



ADVENT CONSPIRACY

IPC PARENT GUIDE

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WHAT IS ADVENT CONSPIRACY?

Advent Conspiracy started when a few pastors realized people were struggling to find the connection between Christmas to-do lists and the story of Jesus' birth. An overwhelming stress had overtaken the worship and celebration of the King.

It is not an organization, a denomination, or a single church. Advent Conspiracy is a movement of churches, families, friends, and organizations who have made the declaration to celebrate Christmas in a radical, God honoring way. The four tenets of Advent Conspiracy are simple but life changing:

Worship Fully. Spend Less. Give More. Love All.

We worship fully because Christmas is about Jesus. If we forget this foundational truth, everything else falls apart. Let our actions and our words come from a place of worship. We spend less because we know mindless consumption is not the way to celebrate our Savior. By spending a little less on ourselves we are able to joyfully give to others in need. We give more of ourselves because this is the way of Christ. God gave us his Son and now it is our turn to reflect that same selflessness to the world. We share our time, talents, and presence with the people we love. We love all because we have been loved first. We believe that the poor and hurting of our world can be reached by God through the way we choose to celebrate Christmas.

As the Church, we are telling the story of Jesus to the watching world. Join us.





4 SIMPLE WAYS TO BRING THE MESSAGE HOME

OVERVIEW: ADVENT CONSPIRACY

PARENT OVERVIEW

This week, we talked about Advent Conspiracy, a special plan we're going to work on together as a church to help prepare our hearts for Christmas, Jesus' birthday. The four steps of our plan are Worship Fully, Spend Less, Give More, and Love All. These steps help us remember that Jesus is the reason that we celebrate Christmas.

WORSHIP FULLY: Christmas is all about Jesus. We'll worship Him with our hearts, minds, and actions!

SPEND LESS: We'll spend a little less on ourselves and use the money we saved to help others this Christmas.

GIVE MORE: We'll give more of ourselves and spend time with the people we love.

LOVE ALL: Jesus came for all people, including us. We'll love and serve all people, as a reminder of how much God loves us.

Over the next few weeks, make it part of your routine to talk about this Advent Conspiracy plan together as a family. We've found that families that commit to doing it together end up having the best experience.

IN ATRIUM

WHAT WE DO TOGETHER:

When we read Scripture in the atrium, the catechist lights a candle to help us remember that Jesus is the light of the world.

AT DINNER

HERE ARE SOME DISCUSSION STARTERS:

- Why do we celebrate Christmas?
- What should our family do to help get our hearts ready for Christmas?
- What is one thing we can pray for this week?

BEFORE BED

GO OVER THE MEMORY VERSE FROM THIS WEEK'S LESSON:

When Jesus spoke again to the people, he said, "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life." - John 8:12

HANGING OUT

MAKE IT PERSONAL:

Talk about the Advent Conspiracy collection jar your child and you can contribute to each week at church. Over the next few weeks, collect coins and money that can be donated to the Christmas offering. There will be a collection jar located on the first and third floor Sunday School hallways.

IN THE MORNING

PRAY TOGETHER:

Dear Jesus,

This week help my heart get ready for you. Help me do good things and keep me from sin. I love you and I'm excited to celebrate your birthday soon. Amen.



4 SIMPLE WAYS TO BRING THE MESSAGE HOME



LESSON 1: WORSHIP FULLY

PARENT OVERVIEW

The four steps of our Advent Conspiracy plan are Worship Fully, Spend Less, Give More, and Love All. These steps help us remember that Jesus is the reason that we celebrate Christmas. This week, we talked about part one of our Advent Conspiracy plan, Worship Fully. There are many ways that we can worship Jesus, through prayer, dancing, songs, our work, doing good things to help others, and by showing our gratitude. There's really no limit to how we can honor, praise, and worship Jesus.

WORSHIP FULLY: Christmas is all about Jesus. We'll worship Him with our hearts, minds, and actions!

IN ATRIUM

WHAT WE DO TOGETHER:

In the atrium, the children have special celebrations for the liturgical seasons. We sing with Ms. Beth to praise God.

AT DINNER

HERE ARE SOME DISCUSSION STARTERS:

- What does it mean to worship God?
- What's your favorite song to sing in atrium or church?
- What is one thing we can pray for this week?
- What's your favorite way to worship God?

