



INTRODUCTION



The Advent season is about anticipation and waiting. The Advent Christmas lessons have been prepared for your children to focus on Advent through fun and engaging activities from a detective's point of view. Just like advent, detectives anticipate and wait for what they're looking for – the GOOD NEWS!

Your children will unravel puzzles and learn how to express hope, love, joy and peace as they go throughout each week. Here's what you can look forward to in each lesson. We realize that churches have varying sizes and capabilities so you can use whatever part of the lessons fit your particular need.

Early Arrivers: Each week there is a puzzle for children to work on as they arrive. The answer to the puzzle is whatever Advent candle they will be learning about on that particular day. You may want to have additional activities available as well, depending on the amount of time you have before the actual lesson begins.

Worship: We have included four songs with each lesson for the worship time. You can select one or all of these songs to lead worship with your children. There is also a list of other appropriate songs for each theme if you want to select something different than what is provided in the lesson. The main thing is allowing our children to understand that one way we can worship our God is through music.

Advent Candle: Each lesson has a section where we talk about the Advent Candle of the week. You may want to get a wreath and candles to use during this time. There is a brief teaching of what each advent candle stands for, a song that progresses through the weeks which builds on each candle, and an advent prayer to close. You can add as much to this section as you would like based on your own specific needs.

Lesson: Each week there is a lesson with discussion on hope, love, joy and peace. Our intent is to try to get children thinking about each of these traits and how they may be examples of these throughout the week. This is where our detective theme comes in. Each week we use something from a detective to weave into the lesson. Hope is a notepad; Love is sunglasses; Joy is magnifying glass; and Peace is a flashlight. We have provided ordering information for props, so you can send your students home with these each week as a reminder of what they learned.

Secret Agents: The intent for this section is for small groups of children to participate in brainstorming ways they can show hope, love, joy and peace each week. Each child has an Advent Promises booklet to help them take notes so they can be detectives during the week at home. There is also a sheet of 4 cards that should be provided to each student. The intent is that when they show hope, love, joy or peace, they leave this card behind for the recipient to know something has been done and to work out the puzzle on the back to find out why. You may want to have a time each week for children to share what they did and what response they received when they followed through with their assignment.

Small Group Prayer: The end of each lesson is a time when small groups of children pray together. We have provided a specific prayer activity to allow children to feel comfortable speaking their prayers out loud. This is not a requirement if you have a child who is uncomfortable, but our hope is that throughout the month each child will feel more comfortable talking to God.

Activities: In different weeks there may be other activities that you can do with your children. Obviously all of this is time permitting. You need to select what fits best in the time frame you have and with your particular group of children.

We hope this provides you and your children with engaging, insightful, and fun ways of learning and putting into practice the traits God wants us to share –

HOPE, LOVE, JOY AND PEACE!

