A New World	Revelation 22

FAMILY ACTIVITIES

Instructions and discussion tips are available on the church website.

Choose one or more activities that will interest your family as you make this week's stories your own.

Third Sunday of Advent Activity

Continue lighting your Advent wreath as we draw closer to welcoming the Messiah into our world.

Thanking God for Nature

Practice prayers of praise and thanksgiving as you take a walk through nature or your neighborhood.

Imagine Together

Supplies needed: drawing materials

Imagine what the first hearers of John's vision thought. Explore with your family members what they imagine this new world might look like.

Fourth Sunday of Advent Activity: Continue lighting your Advent Wreath and see the website for the activity for the 4th Sunday of Advent.

December 5-12

Third Sunday of Advent

This week light three candles on your Advent Wreath or three white candles.

Invite family members to hear the words of Isaiah 9:2-6

What kind of Messiah were the Hebrew people expecting? Do we need this kind of Messiah today? Can you think of some things that are happening in our community, state, and nation that:

- need a Messiah to change the situation?
- show persons at work bringing about change for the good
- are different because of the influences of the teachings and actions of Christ?

Prayer: Holy God, we are often critical of things that are happening in our world. We often wish something would be done to change the way things are, but we sit and do nothing. Dearest God, please give us the insight and courage to work to bring about change. Remind us of the teachings of Jesus and do not let us sit idle but prod us to live as Jesus taught us to live. Amen.

Thanking God for nature:

If weather permits take a walk in nature and as you walk, stop, and thank God for each living things you see. At this time of the year many plants appear to be dead but they are just dormant and will come back to life with sunshine and warm rains. Thank God for the promise of a new heaven and a new earth as shared in our readings this week.

Imagine together (Revelation 21:1-3 and 21:22-27)

Supplies: paper and drawing materials, Bible

Read the Revelation passage out loud. Imagine what the new world might look like.

- I wonder what John means when he writes “God will be their light?”
- I wonder how the people reading John’s letter felt about living in such a place?
- I wonder what they might draw to show John how they feel about his message?

Using the drawing materials, invite family members to draw what they think the new heaven and new earth and new Jerusalem might look like.

Learn a new bedtime prayer:

Now the light has gone away; Jesus, listen while I pray.

Asking you to watch and keep and to send me quiet sleep. Amen

EXTRA: December 13-20

4th Sunday of Advent

This week light four candles on your Advent Wreath or four white candles.

Read Matthew 17:1-8.

Talk about the words of God spoken on the mountain; "This is my Son, the Beloved; with him I am well pleased; listen to him!"

- I wonder how the disciples felt when they saw Jesus change and heard the voice speak about Jesus.
- I wonder how you feel about Jesus the Messiah?

Prayer: Parent God, it is almost Christmas Day when we will celebrate the birth of our Lord, Jesus Christ. As we celebrate the birth of Jesus, don't let us forget the life, death and resurrection of Jesus. Help us be constantly aware that Jesus is your Son and that he came to save each one of us. Amen.