

**Journey through Advent
2011**

**Community United Methodist Church
Half Moon Bay, California**



Advent is most often seen as a time of preparation, a period of waiting with anticipation, hope, and joy... of looking forward to Christ's second coming as well as backward to his birth. Advent is a time to prepare our hearts for Christ to be born in us anew. We need to be watchful and alert to the way God works in our lives.

Many of the reflections in this calendar come from Adam Hamilton's, *The Journey, Walking the Road to Bethlehem*. This is the small group Advent study for 2011. If you haven't joined a group there is still time. Just call the office and we will set you up!

Enjoy this calendar and do some or all of the meditations and activities as we wait for this joyous event.

Included are meditations for each day. In addition, there is a daily activity that is geared to children, youth and families.

Thank you to all the members of the congregation that shared their thoughts and traditions. We have used many of the contributions this year. We are hoping that creating an Advent Calendar becomes a tradition at CUMC and that all members of the congregation contribute. Because there are only four weeks in advent it may take several years to get everyone's contribution included! We really look forward to hearing about your traditions, thoughts, and prayers!

2011 Disciple Development Team

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Advent Sundays

Each Sunday of Advent read scripture, light candles, discuss the prompt and sing a hymn and say a prayer.

Below is a suggestion from Kathee Tyson for each of the Sundays in Advent. You may want to add this tradition to your own or use the suggestions here.

Here's one of my favorite Advent songs. As a child, we sang this as we lit each week's candle on the Advent wreath --- four verses for four weeks. KATHEE TYSON

Week 1: Nov 27th

*Come, thou long expected Jesus
born to set Thy people free;
from our fears and sins release us,
let us find our rest in Thee.*

Week 2: Dec 4th

*Israel's strength and consolation,
hope of all the world Thou art;
dear desire of every nation,
joy of every longing heart.*

Week 3: Dec 11

*Born Thy people to deliver,
born a child and yet a king,
born to reign in us for ever,
now Thy gracious kingdom bring.*

Week 4: Dec 18

*By Thine Own eternal Spirit,
rule in our hearts alone,
by Thine all-sufficient merit,
raise us to Thy glorious throne.*

CHARLES WESLEY, 1744



November 27

Meditation: Luke 1:26-38

This is the first Sunday of Advent. As a family create an Advent wreath with 3 purple, 1 pink and 1 white candle. The pink and purple candles create a circle and the white one (the Christ candle) goes in the center. If you don't have colored candles white ones are fine. Decorate the wreath with evergreens.

Advent Wreath-making Party, CUMC, 11:15 am., Social Hall

The color purple originally represented penance, just like Lent. Now we think of the Purple candles as representing the royalty of Christ. Some people have replaced the purple candles with blue ones representing hope – but you can use any color candles. The Christ Candle represents the birth of Jesus and is often larger than the other candles, is white and placed in the center of the circle.



Celebrate the first Sunday of Advent by reading Luke 1:26-38.

Light a purple candle and talk about what questions you would ask if an angel appeared to you with a word from God. How would you know a person was an angel from God?

Sing a hymn, say a prayer and set out the crèche stable (we will add figures on another day).

Plant a Narcissus bulb in a pot inside your home at the start of Advent -- it grows and blooms in about four weeks.

November 28

Meditation: PSALM 98, PSALM 103:8

Have you ever felt God calling you, whether to ministry or to a specific task, in your day-to-day life?

So what are you going to do with all those cute pictures that arrive in your Christmas cards this year?

Start collecting the Christmas cards that you receive.

Maybe your family would enjoy making a prayer/photo album that you can use for years to come. Glue snapshots into the album, and illustrate it, too, if that suits your fancy. Our family pasted in favorite card illustrations, too, such as snowy trees, manger scenes, animals, etc. Each night at dinner a family member prayed for whomever or whatever was shown on one page. Over the years we added new pictures, reminisced over old ones, and prayed our way through our prayer album each Advent season.

November 29

Meditation: PSALM 98, ISAIAH 7:14

How does God speak to people today?

Are you looking forward to Christmas? Are you excited about the birth of the Christ Child? You can count the days by making an Advent chain out of construction paper. Each day starting December 1st. take a loop off the chain.

Cut 25 strips of construction paper into 1 inch strips the long way. Glue the end of each strip so that it loops around another chain.

