

Praying Together Resources (PTR019)

“Advent Family Prayer Bags”

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Advent Family Prayer Bags

A weekly journey through Advent for families.

Introduction:

The Advent family prayer bag is a bag containing ideas for a 5-10 mins weekly family devotional for the 4 weeks of Advent and Christmas Day. Each week there is a different part of the Christmas story to explore.

Its purpose is simply to enable families to grow in their relationship with Jesus during Advent. It has been designed for families where at least one child is between the ages of 3-13yrs.

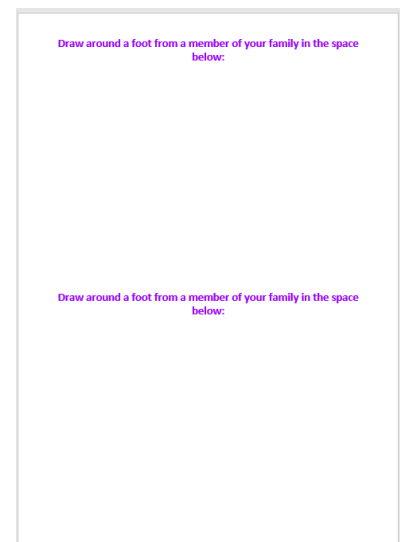
What do I need to put inside the Advent Family Prayer Bag?

Print:

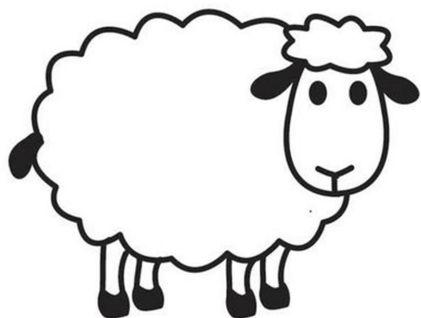
- 1) Print the 8-page Advent devotional leaflet (in double-sided format on 2 pieces of A4 white paper), which you can find after this section. It contains the Bible verses, Activities and Prayers for each week of Advent.



- 2) Print onto A4 white card the foot instructions, which you can find after the Advent devotional leaflet. (Each bag needs one A5 card)



- 3) Print onto white card the “Sheep” picture, which you can find after the Advent devotional leaflet.
(Each bag needs one A5 card)



Purchase:

- 1) Buy a white paper bag¹



- 2) Buy a wooden angel template.² (These come in packs of 6)



¹ You can purchase white paper bags from ebay (www.ebay.co.uk) by putting “white kraft paper bags” into the search bar. You want the small bags (7”x9”x3.5”)

² You can purchase wooden angel templates with gold string from Baker Ross (www.bakerross.co.uk) Put the words “Angel Wooden 3D Decorations” into the search bar. They come in packs of 6.

- 3) Buy a reel of mini tinsel³ (each bag needs a 30cm length of mini tinsel for making a halo for the angel)



- 4) Buy a t-light⁴



- 5) Buy white cotton wool balls.⁵ You will need 6 in each bag



- 6) Buy a wooden "peg"⁶ and draw a face on it.



³ You can purchase a reel of "mini" tinsel from ebay (www.ebay.co.uk). Put "14mm Fringe Thread Ribbon 15 Metre Roll Mini Small Tinsel" into the search bar. You need a 30cm piece for each bag, to make a halo for the angel

⁴ You can purchase t-lights from ebay (www.ebay.co.uk)

⁵ You can purchase white cotton wool balls from ebay (www.ebay.co.uk)

⁶ You can purchase wooden pegs from Baker Ross (www.bakerross.co.uk) Put the word "wooden people" into the search bar. They come in packs of 10.

7) Buy a piece of white cloth.⁷ Each bag needs a piece approximately 16cm x 8cm



8) Buy chocolate coins.⁸ I put enough chocolate coins in the bags so that each child in the family had one.



Once you have printed and bought the various items, put them all together in the paper bag and you are ready to go!

⁷ I bought a "Snow blanket" from Baker Ross (www.bakerross.co.uk) and cut it up into pieces

⁸ You can purchase chocolate coins from Baker Ross (www.bakerross.co.uk) or from most supermarkets





Advent Family Prayer Bags



In your Advent Prayer Bag, there is a **Reading**, an **Activity** and a **Prayer** for each of the 4 weeks of Advent and one for Christmas Day also.

As a family you may choose to gather together once a week to take part in the activity, or you could repeat the same activity a number of times through the week.

When you gather try using the following format:

-  **Pause** and “be still” for a moment to focus on God
-  **Read** the Bible verse
-  **Do** the **Activity** together
-  **Pray** the **Prayer**



Week 1: An Angel visits Mary:

(Sun Nov 29 – Sat Dec 5)

|| Pause

“Be still” for a moment to focus on God

Reading

The Christmas story began when God sent the angel Gabriel to a girl called Mary, who lived in Nazareth. The angel came with good news for Mary. He said:

“Don’t be afraid! God is pleased with you, and you will have a son. His name will be Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of God Most High.” (Luke 1:30-32 CEV)

Activity

The angel Gabriel gave Mary the **good news** that God was sending His Son Jesus into the world.