BEFORE BED

GO OVER THE MEMORY VERSE FROM THIS WEEK'S LESSON:

Let everything that has breath praise the Lord. Praise the Lord! - Psalm 150:6

HANGING OUT

MAKE IT PERSONAL:

Go on a walk outside as a family sometime this week. Notice the beauty of God's creation. Talk about all the things you see and hear. Giving thanks to God for all the beauty in the world is a great way to worship fully this week.

IN THE MORNING

PRAY TOGETHER:

Dear Jesus,

Thank you for loving me. Help me to worship you with my whole heart. Amen



4 SIMPLE WAYS TO BRING THE MESSAGE HOME



LESSON 2: SPEND LESS

PARENT OVERVIEW

The four steps of our plan are Worship Fully, Spend Less, Give More, and Love All. These steps help us remember that Jesus is the reason that we celebrate Christmas. This week we talked about part two of our Advent Conspiracy plan, Spend Less. We learned about what it means to spend less during the Christmas season and how we can save some of our money to serve others at Christmas.

SPEND LESS: We'll spend a little less on ourselves and use the money we saved to help others this Christmas.

IN ATRIUM

WHAT WE DO TOGETHER:

We contemplate Jesus' parable of the pearl of great price. The mystery of the kingdom of God is of great value and beauty and is more precious than anything else.

AT DINNER

HERE ARE SOME DISCUSSION STARTERS:

- What is something valuable that you cannot purchase at a store?
- What is one thing you can give away to help someone else?
- What are three things that you're thankful for?

BEFORE BED

GO OVER THE MEMORY VERSE FROM THIS WEEK'S LESSON:

The kingdom of heaven is like a merchant looking for fine pearls; when he finds one of great value he goes and sells EVERYTHING he owns and buys it - Matthew 13:45-46

HANGING OUT

MAKE IT PERSONAL:

Have everyone in your family pick out something they want to donate (toys, books, clothes, etc.). Put all of the items together and drop them off at a local donation center. Talk to your kids about how they are following Jesus' teachings by sharing their stuff with other families in need.

IN THE MORNING

PRAY TOGETHER:

Dear Jesus,

Help me to remember all of the ways you have blessed me and my family. I want to have a grateful heart this Christmas. Amen.



4 SIMPLE WAYS TO BRING THE MESSAGE HOME



LESSON 3: GIVE MORE

PARENT OVERVIEW

The four steps of our plan are Worship Fully, Spend Less, Give More, and Love All. These steps help us remember that Jesus is the reason that we celebrate Christmas. This week, we talked about part three of our Advent Conspiracy plan, Give More. This Christmas, we will give more of our presence.

GIVE MORE: We'll give more of ourselves and spend time with the people we love.

IN ATRIUM

WHAT WE DO TOGETHER:

We hear that God gave us the greatest gift of all in his son, Jesus Christ who we celebrate at Christmas. Just like God did with us, we want our friends and family to know how much we love them. We can do this by giving more of ourselves: making homemade gifts, planning fun activities, and making new Christmas traditions.

AT DINNER

HERE ARE SOME DISCUSSION STARTERS:

- What is one activity you would like our family to do together before Christmas?
- What is one thing we can pray for this week?
- What's your favorite Christmas tradition?
- Who are three people that you're grateful for?

BEFORE BED

GO OVER THE MEMORY VERSE FROM THIS WEEK'S LESSON:

To you is born this day in the city of David, a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord." – Luke 2:11

HANGING OUT

MAKE IT PERSONAL:

Share a story with your kids about your favorite Christmas tradition you had growing up. Why was this such a special memory to you? Who were the people you shared this tradition with?

IN THE MORNING

PRAY TOGETHER:

Dear Jesus,

Help me to share my time with the people I love. I want to make new memories this Christmas. Amen.



4 SIMPLE WAYS TO BRING THE MESSAGE HOME

LESSON 4: LOVE ALL

PARENT OVERVIEW

The four steps of our plan are Worship Fully, Spend Less, Give More, and Love All. These steps help us remember that Jesus is the reason that we celebrate Christmas. This week, we talked about the last part of our Advent Conspiracy plan, Love All. The Bible tells us that God loves every person on Earth and he made every single person in His image. As Christians, we have been given many blessings through Jesus. Now, it's our turn to model the way that Jesus lived.

LOVE ALL: Jesus came for all people, including us. We'll love and serve all people, as a reminder of how much God loves us.

