

## Advent Readings



## Advent Readings



Please cut each page into four readings. Use the circle to designate where to cut holes.  
Use a ring to hold the cards.



Week 1: Day 1: Preparation (waiting, hoping, trusting)

*Romans 15:4*

*For whatever was written before was written for our instruction, so that through patience and the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope. (TLV)*

**Discuss**

Why were the Scriptures written? How might we have hope?  
Can you tell of a time when the Scriptures gave you hope?



Week 1: Day 2: Preparation (waiting, hoping, trusting)

*Titus 2:13*

*At the same time, we wait for the blessed hope and the glorious appearance of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ. (CEB)*

**Discuss**

When you prepare for something, you often must wait, and waiting can be hard. What are you waiting for right now? What does this scripture tell us we are waiting for?



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Week 1: Day 3: Preparation (waiting, hoping, trusting)

*Isaiah 25:9*

*On that day it will be said, "Look, this is our God; we have waited for Him, and He has saved us. This is the LORD; we have waited for Him. Let us rejoice and be glad in his salvation." (HCSB)*

**Discuss**

After a time of waiting has passed, how do you feel?  
How are we to feel after we have waited for the LORD?



Week 1: Day 4: Preparation (waiting, hoping, trusting)

*Genesis 49:18*

*I wait for your salvation, O LORD. (ESV)*

**Discuss**

Is the LORD's salvation worth waiting for?  
In what ways do you wait?



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 Week 1: Day 5: Preparation (waiting, hoping, trusting)

*Psalms 33:20-22*

*We put our hope in the LORD. He is our help and our shield. In him our hearts rejoice, for we trust in his holy name. Let your unfailing love surround us, LORD, for our hope is in you alone. (NLT)*

### Discuss

Why is our hope in the LORD alone?  
How does the passage describe God? How can a shield help us?



 Week 1: Day 6: Preparation (waiting, hoping, trusting)

*Isaiah 26:8*

*LORD, we show our trust in you by obeying your laws; our heart's desire is to glorify your name. (NLT)*

### Discuss

Why would obeying God's laws show that we trust him?  
How does our obedience glorify his name?



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 Week 1: Day 7: Preparation (waiting, hoping, trusting)

*Isaiah 33:2*

*LORD, be gracious to us; we long for you. Be our strength every morning, our salvation in time of distress. (NIV)*

### Discuss

Why do we need to ask for strength every morning?  
Who should we go to when we need help?



 Week 2: Day 1: Love

*John 16:27*

*The Father himself loves you, because you have loved me and have believed that I came from God. (ESV)*

### Discuss

Who is speaking in this passage? Who came from God? Do you believe that?



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Week 2: Day 2: Love

1 John 3:1a

*See how very much our Father loves us, for he calls us his children, and that is what we are! (NLT)*

### Discuss

Think about how much your parent loves you. Why? Because you are his/her child! Not because of anything you have done. Just because you belong to him or her. Isn't that amazing? Your Father in heaven loves you the same way.



Week 2: Day 3: Love

2 Thessalonians 3:5

*I pray that the Lord will guide you to be as loving as God and as patient as Christ. (CEV)*

### Discuss

Can you name one way that God is loving and one way that Christ is patient? Can you name how you can be more loving and patient?



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Week 2: Day 4: Love

1 John 4:16

*We know how much God loves us, and we have put our trust in his love. God is love, and all who live in love live in God, and God lives in them. (NLT)*

### Discuss

Do you know how much God loves you? Have you put your trust in His love? If you have, God lives in you!



Week 2: Day 5: Love

Jude 1:21

*Keep yourselves in the love of God; look forward to the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ that leads to eternal life. (NRSV)*

### Discuss

We keep ourselves in the love of God by trusting him. Do you remember how we show that we trust God? (see Week 1 Day 6)



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Week 2: Day 6: Love

**Romans 12:9-10**

*Love must be sincere. Hate what is evil. Cling to what is good. Be devoted to one another in love. Honor one another above yourselves. (NIV)*

### Discuss

Don't just pretend to love others. Really love them. Give an example of how you can pretend to love someone. How can you honor someone above yourself? What would that look like?



