

Object Lessons

1

First Sunday in Advent

1 Corinthians 1:3–9 (Epistle)

Waiting

Object: A wrapped gift box with removable lid. (Save to reuse with Lesson 5.)

Good morning! Today is the First Sunday in Advent. This is a new season of our Church Year. Does anybody know what the word *Advent* means? Wait for a few responses. The word *Advent* means the arrival of something. Something has come! It's the time of year when we think about the arrival of Jesus to the world!

Pull out the present. What do I have here? That's right, I have a present! But is it Christmas yet? No, it's not Christmas! Christmas is still weeks away. Are you excited about Christmas? What sorts of things are you most excited about? Wait for answers. Of course, the kids will talk about presents, but encourage them to talk about other things as well.

Is waiting for a present hard to do? Yeah, it's hard to wait to find out what you're going to get. Like in this present. You don't know what's in it! And guess what? Today, you won't learn what's in it!

This is to remind you of the season of Advent—a time of waiting. Paul in the Epistle today talks about waiting for the revealing of our Lord Jesus Christ.

In the Bible, God's people had to wait and wait and wait for hundreds and even thousands of years for the coming of Jesus. Can you imagine having to wait hundreds or even thousands of years to figure out what was in a Christmas present? Wouldn't that be hard? But after all that waiting, Jesus finally came to earth. He arrived! He was revealed! He

came to us to forgive us our sins and make us God's people too!

In Advent, we'll take a few weeks in church to remember how God's people waited and waited for God to fulfill His promise to send Jesus to the world! We'll remember how God was faithful to His promise to love and forgive us.

And we'll also think about how we're waiting too! Not just waiting for our Christmas presents. No, we'll think about how we're waiting for Jesus to come again to make all things new, to restore all things.

Do we know when Jesus will come back to make all things new? No! But when He does, it will be like opening the greatest present of all. Let's pray.

Prayer

Heavenly Father, thank You for giving us the gift of Jesus. Thank You for sending Him long ago to die on the cross to forgive our sins. Thank You for promising to send Him again to make all things new. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

2

Second Sunday in Advent

Mark 1:1–8 (Gospel)

Messenger

Object: A handheld bell

Good morning! What object do I have here? Hold up the bell and ring it a few times. **When would somebody use a bell?** Take a moment to wait for the kids' responses. Examples include ringing the bell to begin the school day, ringing the bell for lunch, and ringing the bell to get everyone's attention.

Well, a long time ago before television and radio and the Internet and even before a lot of people could read, it was hard for people to get news. People wouldn't know when a king or another important person was coming to town. Could you imagine not knowing what was going on in the world?

So, when important people were about to come to town, the king would send out messengers. In stories, we read these messengers, or heralds, would ring a bell and cry out, "Hear ye, hear ye!" Can you do this with me? Ring the bell and chant this cry a few times together with the kids.

That way, a town would know the king or an important person was coming! There would be no time to waste! Everybody in town would know because the messenger was loud and clear. People would have to prepare the town, clean up, and get ready for this important event!

In today's Gospel, we see John the Baptist. John the Baptist was a messenger too. He didn't have a bell, but still he cried out that the King was coming. He walked around crying out "Prepare the way of the Lord." Can you do this with me? Take a moment and practice this cry a few times with your kids.

John cried out to let the whole world know that the true King of kings was coming. It was Jesus! John said to prepare their hearts for the coming of the Lord! To repent and receive forgiveness. To be baptized and confess their sins.

Why? Because the King is special and amazing. Because we need His forgiveness and we need His grace. And guess what? The King, Jesus Christ, did come, and has forgiven us our sins and made us God's people.

In Advent, we remember John the Baptist and his message of repentance and forgiveness, and we prepare our hearts as well. We confess our sins and receive forgiveness. Then we rejoice that our King, Jesus, has come for us to make us His people, and He's coming again to make all things new. Let's pray.

