Traders Point Kids

FAMILY CHRISTMAS GUIDE

Lead your family intentionally this holiday season.

CHRISTMAS 2022

INTRODUCTION

Make the most of your family Christmas traditions this year by leading your family with intention and purpose.

In Deuteronomy 6:7-9, Moses clearly highlights a pattern of establishing an everyday faith for families. It’s the type of parenting rhythm that takes advantage of opportune moments in everyday life.

This Christmas, you can have spiritual conversations with your family through built-in traditions. During the season of celebrating the birth of Jesus, your child will repeatedly come face-to-face with the reality that God became human in order to make us whole again.

This guide will provide devotional material and conversation starters to use your holiday traditions to make a significant impact on your child’s faith. Enjoy!

FAMILY HOLIDAY CALENDAR

The holiday season can be chaotic. All of the hustle and bustle can leave you without time or energy to be fully present in any given moment. It’s easy to lose sight of the true reason we celebrate.

Prioritize quality time for your family this Christmas season and don’t let less important activities crowd them out. Good things have the tendency to overtake the best things. Being proactive with your calendar helps you make the most of the season. You’ve got this!

Family Activity:

Print out the calendar on the next page and hang it in a visible location. Print/cut out the icons, representing various activities your family will participate in this Christmas. Place the icons on the calendar and enjoy!

FAMILY HOLIDAY CALENDAR

Christmas lights

Playing in the snow

Decorating the tree

Christmas movies

Giving gifts

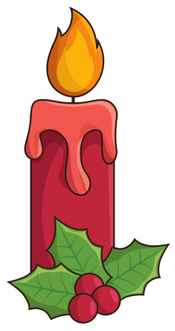
Birthday party for Jesus

Caroling

Baking goodies

Attending a church service

Volunteer



Christmas Eve devotional

DECEMBER 2022

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

ADVENT CALENDAR

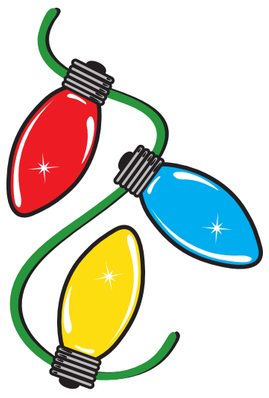
Kids love anticipation. Often, the anticipation is more fun than the event itself.

That’s the idea behind an advent calendar. The word advent means “to come,” referring to Jesus’ coming to earth as a newborn baby on Christmas Day.

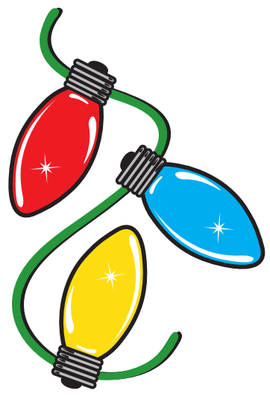
A daily countdown provides a regular opportunity to connect with your family. Spend time with your kids talking about things that matter to them. Ask about their day and spend time looking forward to upcoming Christmas celebrations.

Family Activity:

Purchase or make an advent calendar. Count down the days toward Christmas in a fun and anticipatory way. Each day, talk about the things you’re most looking forward to this Christmas and get excited together!



CHRISTMAS LIGHTS



Decorating our homes with Christmas lights is symbolic of who Jesus is: the "light of the world." **Jesus shines a bright light into a dark world so that everyone can have hope, peace, joy, love, and grace.**

Jesus spoke to the people once more and said, “I am the light of the world. If you follow me, you won’t have to walk in darkness, because you will have the light that leads to life." (John 8:12)

As we follow Jesus, we also get to shine His light for all to see.

Jesus said, *"You are the light of the world—like a city on a hilltop that cannot be hidden. No one lights a lamp and then puts it under a basket. Instead, a lamp is placed on a stand, where it gives light to everyone in the house. In the same way, let your good deeds shine out for all to see, so that everyone will praise your heavenly Father.” (Matthew 5:14-16)*

Family Activity:

As you look at Christmas lights, talk to your family about what it means for Jesus to be the "light of the world." Ask them how they might also shine light into a dark world.

DECORATING THE TREE

A beautiful, decorated Christmas tree represents God in many ways:

Tree

- The triangular shape of a Christmas tree represents the three Persons of the Trinity: God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit.
- In the center of the tree is a piece of wood, much like that of the cross. The branches stretch out to the sides, like the arms of Jesus when He gave up His life in order to save the world.

Ornaments

- Making the tree beautiful with ornaments and decorations reminds us of the beauty and perfection of Jesus.

Star

- When you see the star at the top of the tree, remember the star the wise men followed as they were seeking out Jesus for the very first time (Matthew 2:10).