Week 2: Day 7: Love

**1 John 4:7-10**

*Beloved, let us love one another, because love comes from God. Everyone who loves has been born of God and knows God. Whoever does not love does not know God, because God is love. This is how God's love was revealed among us: God sent His one and only Son into the world, so that we might live through Him. And love consists in this: not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son as the atoning sacrifice for our sins. (BSB)*

### Discuss

How did God show us his love?



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Week 3: Day 1: Joy

**John 15:10-11**

*If you keep my commands, you will remain in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commands and remain in his love. I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete. (NIV)*

### Discuss

How can we remain in the love of Jesus?  
Whose love does Jesus remain in?  
Why does he tell us this?



Week 3: Day 2: Joy

**1 Peter 1:8-9**

*You love him even though you have never seen him. Though you do not see him now, you trust him; and you rejoice with a glorious, inexpressible joy. The reward for trusting him will be the salvation of your souls. (NLT)*

### Discuss

Remember (again) how we show that we trust God? What does this passage tell us will be the result of trusting in Him? What gives us inexpressible joy?



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Week 3: Day 3: Joy

3 John 1:4

*I have no greater joy than this: to hear that my children are living according to the truth. (NET)*

Discuss

Why do you think your parents would have no greater joy than hearing that their children are walking in truth? What would make a person exceedingly sad then?



Week 3: Day 4: Joy

Psalms 35:9

*Then I will rejoice in the Lord; I will delight in His deliverance. (HCSB)*

Discuss

What gives us great joy?  
How can you rejoice in the Lord?



## Advent Readings



## Advent Readings



Week 3: Day 5: Joy

Matthew 2:10

*When they saw the star, they rejoiced exceedingly with great joy. (ESV)*

Discuss

Who saw the star? Which star is this? Show me what "exceedingly with great joy" looks like.



Week 3: Day 6: Joy

Isaiah 52:9

*Break into shouts of joy, you ruins of Jerusalem! Your LORD will rescue his city and comfort his people. (GNB)*

Discuss

Have you ever seen city ruins shout for joy? Can you picture what that would look like? Describe it.



## Advent Readings



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Week 3: Day 7: Joy

*Psalms 66:1-3*

*Tell everyone on this earth to shout praises to God! Sing about his glorious name. Honor him with praises. Say to God, "Everything you do is fearsome, and your mighty power makes your enemies come crawling." (CEV)*

### Discuss

Sing your favorite praise song to God right now. He is indeed worth of honor and praise!



Week 4: Day 1: God's Gift

*Romans 8:31-32*

*What shall we say about such wonderful things as these? If God is for us, who can ever be against us? Since he did not spare even his own Son but gave him up for us all, won't he also give us everything else? (NLT)*

### Discuss

How wonderful is it to know that the King of the Universe is on our side?! Nothing or no one can overcome us with God on our side! Think of one thing that is bothering you this season and think about God overcoming it!



## Advent Readings



## Advent Readings



Week 4: Day 2: God's Gift

*James 1:17*

*All generous giving and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or the slightest hint of change. (NET)*

### Discuss

What is a generous gift you have given (either an act or an actual thing)? How did it make you feel to give that gift? What is a perfect gift that you have received? What does it mean to have "no variation or the slightest hint of change?" Why is that important?



Week 4: Day 3: God's Gift

*Luke 6:38*

*Give, and you will receive. A large quantity, pressed together, shaken down, and running over will be put into your pocket. The standards you use for others will be applied to you. (GW)*

### Discuss

What do you have to do in order to receive? How will what you receive be determined? What do you think it means if something is "pressed together, shaken down, and running over"?



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Week 4: Day 4: God's Gift

2 Corinthians 9:7

*Each of you should give what you have decided in your heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. (NIV)*

### Discuss

What does it mean to give "reluctantly or under compulsion?" Does it matter if you give a fancy or expensive gift with a sour attitude? What kind of giver is God looking for?



Week 4: Day 5: God's Gift

Isaiah 9:6

*For unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given; and the government will be upon His shoulder. And his name will be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. (NKJV)*

### Discuss

Why would a child, a baby boy, be an amazing gift? (If you aren't sure, wait til tomorrow!) How can one baby have so many names? How many names do you have?



## Advent Readings



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Week 4: Day 6: God's Gift

Galatians 4:4-5

*But when the time was right, God sent his Son, and a woman gave birth to him. His Son obeyed the Law, so he could set us free from the Law, and we could become God's children. (CEV)*

### Discuss

Who knew when the time would be right? Did the people know the time was right? How do we know that the time was right?



