

5 ways to celebrate the Reason for the Season through service to others!

Help others focus on faith and resist societal distractions and expectations this Advent and Christmas. Bring together youth, adults, and families in your church to have fun and fellowship sharing the Bible story and meaning of Jesus' birth. Here are five easy ways to make it happen.



1 Host a bingo event for elders

Spread good cheer by getting Sunday school kids, confirmation youth, and adults together to host an afternoon or evening bingo game with elder residents at a local nursing home or senior residence. Use a standard bingo set, create your own using a free online bingo card generator, or use the free downloadable Spark Sunday School Bingo. Use star-shaped foam pieces, small wrapped candy, or stickers as markers.

At the end of each round, pause to share part of the Christmas story from a Story Bible or invite participants to answer questions about their favorite Christmas memories and rituals.

2 Create craft kits for sick kids

Invite all ages to assemble simple, "mini" Christmas craft kits during your fellowship hour or mid-week meal time. Provide crafting supplies, instructions, zip-lock bags, and tools to assemble kits for kids in local hospitals or care facilities.

Kits could include beads and chenille stems for patients and visitors to create simple ornaments to display in their rooms. Provide blank note cards, crayons, and stickers to create Christmas cards. Tuck a strip of paper with a pre-printed Bible verse or prayer inside letting the recipient know they are being thought of and prayed for by your church family.

3 Bring groups together for a make and take (or donate) event

Invite adult small groups to gather together and to create something connected to the Christmas season. Tie blankets or scarves made of fleece or gift bundles of socks and gloves to share warmth. Take finished items to an individual in need or donate to support adults at local homeless shelters. Include time for the larger group to share a short devotion, read scripture, pray, or sing.

4 Form a shoveling caroling club

Get your youth group and adults working together with a shoveling club that hits the streets after a snowstorm to dig out neighbors and those that may not be able to shovel themselves out. Sing familiar Christmas carols or bring a mini-speaker and play Christmas music while you shovel to add to the fun and spread joy beyond your church walls.

5 Inspire others through random acts of kindness

Challenge your congregation to celebrate the 12 days of Christmas by sharing 12 acts of random kindness in your community. Post your acts via social media (tag #SparkhouseReason to join the conversation!) or a bulletin board at church.

Write a note to a neighbor, pay it forward at the drive through, open the door and greet shoppers at a local store, give Christmas hugs at the bus stop; the options are endless. Help others recognize that Christmas is more than one day on the calendar and we have good news to share!

Get additional free resources for Advent and Christmas at www.wearesparkhouse.org/resources

Cut these message strips apart to include in your service gifts or for participants to hand out to others to remind them of the Bible story and what inspires us to share the joy and peace of the Advent and Christmas seasons.



Let the heavens rejoice, and let the earth be glad; let the sea thunder and all that is in it; let the field be joyful and all that is therein.

PSALM 96



God the Creator who *delights* in you,
Jesus the Savior who is *born* for you,
and the lifegiving Spirit who *shines* on you,
bless you and keep you in *hope and peace*.
Amen.



And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying, "*Glory to God* in the highest heaven, and on earth *peace* among those whom he favors!"

LUKE 2:13-14



God's greatest gift came to us as a baby in a manger.

Happy Birthday, Jesus!



Glory to God in the highest.
And peace to all people on earth.



I am bringing you *good news of great joy* for all the people: to you is born this day in the city of David a *Savior*, who is the Messiah, the Lord.

LUKE 2:10-11