Family Activity:

As you decorate your tree, talk about all it represents. Add a star (maybe even make one out of paper!) toward the top of the tree. After you decorate the tree, take time to pray to God, thanking Him for sending His Son into the world!

GIVING GIFTS

On the day Jesus was born, God gave the the entire world the best gift ever: His one and only Son! The very first Christmas gift was baby Jesus.

The birth of Jesus is the best part of Christmas. Because of Jesus, we now have forgiveness, grace, and acceptance into God's family.

The tradition of giving gifts is all about selflessly sharing love and joy to others in a tangible way.

It is easy to accidentally make your child's happiness the center of the season. Receiving gifts is fun, but don't miss the main reason we celebrate Christmas: celebrating the birth of our Savior.

Family Activity:

Help your family consider the needs and wants of others. Purchase or make gifts for them. Wrap your gifts with care and notice their delight as they receive it. Celebrate the joy of giving as a family.

CAROLING

Singing songs is a great way to declare God’s goodness through music. That's why we sing whenever we come together as a church.

The tradition of door-to-door caroling is a powerful way to spread the joy and love of Jesus to people who may not know Him. While your neighbors might not believe that Jesus is the Son of God, they will likely open their doors to listen to songs praising and glorifying Him. It’s an impactful way to share the Word of God.

Give thanks to the Lord and proclaim his greatness. Let the whole world know what he has done. Sing to him; yes, sing his praises. Tell everyone about his wonderful deeds. (Psalm 105:1-2)

Family Activity:

Even if you cannot participate in door-to-door caroling, spend time as a family singing and dancing to your favorite Christmas tunes. Fill your house with a joyful noise to the Lord, praising Him for sending His Son on Christmas Day!

BAKING GOODIES

Christmas and baking go hand in hand. Some of the best Christmas family memories include cookies, hot cocoa, gingerbread men, cakes, and other tasty treats.

Throughout the Bible, God's people gathered together for feasts to celebrate all that God had done and to appreciate the foods that bring us joy. Holiday meals bring together loved ones to share delicious food and connect on a relational level. There's just something about good food and conversation that sets the table for relational connection and for memories to be forged.

As the sweet smell of Christmas baked treats fills your home, reflect on the words of Paul: *Live a life filled with love, following the example of Christ. He loved us and offered Himself as a sacrifice to us, a pleasing aroma to God. (Ephesians 5:2)*

Family Activity:

Choose your favorite recipe and bake some goodies together as a family. Make sure to bake a few extras! You can deliver some to your neighbors as a way to spread love and joy.

VOLUNTEER

This holiday season, we're partnering with our local outreach partner, Shepherd Community Center, in helping create a Christmas store experience that brings dignity to parents and provides hope to families.

Shepherd's annual Christmas store supports families by giving parents an opportunity to shop for gifts, showing their kids how much they care and making Christmas a season of hope. Shepherd is committed to fostering relationships with the families that participate and ensures that parents are treated with dignity and respect.

Family Activity:

Serve the community as a family! For more information on how you can help collect items for Shepherd's Christmas store, go to tpcc.org/christmas-impact.

PLAYING IN THE SNOW

One thing is for sure: kids love having fun! **One way you can invest in your family is to have fun with them.**

Having fun establishes trust through shared experiences. It gives you a platform to speak truth into kids' lives in a memorable way.

Playing and laughing together provides a chance to connect. When a family is having fun, kids feel a sense of safety and belonging.

When you lead kids with fun in mind, it creates impactful opportunities to connect with them. When a child connects with an adult, they're more likely to be able to connect with God.

Family Activity:

Go outside and play in the snow! Build a snowman, have a snowball fight, make a snow angel! Take a break in the action to talk to your kids about life. Leverage the fun as an opportunity to invest in them.

CHRISTMAS MOVIES

If there’s one thing every parent wants, it’s more quality time with their kids. It can be hard to find time to truly connect as a family. And kids aren’t always interested in having meaningful conversations.

You can use your kids' favorite Christmas movies as an intentional way to connect to their heart. It’s amazing how many characters and themes can be pointed back to Jesus and the amazing love He has for us.

When you’re willing to enter their world and watch their favorite movies, you’re showing your kids that you value them. Use what kids know and love to connect them to deeper spiritual truths.

Family Activity:

Have a Family Movie Night and watch a Christmas classic. After the movie, ask your kids about the characters' decisions, feelings, and actions. Ask your kids questions about their favorite scene and the life lessons from the story. To make it more personal, ask if they’ve ever been in similar situations or if they’ve had similar feelings.

BIRTHDAY PARTY FOR JESUS

Explaining the significance of the incarnation to a child can be difficult. Yet, all kids (even toddlers) understand the concept of a birthday party. And Christmas is the most important birthday party ever!