Week 4: Day 7: God's Gift

2 Corinthians 9:15

*Let us thank God for his priceless gift! (GNB)*

### Discuss

Yes, let's do just that! Can you say a prayer right now thanking God for sending his Son – the most precious gift ever?



## Christmas Readings

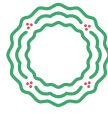


## Christmas Readings



Please cut each page into four readings. Use the circle to designate where to cut holes. Intersperse red cards behind the green cards

### Week 1



*The Christmas Miracle of Jonathan Toomey*  
by Susan Wojciechowski, illustrated by P.J. Lynch.  
ISBN: 0-7636-1930-2. Picture book. RA: PreK-Adult

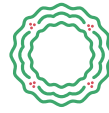
A boy loses a treasured wooden nativity set, so his mother commissions a cranky woodcarver to carve a replacement, asking to allow her son to watch. The time together causes a relationship to grow, allowing the three of them to struggle with painful memories and the process of putting their unhappiness behind them. A story of love, redemption, and hope.



## Christmas Readings



## Christmas Readings



*The Legend of the Candy Cane*  
by Lori Walburg, illustrated by James Bernardin.  
ISBN: 0-310-21247-2

A mysterious stranger and a little girl named Lucy tell the story of the candy cane to the people of a small prairie town. This tale set at the turn of the century explores the symbolism behind the favorite Christmas confection. Sure to become a keepsake!

### Week 1



*The Year of the Perfect Christmas Tree: An Appalachian Story*  
by Gloria Houston, illustrated by Barbara Cooney.  
ISBN: 0-14-055877-2. Picture book.

It is the custom in the Appalachian village for one family to give a Christmas tree for Pine Grove Church. Ruthie and Papa pick a balsam up on the rocky crag before he goes to war. But despite the Armistice, the holiday is approaching and there's no sign of Papa. Will the village get their Christmas tree? A story of courage and family.



*The Polar Express*  
written and illustrated by Chris Van Allsburg.  
ISBN: 0-395-38949-6

A magical train ride on Christmas Eve takes a boy to the North Pole to receive a special gift from Santa Claus. The setting of the story is based on the author's home in Grand Rapids, MI. In addition to the wonderful story line, his oil pastel illustrations beautifully enhance the nighttime setting.

### Week 1

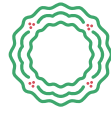




## Christmas Readings



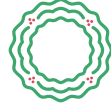
## Christmas Readings



*A Christmas Tree in the White House*  
by Gary Hines, illustrated by Alexandra Wallner.  
ISBN: 0-8050-5076-0

### Week 1

Because of his conservation work, President Theodore Roosevelt decides to set an example for the American people by not cutting down living trees to be used as Christmas decorations. With the help of their aunt, his two young sons sneak one into their White House bedroom anyway. Based on actual events, this humorous story adds a touch of history to Christmas.



*A Christmas Like Helen's*  
by Natalie Kinsey-Warnock, illustrated by Mary Azarian.  
ISBN: 0-618-23137-4

### Week 1

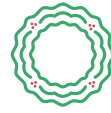
A warm and welcoming story based around Christmas like the author's grandmother enjoyed in the time before cars, electricity, and telephones. Set on a farm in nineteenth century Vermont, this descriptive telling might encourage you to share some of your own childhood Christmas stories.



## Christmas Readings



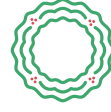
## Christmas Readings



*Christmas Farm*  
by Mary Lyn Ray, illustrated by Barry Root.  
ISBN: 978-0-15-216290-0

### Week 1

Wilma decides her garden needs a new beginning, so she enlists the help of her five-year-old neighbor Parker to help her plant sixty-two dozen balsam seedlings. Nurturing the trees year after year, they keep careful count of how many they plant, how many perish, and how many grow to become fine, full Christmas trees. The author's lyrical story-telling style offers a unique perspective to the usual Christmas story.



*The Light of Christmas*  
by Richard Paul Evans, illustrated by Daniel Craig.  
ISBN: 0-689-83468-3

### Week 2

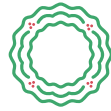
When Alexander helps an old man lying in the snow rather than going to see the annual lighting of the Christmas torch, he does not realize the reward his kindness will bring. Alexander learns that it isn't what you have to give, but how you give of yourself that matters most.



