

Family Advent Calendar 2016

Advent this year begins on Sunday November 27.

This collection of actions, conversations, crafts, music and prayer has been put together to help encourage your family to journey through Advent together.

As you prepare for Christmas we encourage you to find a space each day to talk, share, create, sing and pray together.

If you'd like to print double sided you can use the image on the final page as a background image, perhaps you can use the calendar to decorate your tree.

Some days will require a computer or phone with internet connection while others will require other material, here is a list of things that you will need:

A candle

A lighter

A Bible

A printout of an Advent wreath craft <http://goo.gl/OxH0Ez>

A printout of a nativity set craft <https://goo.gl/Xlw5LJ>

A newspaper for Advent 2

Paper

Coloured pencils, textas or crayons

Christmas cards

Advent 01

On this first day of Advent make an Advent wreath together.
(Template here: <http://goo.gl/OxH0Ez>)

For conversation:

What do you enjoy about getting ready for Christmas?

What do you find hard about getting ready for Christmas?

Advent 02

Light a candle.
Read today's news.

Pray for somewhere that needs hope & that God will send light to the places that need it.

For conversation:

How can you be a light in the dark?

Advent 03

Listen: Kingdom Come
<https://youtu.be/tx8WcxTEN8Y>

For conversation:

Mary and Elizabeth were waiting for a baby

The people were waiting for a king

What are you waiting/longing for?
Do you like waiting? Why, why not?

Advent 04

Reading: Luke 1:26-33

Light a candle.
Read through the scripture.

What do you think angels look like?
Draw or paint an angel and share your
image with each other.

For conversation:
What would you like to talk
about with an angel?

Advent 05

For conversation:

An angel spoke to Joseph in a dream and
told him not to be afraid.

Have you had a dream that frightened you?

What do you think God dreams of for
the world?

Advent 06

Think of people you will miss this
year and share with each other, what do
you miss about them?

Draw portraits of them (or go through
photos).

Place the images around your Christmas
tree or fridge to remember them
this Advent.

Advent 07

Is there someone you know who needs to hear words of love, of hope?

Create a card and write a letter for them today and send them a word of love and hope.

Advent 08

Put up your Christmas Tree together.

As you decorate the tree talk about your best Christmas, and what makes Christmas special to you?

(if it's already up, sit around the tree and share with each other)

Advent 09

Spend some time outside today and go for a walk. As you walk take photos on your phone or camera of the beauty around you.

Where do you encounter God?

Where do you find peace and joy in your neighbourhood, in the world?

Advent 10

Using what you can find around the house build musical instruments together.

For conversation:

Do you have a favourite Christmas song?

As a family sing one of the songs together while playing your new instruments.

Advent 11

Reading: Luke 1:39-56

Light a candle. Read through the reading 3 times together taking turns to read.

For conversation:

What images or words grab your attention, or shine out to you?

Watch:

<https://youtu.be/Ow7UwAsNt6o>

Advent 12

Christmas can be a time of waste, particularly of food, wrapping paper and rubbish.

Eat a meal together today and discuss/ plan how your family will minimise waste and recycle this year

Advent 13

Write a list of things you're thankful for as a family this year.

Place the lists under your pillow and read them each morning during Advent to remind you of these things.

Advent 14

Mary and Joseph found themselves alone without a place to stay.

Christmas can be a lonely time for many people. Today, invite a neighbour over for dinner or for a cup of tea/coffee.

Advent 15

Spend some time today thinking of your family and friends.

Write your Christmas cards together.

Phone someone on your list who you've not spoken to for a while and ask them if they're ok.

Advent 16

Zechariah was made mute by God until John's birth.

Light a candle.

Christmas can be a time of a lot of noise, as a family spend 5 minutes in silence together.

For conversation:

What part of the Christmas story takes your breath away?

Advent 17

Listen and Watch:

<https://youtu.be/ifCWN5pJGIE>

For conversation:

What expectations do you think Mary had for her baby?

Do you know anyone who is pregnant now that you can do something nice for this week?

Advent 18

Reading: Luke 2:8-14

Watch/Listen:

<https://youtu.be/GBaHPND2QJg>

For conversation:

The angel brought news of great joy to the shepherds. Can you name a time where you felt the most joyful?

In how many languages can you learn how to say "joy"?

Advent 19

“Abundance does not spread, famine does” ~ Zulu Proverb

There are many people in the world going without food today. For a meal today eat something simple, (a bowl of rice, rice & beans, baked beans)

Write and say a prayer for the world together as you eat.

Advent 20

When there is hurt, reconciliation can be hard.

For conversation:

What are some ways your family can practice forgiveness over the next year?

How can you make sure you always forgive each other?

Advent 21

Light a candle.

As a family decide to give to a charity (TEAR, Oxfam, Christmas Bowl, Target giving tree or a local food bank). Talk about how much, what, to who and why.

For conversation:

Remember a time when you gave something to someone and experienced God in the act of giving.

Advent 22

Download the template for a nativity scene by Joel Henriques.
<https://goo.gl/Xlw5LJ>

For conversation:

Create the nativity set together, as you do share with each other your favourite characters from the story, what makes them your favourite?