In life, we throw parties for big moments and milestones. The bigger the moment, the bigger the party. By throwing a lavish, ridiculously fun birthday party on Christmas, you're conveying the importance of Jesus' birth to your family.

Family Activity:

Throw a birthday party at home! Decorate your house, bake a cake, and sing "Happy Birthday" to Jesus. Stay up late, watch movies, and have a blast! However you do it, throw a party worthy of celebrating the birth of our Savior!

CHRISTMAS CHURCH SERVICES

Christmas church services are some of the most special services in the entire year. Come together with your church family to worship God, encourage one another, and glorify Jesus in a big way.

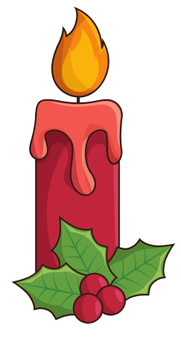
Consider who you might invite to come with you. People who aren't yet following Jesus are most open to attending a church service during the holidays. This is a great opportunity to share the Good News and the best message of hope and joy that the world has ever known!

Click here for TPCC Christmas service times

Family Activity:

Attend a church service with your family. Talk about what you learned and what inspired you during your drive home!

CHRISTMAS EVE DEVOTIONAL



READ: Luke 2:1-20 (see next page)

ASK:

1. Why do we celebrate Christmas?
2. What makes Jesus' birth different from any other baby's birth?
3. Why was Jesus born? [answer: Jesus was born to rescue us from sin]
4. What makes Jesus' birth good news?

WATCH: To understand the full picture of the good news of Jesus, watch the video below as a family. Discuss any questions your kids have, as well as anything you learned.

Click here for The Gospel Message video

PRAY: "God, thank you for Jesus. As we do all the fun things that come with Christmas, help us remember Jesus most of all. Thank you for loving us so much that you sent your very own Son to earth as a baby so that we could be saved from our sin and can spend forever with you. We love you! In Jesus' name...Amen."

CHRISTMAS BIBLE STORY

The Birth of Jesus

At that time the Roman emperor, Augustus, decreed that a census should be taken throughout the Roman Empire. (This was the first census taken when Quirinius was governor of Syria.) All returned to their own ancestral towns to register for this census. And because Joseph was a descendant of King David, he had to go to Bethlehem in Judea, David's ancient home. He traveled there from the village of Nazareth in Galilee. He took with him Mary, to whom he was engaged, who was now expecting a child.

And while they were there, the time came for her baby to be born. She gave birth to her firstborn son. She wrapped him snugly in strips of cloth and laid him in a manger, because there was no lodging available for them.

The Shepherds and Angels

That night there were shepherds staying in the fields nearby, guarding their flocks of sheep. Suddenly, an angel of the Lord appeared among them, and the radiance of the Lord's glory surrounded them. They were terrified, but the angel reassured them. "Don't be afraid!" he said. "I bring you good news that will bring great joy to all people. The Savior—yes, the Messiah, the Lord—has been born today in Bethlehem, the city of David! And you will recognize him by this sign: You will find a baby wrapped snugly in strips of cloth, lying in a manger."Suddenly, the angel was joined by a vast host of others—the armies of heaven—praising God and saying,

"Glory to God in highest heaven, and peace on earth to those with whom God is pleased."

When the angels had returned to heaven, the shepherds said to each other, "Let's go to Bethlehem! Let's see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has told us about."They hurried to the village and found Mary and Joseph. And there was the baby, lying in the manger. After seeing him, the shepherds told everyone what had happened and what the angel had said to them about this child. All who heard the shepherds' story were astonished, but Mary kept all these things in her heart and thought about them often. The shepherds went back to their flocks, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen. It was just as the angel had told them. (Luke 2:1-20)

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Resources for kids:

1. A Jesus Christmas: Explore God's Amazing Plan for Christmas by Barbara Reaoch
2. Unwrapping the Greatest Gift: A Family Celebration of Christmas by Ann Voskamp
3. The Wonder of Christmas: 25 Days of Advent Journaling for Girls by Shanna Noel
4. The Way to the Manger: A Family Advent Devotional by Jeff and Abbey Land
5. Jesus Calling: The Story of Christmas (picture book) by Sarah Young

Resources for parents:

1. The Adventure of Christmas: Helping Children Find Jesus in Our Holiday Traditions by Lisa Whelchel
2. Come, Let Us Adore Him: A Daily Advent Devotional by Paul David Tripp
3. Treasuring God in Our Traditions by Noël Piper

Popular family traditions in Indianapolis, IN:

1. Sullivan's Express
2. Christmas Night of Lights - Indiana State Fairgrounds
3. Winterlights at Newfields
4. A Merry Prairie Holiday - Conner Prairie
5. Christmas at the Zoo
6. Circle of Lights on Monument Circle
7. Carmel Christkindlmarkt
8. AES Yuletide Celebration