## Christmas Readings



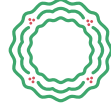
## Christmas Readings



**Song of the Camels: A Christmas Poem**  
by Elizabeth Coatsworth, illustrated by Anna Vojtech.  
ISBN: 1-55858-811-6

Week 2

The tale of the wise men's journey told from the point of view of the camels who carried them. A lavishly illustrated interpretation of a beautiful Christmas poem.



**Good King Wenceslas**  
by John M. Neale, illustrated by Tim Ladwig.  
ISBN: 0-8028-5209-2.

Week 2

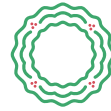
Adapted from the Christmas carol by the same name, the story is based on actual events from the tenth century about a kind-hearted Bohemian king and his page who set out to help a poor peasant on a cold winter's night. A good reminder that helping others brings us a blessing.



## Christmas Readings



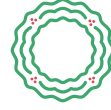
## Christmas Readings



**Waiting for Christmas**  
by Monica Greenfield, illustrated by Jan Spivey Gilchrist.  
ISBN: 0-590-52700-2

Week 2

Sharing a sense of excitement in the waiting time just before Christmas, two African American children enjoy decorating the tree, visiting with relatives, and checking for presents one last time. An engaging Christmas poem accompanied by impressionistic illustrations.



**Gifts of the Heart**  
written and illustrated by Patricia Polacco.  
ISBN: 978-0-399-16094-3

Week 2

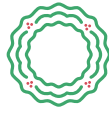
Kay Lamity, the new housekeeper, is a force of nature as she teaches Trisha and Richie about the unforgettable gifts that come from the heart. A wonderful story celebrating the joy of homemade gifts.



## Christmas Readings



## Christmas Readings

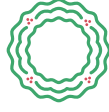


### *The Last Christmas Tree*

by Stephen Krensky, illustrated by Pascal Campion.  
ISBN: 978-0-8037-3757-0

### Week 2

Among the grand trees in the Christmas tree lot, a little sparse tree, filled with the spirit of Christmas, hopes to be taken home. Will the little tree get what it wants most of all? A great reminder that it isn't always about being chosen first.



### *Sharing Christmas*

by Kate Westerlund, illustrated by Eve Tharlet.  
ISBN: 978-0-698-40074-0

### Week 2

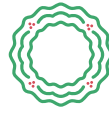
The snowy winter is causing food to be scarce for the animals of the forest. Clara, a little deer, worries if there will be enough to eat and, more importantly, will there be enough for Christmas? A heart-warming story about sharing, caring, and helping wishes come true.



## Christmas Readings



## Christmas Readings

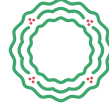


### *Pablo's Christmas*

by Hugo C. Martin, illustrated by Lee Chapman.  
ISBN: 978-1-4027-2560-9

### Week 3

When his father must go to America to earn more than woodcarving in Mexico, Pablo is the man of the house. He must protect their small farm from coyotes and prepare everything for Christmas. The wonderful folk-art illustrations complement this story about the importance of family.



### *Lighthouse Christmas*

by Toni Buzzeo, illustrated by Nancy Carpenter.  
ISBN 978-0-8037-303-3

### Week 3

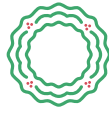
Peter and Frances have moved with Papa to a tiny lighthouse island off the coast of Maine. A nor'easter is keeping the supply ships away, forcing Papa to rescue an upturned fishing boat. Frances must keep the light burning. Will Santa know how to find them? Inspired by the true story of the Flying Santa Service tradition.



## Christmas Readings



## Christmas Readings



*The Little Drummer Boy*  
by Ezra Jack Keats.  
ISBN: 0-670-89226-2

Week 3

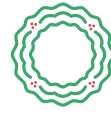
The illustrated version of the beloved Christmas song. A procession travels to Bethlehem, bringing gifts for baby Jesus. The little drummer boy comes along and although he has no gift fit for a king, he plays a song on his drum for the Christ Child.



## Christmas Readings



## Christmas Readings



*Waltz of the Snowflakes*  
by Elly MacKay.  
ISBN: 978-0-7624-5338-2.