November 30



Meditation: PSALM 98, ISAIAH 9: 6-7

How does knowing that God is love shape your understanding of what love is meant to be? How can we love god and others as Jesus Commanded us?

One Jewish baby made a huge difference in the world. You can make a difference too. Select a mission you will pray for daily and one where you can provide a helping hand at least once during the advent season.

Donate food to Second Harvest Food bank or the Senior Brown Bag.

December 1

Meditation: PSALM 98, ISAIAH 40

How would you define an angel? Do you believe in angels? Why or why not?

Start an ABC book that tells the story of Christmas. Each letter should have its own page. Write the featured letter large and then say what it is for. For example: A is for Angel. Then illustrate your page. All pages should be the same size so the book can be bound at the end.

Today complete letters A thru E.

December 2

Meditation: PSALM 98, MATTHEW 11:3

What do you think the angel Gabriel looked like?

Complete letters F thru J of the ABC book.

What are some special things we can do to get ready this Christmas?

December 3

Meditation: PSALM 98, MATTHEW 19:14-15, 26

Do you think there was a time in your life where you failed to recognize an angel?

Make Christmas cookies and deliver to friends and family. How do you feel when you give gifts to your friends?



Help women, youth and children, locally and beyond by shopping! Check out the CUMC Church Bazaar, 9am-3pm, Social Hall

December 4

Meditation: Matthew 1:18-24

Celebrate the second Sunday of Advent by reading Matthew 1:18-24.

Light two purple candles and talk with those with you about how you were able to be alert today for Christ's Love and Light.

Sing a hymn and say a prayer. If you've set up the stable or barn of your nativity set, now's the time to add the animals, other than the sheep (we will add the sheep later).

Attend the Christmas Pageant, 10 am service in the sanctuary.

Make a Christmas card for Jesus. Tell him what you are thankful for.



Attend the 5th Annual CUMC Christmas potluck dinner, 5:00 pm. Ham will be provided and you provide the rest. Bring a Christmas card to decorate the social hall.

December 5



Meditation: PSALM 148; PSALM 107: 8, 9

What does it mean to trust God? How can you live out your trust in God? How would you live differently if you always trusted God?

Do you have neighbors who can not make the journey to be with family this year? Can you include them in your plans?

December 6

Meditation: PSALM 148, RUTH 1:14-19

How do you overcome doubt? Is it just the simple matter of choosing to trust and believe?

Look at your Christmas ornaments and share how each symbolizes the Advent season.

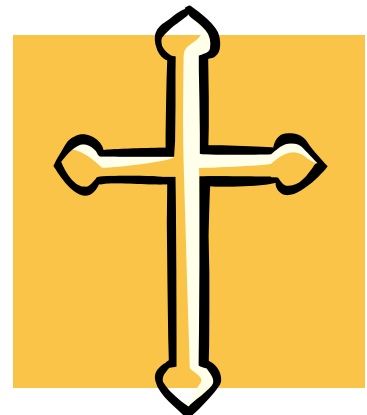
Glimpses of Christmas are all around us – and many of the images remind us of Jesus. See if you and your family can match the symbols below with their traditional meaning, and then help your children see how often they can spot these symbols in the stores, neighborhood, etc.

1. candle	2. holly	3. Advent	4. angel	5. Star	6. bells
7. Xmas	8. evergreens	9. candy cane	10. wreath	11. the word “Merry”	12. poinsettia

- A. old English word meaning “blessed”
- B. Martin Luther said this demonstrated the light given to the world through the birth of Jesus
- C. A reminder of the one that appeared at the time of Jesus’ birth and later led wise men from the East to come and worship him
- D. a reminder of the crown of thorns placed on Jesus’ head before his crucifixion, or the “crown of righteousness” St. Paul says believers will get on the Day of Judgment
- E. another reminder of Jesus’ crown of thorns, with its sharp leaves and blood red berries
- F. everlasting life and God’s everlasting love
- G. shaped like a letter “J” for Jesus, or red stripes to remind us of his sacrifice and white stripes to remind us of his purity
- H. ring out the good news that Jesus was born
- I. “X” is the first letter of the Greek word *Xristos*, meaning “Christ”.
Mas is the abbreviated form of the word “Mass”. Put together, the two words mean “worship for Christ”.
- J. “coming” or “arrival”
- K. told the shepherds that a Savior had been born that day
- L. star-shaped blossoms at the heart of the plant remind us of the Christmas star

Symbol Match-Up Key

1B, 2E, 3J, 4K, 5C, 6H, 7I, 8F, 9G, 10D, 11A, 12L



December 7

Meditation: PSALM 148, ISAIAH 9: 2-7

Do you believe God speaks to us in dreams?