Q1. How would you get ready to welcome the Queen if you knew that she was coming to visit your house?

Q2. How do you think we can get ready to welcome King Jesus this Christmas?

Put your angel together and decorate it. You might like to paint it, add tinsel to give it a halo etc. Finish by writing the words: “GOOD NEWS, KING JESUS IS COMING” on the wings and then hang it on your Christmas tree.

Prayer

Thank you, King Jesus, that the angel Gabriel told Mary the good news that you were coming into the world. Help us to be ready to welcome you into our lives this Christmas time. Amen.



Week 2: A very long Journey

(Sun Dec 6 – Sat Dec 12)

Pause

“Be still” for a moment to focus on God

Reading

Mary was engaged to Joseph. Just before Jesus was born, Mary and Joseph had to make a long journey.

“So, Joseph had to leave Nazareth in Galilee and go to Bethlehem in Judea. Long ago Bethlehem had been King David’s hometown, and Joseph went there because he was from David’s family. Mary was engaged to Joseph and travelled with him to Bethlehem. She was soon going to have a baby. (Luke 2:4-5 CEV)

Activity

Mary and Joseph had to make a three-day journey to Bethlehem on foot. It must have been very hard for Mary making such a long journey with a baby due any day. Sometimes it is hard for us to follow Jesus.

Q1. What would you pack for a three-day journey by foot?

Q2. What do you find hard about following Jesus? (eg. forgiving people when they hurt you, serving other people, loving others....)

On the piece of card, draw around someone in your family’s foot. Cut the foot out, decorate it and then write on it:

“Help me to follow You Jesus, even when it is hard.” Hang it on your Christmas tree.

Prayer

Father God, please help us to keep following Jesus even when at times it is hard to do so. Amen.



Week 3: No room for Jesus

(Sun Dec 13 – Sat Dec 19)

⏸ Pause

“Be still” for a moment to focus on God

📖 Reading

While Mary and Joseph were in Bethlehem, Jesus was born.

“Mary wrapped him in cloths and laid him in a manger—there was no room for them to stay in the inn” (Luke 2:7 GNB)

📈 Activity

There was no room for Jesus in the inns of Bethlehem. So, Jesus ended up being born in a place where animals were kept and placed in an animal’s feeding trough – a manger.

Q1. What do you think about King Jesus being born in such a place?

Q2. How much room is there in your life for Jesus?

As you think about that second question, light the t-light, which reminds you that Jesus, the light of the world wants to be part of your whole life.

🙏 Prayer

Thank you, King Jesus, that you left the glory of heaven to come to earth to show us your love. Help us to make time to spend with you each day, so that we can get to know and love you more. Amen.



Week 4: The shepherds visit:

(Sun Dec 20 – Thurs Dec 24)

⏸ Pause

“Be still” for a moment to focus on God

📖 Reading

The night that Jesus was born there were shepherds looking after their sheep in the fields around Bethlelem. Angels appeared in the sky and one of them said: *“This very day in David's town your Saviour was born—Christ the Lord!”*

(Luke 2:11 GNB)

📈 Activity

Jesus came to rescue us from the wrong things that we do. The prophet Isaiah said that we are all like sheep that wander off, doing our own thing.

Q1. Can you think of some things that we do that make God sad?

Q2. Jesus came to forgive us and help us live God's way. How does that make you feel?

Cut out your sheep. Write everyone's name on it (from your family) and the words: *“Thank you for coming to be our Saviour.”* On the other side of your sheep, stick on some cotton wool and decorate it. Now hang it on your Christmas tree.

🙏 Prayer

King Jesus, thank you for coming to be our Saviour. Please forgive us for the wrong things that we have done and help us live God's way. Amen.



Christmas Day: CELEBRATE

(Fri Dec 25)

 **Pause**

“Be still” for a moment to focus on God

 **Reading**

Jesus, our King was born in Bethlehem on the very first Christmas Day. A little while later some wise men came to visit Jesus, and when they saw Him:

“they knelt down and worshipped him.” (Matthew 2:11 GNB)

 **Activity**

Wrap up your baby Jesus peg in the white cloth and make a special bed for Him to lie in. As you look at your baby Jesus, what words of worship do you want to speak to Him?

Today is a celebration of King Jesus’ birthday.

Enjoy eating and sharing the gold coins as you think about Jesus.

 **Prayer**

King Jesus, thank you for loving us. We worship You this day. Amen.

Draw around a foot from a member of your family in the space below:

Draw around a foot from a member of your family in the space below:

