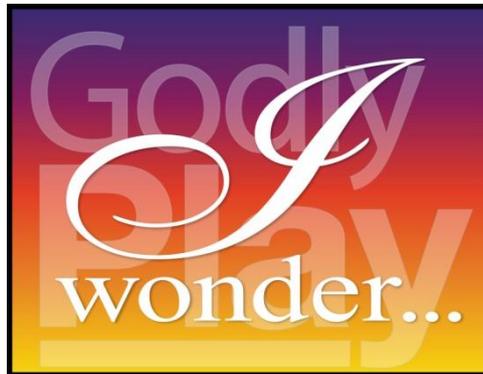


Stories of God at Home

The Advent Story



This story will be shared over the four weeks of Advent, in order to allow us time and a way to get ready to enter into the Mystery of Christmas.



In the Church there are four weeks to get ready to enter into the Mystery of Christmas called the season of Advent. You know, a mystery is hard to enter into sometimes, so that is why this time of Advent is so important.

The Church learned a long time ago that people need a way to get ready to enter or even come close to a mystery like Christmas. The Church set aside four weeks to get ready. This is such a great Mystery that it takes that long to get ready. During this time, we are all on the way to Bethlehem. We are all making the journey. We are all getting ready to enter the Mystery of Christmas

The Godly Play Advent story will be shared over the course of the next four weeks. Each week we will be sharing the story by uploading a recording from Sharon, a Godly Play storyteller. We suggest that you watch the video each week with your family or your class, and then use the support material provided alongside the videos.

Each weekly recording will pick up from the previous week and come together to tell the full story that will lead us into the Christmas Season.

We also suggest that you use your Advent Wreath as part of the storytelling experience – lighting one candle per week, and maybe you could reflect upon your crib at home or in the class room as you wonder.

Godly Play Advent Story - Week One **The Prophets**

As you get ready to enter into the Mystery of Christmas, it is so important that you prepare to listen to and watch the Advent Story unfold, and to be reminded of the language of silence. A silence that appears between the words as the lesson is spoken, as you listen to the words, as you watch the movement of materials and the light that begins to fill out the story with the presence of God amongst you. The world can be often overcrowded with words and ideas, so many things compete for your attention, so making room to just “be” and to hear God’s “still and gentle voice” is an invaluable practice to learn together.

Watch the Video here:



The Spoken Lesson

This is the storyteller's script – it is provided here to allow you to reflect upon the written word and maybe retell the story as often as you like during the first week of Advent.

“Everything is changed. It is now the time of the colour purple. Purple is the colour of kings and queens. No one would wear purple in those days except royal people. Roman citizens would wear a little stripe of purple, but that was all. Purple is a serious colour, and something serious is about to happen. A king is coming, but he is not the kind of king that people thought was coming. This King had no army, no great house and no riches. This King was a baby who was born in a barn. The King who was coming is still coming. This is full of mystery.

You know, a mystery is hard to enter into sometimes. That is why this time of Advent is so important. Sometimes people can walk right through a mystery and not even know it is there. This time of year, you will see people hurrying in the shops buying things and doing this and that, but they will miss the Mystery. They don't know how to get ready and maybe they just forgot.

The Church learned a long time ago that people need a way to get ready to enter or even come close to a mystery like Christmas. The Church set aside four weeks to get ready. This is such a great Mystery that it takes that long to get ready. During this time, we are all on the way to Bethlehem. We are all making the journey.

We are all getting ready to enter the Mystery of Christmas, so let's go with the prophets, the Holy Family, the shepherds, the angels, the Magi and all the rest to make the journey that was not just back then. It is also now.

Prophets are people who come so close to God and God comes so close to them, that they know what is most important. They pointed the way to Bethlehem.

They didn't know exactly what was going to happen there, but they knew this was the place. This week is the time we remember the prophets.

Look at the hand of a prophet pointing the way to Bethlehem, showing us the way, too.

Stop. Watch. Pay attention.

Something incredible is going to happen in Bethlehem.



Advent Wreath -Take the first purple candle and light it.



This is the light of the prophets. Let's enjoy the light. Prophets are the people who know the most important things. They knew which way to go. They are the ones who showed us the way. Now we can go to Bethlehem too."

Wondering

After you have listened to the story, you as a family begin to wonder about what we have seen and heard. Everyone is encouraged to wonder, everyone is free to share their response, but nobody has to respond. Wondering does not have to be verbal, younger children can point to what they liked best. All answers are encouraged and are held as being earnest and honest. As you wonder as a family practice truly listening to each other without feeling the need to validate or dispute a wondering. There is no right or wrong way to wonder, instead this time sets up a safe space to express and listen to each other.

So, are you ready to Wonder?

- 1. I wonder if there are special things we might do at your house to remember what Christmas is really all about.*
- 2. The prophets told the people of God that a new king was coming. I wonder what you think they expected. What kind of king do you think they thought he would be?*
- 3. I wonder why God sent Jesus as a baby?*
- 4. I wonder what it's like to be a prophet?*
- 5. I wonder what prophets you have already met in your life? At home? At schools? In your neighbourhood?*
- 6. I wonder how God feels about the prophets.*

Response Time

This part of the Godly Play process is sometimes called “the work period”; the child’s work is really deep and personal play. This is the time to continue to respond to the story through some form of creative expression. You may want to work together or individually. As with the Wondering, there is no right or wrong play during this creative phase. Have some art materials, some paper and crayons, or whatever materials you have at home, set up and ready to use. Response time is the child’s/young person’s opportunity to respond to what they have heard/seen/felt in the story through their own creative efforts.

Feast

After the response time is the time to come back together to share a small feast. Have some small treats and drinks prepared beforehand. The feast is more than a snack but it signifies coming together, in communion with each other, indirectly preparing for or recreating the sacrament of Holy Communion. Everyone waits until all are served before they begin to eat and drink. This can be a time to truly share with each other, to talk about the story, how your day or week went, a time to laugh, to cry with one another. A time to be together.

Prayer

“All these people, and many others, travel on the roads to Bethlehem. As we get ready, for the great mystery which is Christmas, we travel with them bringing all that is hard and painful, all that is true and everlasting.”

Lord Jesus, Light of the world, the prophets said you would bring peace, give us peace in our hearts at Christmas time as we journey towards the child, the mystery of Christmas.”