Week 3

In this wordless picture book, a young girl reluctantly goes to the theater with her grandmother to watch a performance of *The Nutcracker* on a cold and rainy evening. As the curtains rise, the girl's eyes light up as she's introduced to the bright magic of the theater. Children can put their imaginations to work spinning a story to accompany the vibrant illustrations.



*A Kenya Christmas*  
by Tony Johnston, illustrated by Leonard Jenkins.  
ISBN: 0-8234-1623-2.

Week 3

Ten-year-old Juma, with the help of his Aunt Aida, want to surprise his Kenyan village one Christmas but end up surprised themselves. A wonderful tale told by an old man to his grandchildren



*Room for a Little One: A Christmas Tale*  
by Martin Waddell, illustrated by Jason Cockcroft.  
ISBN: 0-689-86841-3.

Week 3

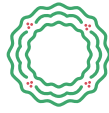
One cold night, animals are welcomed one-by-one into the stable by a kind ox, to rest and shelter from the cold. The animals that come don't usually get along but in the shelter of the warm space, peace reigns. Finally, some special visitors arrive and are also welcomed in. A wonderfully warm telling of the manger story. "There's always room for a little one here."



## Christmas Readings



## Christmas Readings



*Christmas Day in the Morning*  
by Pearl S. Buck, illustrated by Mark Buehner.  
ISBN: 0-688-16268-1.

Week 3

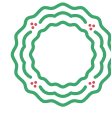
Fifteen-year-old Rob overhears a conversation between his father and mother which makes him want to give his father a special gift this Christmas but it's already Christmas Eve and he doesn't have much money. What gift can he possibly give his hard-working farmer father? Suddenly, he thinks of the best gift of all. A wonderfully illustrated version of a Pearl S. Buck classic.



## Christmas Readings



## Christmas Readings



*The Crippled Lamb*  
by Max Lucado, illustrated by Liz Bonham.  
ISBN: 978-1-4003-1807-0

Week 4

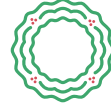
A lamb named Joshua has always felt different and sad because of his black spots and his limp. Because he is different, he is often left out by the other sheep. But one starry night he feels his true worth when he is called upon to give the newborn King the one thing He needs most. A wonderful reminder that God has purpose for our lives.



*The Night Before Christmas*  
by Clement Clarke Moore, illustrated by Ted Rand.  
ISBN: 1-55858-465-X.

Week 4

The classic poem is beautifully illustrated with lush pictures set in the era in which the poem was written. Faithful tribute to the smallest detail of the beloved account.



*The Gift of the Christmas Cookie:  
Sharing the True Meaning of Jesus' Birth*  
by Dandi Daley Mackall, illustrated by Deborah Chabrian.  
ISBN: 978-0-310-71328-9.

Week 4

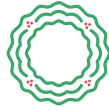
Jack's dad had to take a train west to find work and won't make it home for Christmas. Money has been tight, so Jack is surprised to smell baking when he walks in from the cold. Jack helps his mother make cookies for the needy, learns the story of how the first Christmas cookies were used to spread the gospel to people who could not read, then finds a way to bring that story to life.



## Christmas Readings



## Christmas Readings



### *Silent Night*

illustrated by Lara Hawthorne.  
ISBN: 978-1-78603-066-5.

The words of the beloved hymn are beautifully illustrated in this book. A history of the hymn is included at the end



Week 4



### *Listen to the Silent Night*

by Dandi Daley Mackall, illustrated by Steve Johnson and Lou Fancher.  
ISBN: 987-0-525-42276-1

It was not such a silent night when Jesus was born! This rhythmic story invites you to imagine all the sounds of this wonderful night.

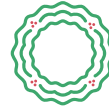


Week 4

## Christmas Readings



## Christmas Readings



*The Twelve Days of Christmas*  
illustrated by Laurel Long.  
ISBN: 978-0-8037-3357-2.

An intricately illustrated version of the traditional Christmas carol where each new day brings a new gift, but the earlier gifts are repeated. The reader can search for images of the repeated gifts hidden in the detailed illustrations.

Week 4



*Christmas Tapestry*  
by Patricia Polacco.  
ISBN: 0-399-23955-3.

A tapestry is hung to temporarily cover a hole that develops on a wall in a church right before Christmas but ends up doing so much more than cover a hole. A surprising and heart-touching ending will leave you reaching for the tissues.

Week 4