Read Luke 2:3 and talk about where you were born.

Make Chrismoms (monograms for Christ) out of white and gold paper (or white felt and gold glitter glue) and bows. Make and decorate in the shape of a cross, fish, manger, or crown. These symbols represent Jesus' and are a shortened way to say his many names. Hang them on your tree as you sing "Jesus loves me."

December 8

Meditation: PSALM 148, ISAIAH 60: 1

Have you ever had a dream that made a difference in your life?

Complete letters K thru O of the ABC book.

Storytelling: Using a real event in your child's life -- tell the [child's name] story. . ."Once upon a time there was a little boy named James." Tell how your child has brought light into your life and/or the life of the family.

December 9

Meditation: PSALM 148, 2 CORINTHIANS 4:6

It is difficult to forgive. How have you extended compassion and mercy to others?

Read Luke 2:4. King David was Joseph's Great, Great ... Grand father. Look at family memorabilia and talk about your ancestors.

December 10

Meditation: PSALM 148, JOHN 3:16

If God speaks to you are you willing to obey? Would you travel to a far away land? Why or why not?

Bethlehem literally means "house of bread." In Germany people make gingerbread houses at Christmastime. Build a Ginger Bread house. There are many recipes and easy directions on the Internet.



December 11

Meditation: LUKE 1:39-45



Celebrate the third Sunday of Advent by reading Luke 1:39-45.

Light two purple candles and the pink candle. When we anticipate someone we love coming we are excited, awake for new events and filled with joy! Talk about how you are joyful and are able to stay awake today.

Sing a hymn and say a prayer. Now is the time to add Mary and Joseph to your nativity scene.

Read Luke 2:5 and talk to your mom about what she remembers about being “with child” (pregnant) with you.

In the evening, attend the Community Sing, 7:00 – 8:30 pm at CUMC. Bring some cookies for the reception!

There Was No Church, by Gail ERWIN (2010 children’s pageant)

*There was no church.
There was no great cathedral.
There was no inn.
There was no room for Jesus.
In a lowly stable with no one else around,
Jesus was born, a King without a crown.*

*There was no church.
There was no great cathedral.
There was no inn.
There was no room for Jesus,
And his mother Mary then held him safe and warm,
Knowing that God would keep them from all harm.*

*God was there and watching, God was there.
God is still here and watching,
God is here, is here, is here.*



December 12

Meditation: LUKE 1: 46-55, LUKE 2:10

How would you define “joy” and how is it different than “happiness?”

At this time of year I am deeply thankful for God’s bounty, the joy of the season, the community of our church which has sustained me through many trials, and above all for God’s grace. -- Hugh Bowen

Complete letters P thru T of the ABC book.

December 13

Meditation: LUKE 1: 46-55, GALATIANS 5:22

Read Luke 2:6-7 and talk to your mom about what the difference is between sleeping in a motel and a garage. How do those differences compare to sleeping in an inn or a stable?



December 14

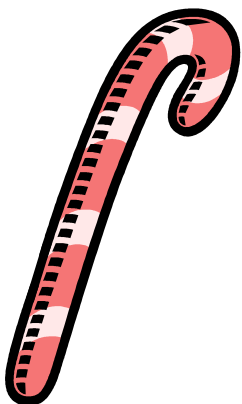
Meditation: LUKE 1: 46-55, JOHN 15: 9-11

If God doesn’t generally intervene to suspend the forces of nature, what does God do? (hint: read Isaiah 43:2)

Complete letters U thru Y of the ABC book.

MYF Christmas Party, 6-8 pm in the youth house, bring your friends!

December 15



Meditation: LUKE 1: 46-55, PSALM 51:10-12

What is the meaning of the name Emanuel? How is this like the staff that shepherds use?

Read Luke 2:8. A candy cane is shaped like the staff that shepherds use. What do they use a staff for?

December 16

Meditation: LUKE 1: 46-55, ROMANS 15:13

Complete letter Z of the ABC book, bind the book by stapling the edge. Read your book to a parent, friend or sibling.