Prayer

Heavenly Father, thank You for sending Jesus to be our King. Prepare our hearts to always rejoice that Jesus has forgiven us and made us Your own. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

Third Sunday in Advent

John 1:6–8, 19–28 (Gospel)

The Light Shines through You**Objects:** A flashlight and a piece of thin paper

Good morning! Today, I'm going to shine a light! Are you ready? This will really be amazing! Here we go! Hold up the piece of paper. **Voilà! Here you go! Do you see the amazing light?** Take time to have the kids answer.

You mean, this piece of paper isn't a light? Why isn't this piece of paper a light? Wait for responses. **Well, I can show you a way that this piece of paper can shine light. You want to see? Here we go.** Pull out the flashlight. Hold up the piece of paper in front of you, then hold the flashlight closely behind it. Turn on the flashlight so that the full beam shines on the page. The light should show clearly through the paper.

There you go! The paper is now shining some light! Why is it? Wait for responses. **That's right! The paper shines because there's a flashlight shining behind it. It doesn't make the light. It's a piece of paper. But the light shining on it shines through it.**

In the Bible today, we read about John the Baptist. John came and did a lot of great things before Jesus. Remember, Advent is a time when we look forward to the arrival of Jesus! John the Baptist did great things, but we read in the Bible that he wasn't considered an important person to many people.

Hold the piece of paper up again. **John reminds me of this piece of paper. He was a sinner, just as you and I are sinners. But God shined the light of His Word through John.**

Turn on the flashlight and shine it through the paper again.

God chose to make John His special messenger. And because God chose to use him, John could shine the light of God's Word to others and help prepare the world for Jesus.

In Jesus, God has chosen you too. Hold up the piece of paper again. **We are sinners and do bad things. But because Jesus has chosen to love and forgive you, His light shines in you too.**

Turn on the flashlight and shine it behind the paper.

The Holy Spirit lives in you. You're God's chosen, forgiven, and loved child through Christ. And on top of that, God uses you to share His Word in His world. So, share the hope of God's Word in His world! Let's pray.

Prayer

Heavenly Father, You sent John to prepare the world for the coming of Jesus. Thank You for John and using him to shine Your Word to the world. Thank You for choosing us too. Use us to shine the light of Your Word to the world too. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

Fourth Sunday in Advent

Luke 1:26–38 (Gospel)

Just Imagine!

Object: None

Good morning. Today, we have a story from the Bible that I'm going to need your help in telling. Will you help me tell it?

Okay, so in this story you're going to pretend to be Mary. Even the boys can act this out. One day, 2,000 years ago, the young woman Mary was going about her daily business. What sorts of things do you do every day at home? Wait for some responses.

Good, now everybody needs to just stand up and quietly pretend to be doing those things. Give a moment for everyone to act out these activities.

Stay seated where you are. Then ask students to sit and close their eyes. While they do, stand up very tall in front of them.

Now open your eyes. All of a sudden, an angel appeared!

The angel of the Lord had a message for Mary. She was highly favored by God! God would use her for something really special! She was going to have a baby! Everybody, from where you are on the ground, look up and pretend you're holding a baby. Mimic this motion for them. Keep pretending you're rocking a baby.

Now, this wasn't going to be just any baby. This would be Jesus, the Savior of the world, who would save us from our sins. Everybody make a cross with your fingers.

Mimic how to make a cross shape with the index fingers of your hands. **This baby would grow up to forgive you and me and die on a cross for us. But He wouldn't stay dead. He'd come back to life to be the King of all creation, just as the angel said.**

Let's pretend we have crowns. Hold up both hands above your head and model for the kids how to pretend to wear a crown. **This baby would grow up to be our King. Jesus is our Forever King. Then, after saying all of this, the angel left. Everybody close your eyes again.** When they close their eyes, sit back down where you were before.

Now, open your eyes.

What a great story! Thanks for helping me act it out. How wonderful it is that God gave this news to Mary so long ago. In Advent, we think about the people who heard God's promises and had to wait. Today, we don't have to wait! God's promises to Mary came true, and now we're God's forgiven people through Jesus. Please pray with me.

Prayer

Heavenly Father, thank You for choosing Mary to bring Your Son, Jesus, into the world. Thank You for keeping Your promises to her that her child would become our King. Thank You for the forgiveness that He gives to us today. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.