



The
weary world
rejoices

Invitation for Children & Housemates

An Advent Invitation for Children & Housemates

Welcoming your child or others in your house into your devotional life, making it a collaborative effort, is a rewarding experience. These interactions will build a deeper bond between you and those with whom you share your home. You have a golden ticket to lead your children or housemates towards Jesus and towards a God-honoring life -- please take advantage of that opportunity.

I encourage you to invite your children or housemates to join you on this Advent journey through Scripture, Song, Instagram, Spiritual Disciplines, Activities, and whatever else you can dream up together. Let this season be a time to engage your collective inspired creativity - the Lord created this gift within each of you! Creatively engaging the mind and heart will help young and old remember the truths of these scriptures so pertinent to this season.

Grab enough of the Advent materials from your church or from online so that everyone in your house can have their own copy. Engage in the weekly and seasonal rhythms together. Consider some of the ideas below:

Reading Scripture —

- Engage the senses (see, touch, taste, smell, hear), explore the emotions (feelings, intuition), and imagine the environment of the situation. These “human” factors are very important to understanding and engaging with the story of Scripture.
- For about 10 minutes, draw or sketch the events or ideas on separate pages, then have a storytelling time to teach each other. Take turns, and especially if you have children, let your child teach you, too.
- Build the scene with playdough, popsicle sticks, or anything you have around the house. “Show and Tell” one another what is in your scene.
- Divide up the characters, assigning one or two to each person, then go to your closet to pick out an outfit to represent this person in the scene. Have a “Reader” read through the scriptures as the “Actors” play their part. (I remember a scripture enactment I participated in 10+ years ago -- this works!)
- Bring out the dolls, Legos, or other toys, and let these be the “puppets” for the story
- Read the Scripture several times - out loud, silently, with different pauses and inflections, and in different translations. Journal and reflect on what you hear and read.
- Look up words or ideas that are unfamiliar.
- Ask yourselves, “how does this point towards what I know about Jesus?” Then talk about it.

When Engaging with Spiritual Disciplines --

- “Fast” and “Feast” together, as a house -- this will help make the focus less on what is being intentionally left out of or added to your day, with a focus more on Jesus. Engage in discussions centered around this fast or feast of the day.
- Consider modifying the suggestions to meet your needs (especially dietary). Do what you can, or use the idea as a springboard to do something else!
- Especially for children, learning self-control happens best when modeled; for example, if your child is being told to fast technology, but you as the parent are still using it (for purposes other

than work and emergencies), then your child will see the difference and will likely tell you about it. Lead by example.

- Fasting is not meant to be easy. If it were easy, perhaps we would do these exercises all the time. Let the tension within you, your housemates, or your child lead to prayer, not to arguments and strife. Acknowledge the tension, talk through what needs are behind the tensions, pray about it, and move forward in peace.

Song List —

- These songs for Advent are selected for their role in building the narrative or exploring the theology of Advent and Christmas. The songs listed within this resource are not necessarily traditional “Christmas” songs, but carry theological and narrative weight for our Christian faith. I encourage you to listen to the words sung and to pay attention to the emotions brought to the surface within you. Let these songs guide your personal worship this season. Listen, sing, and dance with your housemates, spouse, family, children, friends, or coworkers, and discuss what you hear and feel as a continuation of your own personal spiritual development.
- Specific artists and their arrangements are listed for emphasis, contrast, or to demonstrate a specific facet of the story of Advent as portrayed by the artist. If this arrangement is different from what you have heard before, lean into this difference, embrace it, and compare and contrast it with what you have heard and sung in the past. I encourage you to explore these artists’ Advent and Christmas albums in addition to these songs to find additional portrayals of this ancient story through song and sound.
- This list may be found in the Devotional Calendar, within this Devotional itself, on YouTube, and on Spotify.
- YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLL8AjOqNxxCcGM01BOrdS4hPs1ZYR4b2D>
- Spotify: <https://open.spotify.com/playlist/2UkLGRcU9Y8kprjZRQ2DIB?si=cgmHVAw0SVWoWqp71lj80Q>

I pray that this season is such a spiritually fruitful time for you, your children, and those in your home. I am excited for you!

Rev. Emily Hines