December 17

Meditation: LUKE 1: 46-55, PSALM 34: 4, 5

Read Luke 2:9. Get a flashlight and shine it behind someone's head and imagine a little bit of the "Glory of the Lord."

December 18

Meditation: Luke 2:1-7

Celebrate the fourth Sunday of Advent by reading Luke 2:1-7.

Light three purple candles and the pink candle and talk with those with you about how you were able to listen and were able to either create peace or observe someone who created peace today.

Sing a hymn and say a prayer. Now is the time to add the shepherds and sheep to your nativity scene.

Either make or use the pieces of a crèche and retell the story of Jesus' birth.

December 19

Meditation: PSALM 122, 1 TIMOTHY 2:5

When has a journey radically changed your life?

Read Luke 2:10-12. What two clues did the angel give the shepherd?



December 20

Meditation: PSALM 122, MATTHEW 2: 2

What are some biblical examples of individuals responding to God's Call? What can we learn from how they responded?

MICHELE CLEAVE suggests reading, "The Gift of the Magi," a short story about exchanging gifts by O. Henry. You can find it at: http://www.auburn.edu/~vestmon/Gift_of_the_Magi.html

Make Jesus a birthday present (for example: a poem, picture, sing a song, create a special ornament or serve others).

December 21

Meditation: PSALM 122, MATTHEW 2:9-12

What are some projects in Half Moon Bay that could constitute a response by you to God's Call? What do you need to do first to get started responding to God's Call?

Read Luke 2:13-14. Create paper doll angels and sing "Angels We Have Heard on High."

December 22

Meditation: PSALM 122, JOHN 1: 1-5, 10-14

What difficult journeys have you made in your life? If God was with you how would that journey be changed?

Read Luke 2:15-16. Get out your "running shoes" and talk about why the shepherds ran!

December 23

Meditation: PSALM 122, JOHN 1: 1-5, 10-14

If God chose shepherds to be the first to celebrate the birth of Christ, what might that tell you about what God hopes to see in our attitude and heart?

Read Proverbs 3:34. How does this verse apply to the shepherds?

December 24

Meditation: PSALM 122, JOHN 14:6

We always read John 3:16 on Christmas Eve night as a family, but that's not my favorite bible passage for Christmas, it's my father-in-law's. I like all the Angels sayings, "Peace on earth, good will towards men" to the awed (and frightened a little) shepherds.

Luke 2:8-20.

And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid. And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, which is Christ the Lord.

Submitted by Tom Ferenz

Read Luke 2:17-20. What do you think the shepherds said to the villagers? How can we tell someone about the Baby Jesus right now? Roll a piece of paper into a megaphone and sing "Joy to the World."

Attend a CUMC Christmas Eve service.

5 pm – Children's service - Sanctuary

8 pm – Candlelight, Lessons and Carols service - Sanctuary

10 pm – Candlelight Communion service - Chapel



December 25, 2010

Celebrate the coming of the Christ Child by lighting all the purple candles, the pink candle and the white candle in the center of the advent wreath. Say a prayer to give thanks for Jesus and a hope for peace in the world.

Sing Christmas carols. Add the baby Jesus to the Nativity and read the lullaby submitted by Ariel Moseley.

CHRIST CHILD LULLABY

*My love, my pride, my treasure oh
My wonder new and pleasure oh
My son, my beauty, ever You
Who am I to bear You here?*

*The cause of talk and tale am I
The cause of greatest fame am I
The cause of proudest care on high
To have for mine, the King of all*

*And though You are the King of all
They sent You to the manger stall
Where at Your feet they all shall fall
And glorify my child, the King*

*There shone a star above three kings
To guide them to the King of kings
They held You in their humble arms
And knelt before You until dawn*

*They gave You myrrh and gave You gold
Drank incense and gifts untold
They traveled far these gifts to bring
And glorify their new born King*



Note: There are no church services today. Please celebrate with your family and friendship circles.

Christmas season goes for 12 more days

Epiphany, the 12th day after Christmas, celebrates the visit of the three kings or wise men to the Christ Child, signifying the extension of salvation to the Gentiles.

Epiphany falls on Friday, January 6, 2011. Light the Christ Candle only in your Advent wreath each evening at a special time, or meal time from Christmas to Epiphany.

Your nativity is not quite complete...Keep the wise men out of sight and wait to add them on January 6th, the day of Epiphany when we celebrate the coming of the wise men and the light God revealed to the world through Jesus. .