Can you tell the story using the set?

Advent 23

There are lots of people who work extra hard this time of year (police, emergency services, petrol attendants, shopping assistants, nurses).

Find a way that your family can give thanks and show appreciation to those who serve so we can enjoy Christmas time.

Advent 24

For conversation:

Can you remember your favourite carol from Advent 10?

Do you know where it comes from?

What does it mean? What's its origin?

Find out and share your findings with each other.

Advent 25

Watch:

<http://youtu.be/kWq60oyrHVQ>

For conversation:

If Jesus was born today, how do you imagine the story would be told?

What would be different?
What would be the same?

Advent 26

Read:

<https://goo.gl/X7XWHn>

For conversation:

Jesus and his family had to escape to Egypt and become refugees.

Do you know anything about the experiences of refugees around the world? Do you know anyone who is a refugee that you can hear the story of?

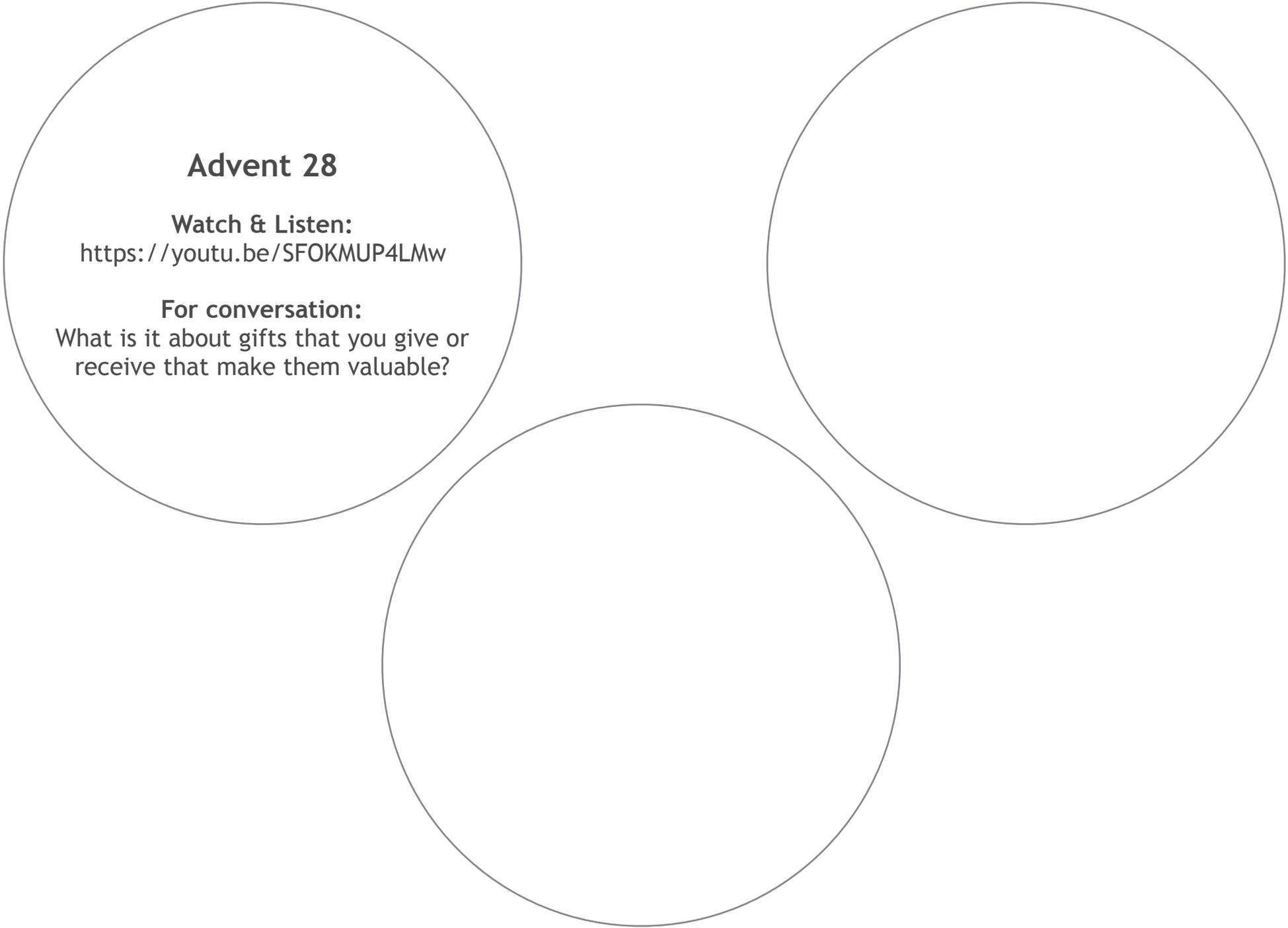
Advent 27

For conversation:

What can we do to be a more loving family?

What qualities of Jesus do we most need show to our family?

Decide on three things you will live out this year to be more loving to each other.



Advent 28

Watch & Listen:

<https://youtu.be/SFOKMUP4LMw>

For conversation:

What is it about gifts that you give or receive that make them valuable?