IN ATRIUM

WHAT WE DO TOGETHER:

We read the words that Jesus shared with us to love our neighbor in the "Summary of the Law" wooden plaque. We contemplate responding to God's great gift of love by loving others during the Christmas season. Jesus loves everyone in the world and wants us to treat our neighbors with love and kindness. We can love others by serving, donating money, lending a helping hand, being kind, and praying for them.

AT DINNER

HERE ARE SOME DISCUSSION STARTERS:

- Who is someone you can pray for this week?
- What's one way you can show kindness this week?
- It's almost time for Christmas. What's something you learned from doing Advent Conspiracy plan?

BEFORE BED

GO OVER THE MEMORY VERSE FROM THIS WEEK'S LESSON:

Jesus replied: "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.' This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' - Matthew 22:37-39

HANGING OUT

MAKE IT PERSONAL:

Reflect on the past month of celebrating Advent. What has your family learned? What are some of the things you want to do again next year?

IN THE MORNING

PRAY TOGETHER:

Dear Jesus,

You love all the people in the world, including me. Help me to love others just like you. I want to serve and love people in my neighborhood and around the world. Amen.



RELATIONAL GIFT IDEAS

Looking for ideas on how to “Give More” relationally this Christmas? Here are some gift ideas to help you get started.

Spend Time Together

- Host a dinner party.
- Create together. Do a puzzle, bake cookies. Build a fort. Write a song. Make jewelry. Garden. Take photos.
- Be present. Make it a habit to have one technology-free night. Turn off the distractions and spend quality time together.
- Do an activity. Go for a hike and look at creation. Go see a concert or play.

Purchase with a Purpose

- Research Fair Trade companies and purchase Fair Trade certified goods.
- Shop local. Buy from local boutiques and artisans.
- Donate to the Giving Tree. Honor someone with a gift made in their name to Children's Fresh Air Farm, First Light, Habitat for Humanity, IPC Food Pantry/Social Services, Mwandi Mission, Presbyterian Disaster Assistance or STAIR.
- Give to the IPC Day School HERO Scholarship Program.

Serve Someone

- Make a helping-hands coupon book. Give your family vouchers to babysit. Help with yardwork. Do the dishes, Fold laundry. Clean the kitchen. Walk the dog.
- Take someone out to lunch after a church service and get to know their story.
- Volunteer at church as a family or small group. Serve a dinner at First Light. Help in the IPC Food Pantry.
- Bake cookies and make a thank you card for someone who regularly serves your community, like police officers, first responders, post office workers, doctors and nurses.
- Pay for a date night or babysit for a couple with young kids.

Celebrate Memories

- Skip the traditional Christmas presents and instead plan a family vacation.
- Try something new, like cooking classes, music lessons, rock climbing, or painting.
- Make a list of local restaurants, parks, and activities you want to explore. Grab a friend and see how many you can experience together in the next year.
- Put together a cookbook of your favorite recipes that you can share with everyone in your family.
- Make a scrapbook or photo album for your grandparents.
- Put together a family night basket. Wrap up some popcorn, candy, gift cards, and board games

Share Your Talents

- Celebrate the talents that God has given *you* and share those with others.

ADVENT READING LIST

- DAY 1** - John 1:1-5
- DAY 2** - Jeremiah 33:14-16
- DAY 3** - Luke 1:5-10
- DAY 4** - Luke 1:11-17
- DAY 5** - Luke 1:18-25
- DAY 6** - Luke 1:26-38
- DAY 7** - Matthew 1:18-21
- DAY 8** - Matthew 1:22-25
- DAY 9** - Isaiah 7:14
- DAY 10** - Luke 1:39-45
- DAY 11** - Luke 1:46-56
- DAY 12** - Luke 1:68-79
- DAY 13** - Luke 2:1-5
- DAY 14** - Luke 2:6-7
- DAY 15** - Luke 2:8-12
- DAY 16** - Luke 2:13-14
- DAY 17** - Luke 2:15-18
- DAY 18** - Luke 2:19-20
- DAY 19** - Matthew 2:1-2
- DAY 20** - Matthew 2:3-6
- DAY 21** - Matthew 2:7-8
- DAY 22** - Matthew 2:9-12
- DAY 23** - Galatians 4:4-7
- DAY 24** - Isaiah 9:6-7
- DAY 25** - John 1:14



**ADVENT
CONSPIRACY**

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INDEPENDENT
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH



MAKING CHRISTMAS MEANINGFUL (AGAIN)

