





O
Emmanuel

Matthew 1:23







Welcome!

Welcome to *Families Celebrate Advent & Christmas!* This deck of cards is full of rituals, prayers, reflections, and activities your family can use to celebrate the Advent and Christmas seasons. Begin using the cards on November 29, 2020, the first Sunday of Advent. The cards follow the church year and help you celebrate all the way through the Day of Epiphany on January 6, 2021.

Using These Cards

- Most cards are dated for a specific day on the calendar.
- Four cards present prayers to accompany lighting the Advent wreath, one for each week of Advent.
- Keep cards handy in a basket/bowl.
- Tuck favorite cards in a backpack or coat pocket.
- Punch a hole at the top and hang with ribbon, yarn, or paper clips.
- Shuffle the cards, then put them back in church year order.
- Find all the cards with candles, animals, children, the color blue . . .

Family Time Suggestions

- Gather around the Advent wreath, Christmas tree, or dinner table.
- Light candles and say the prayer from the weekly card.
- Look at the picture.
- Read the card text aloud.
- Talk about the question or try the activity.
- Look up Bible verses.
- Sing a favorite Advent song or Christmas carol.
- Skip cards when you need to—no guilt!

ELW

ELW = *Evangelical Lutheran Worship*, the worship resource commended for use in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. Some prayers and hymn texts from this book are quoted and referenced in these cards. *Evangelical Lutheran Worship* is a wonderful resource to have at home for family prayers, singing, and rituals. If your family doesn't own a copy, ask to borrow one from your church. Or order one for your home at augzburgfortress.org/elw or 800-328-4648.

Our Advent Wreath

Make a simple Advent wreath using four candles (votives or tapers in sturdy holders) and greenery from outdoors. You might decorate the wreath with ribbons, dried flowers, or fruit. The four candles mark the progress of the four weeks of Advent.

The evergreen branches lead the household to the evergreen Christmas tree. Gather around the wreath each day to read one of these cards.