

December 18, 2022

GOD WITH US

Nurturing Faith and Spirituality at Home

The Season of Advent invites us into wild possibilities of tiny buds of hope. Together and apart, we consider how these buds grow in and through our everyday living.



The prophet Isaiah leads us into the Season of Advent, offering visions of a world of peace and harmony and a child leading the way forward. We join Mary in her song of justice and joy, hear the promise of a child from Joseph's point of view and take courage from Joseph's example of faithful living in troubled times.

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This week, Mathew shares the good news that Joseph will become a father of a child he is to name Emmanuel, God is with us, and we become more aware of how God is with us in our everyday lives.

Ordinary Extraordinary Emmanuel

Read [Matthew 1:18–25](#) or **listen** to the audio story “[A Baby Is Born](#)” or **gather** around as someone tells the story “[Joseph’s Dream](#)” in this week’s Exploring Our Faith.

Through God working with two ordinary people, Mary and Joseph, who struggled with life and emotions, Jesus was born and shows God with us. We have spent this whole season noticing the ordinary wonders that God is already at work in the world. As Advent closes and Christmas comes, reflect on the wonders you’ve seen this week. You might not remember them all at once but put a piece of paper on the fridge so that everyone in your family can add the wonders they’ve found as they’re remembered.

Watch and sing along with [Hey Mary](#). Add your name to the lyrics to remember that nothing is ordinary when God is here.

- **What feels most extraordinary right now?**

Role Play, Craft, Make

Role play through the thoughts and feelings of the story. Choose one or more of these scenarios: Mary and Joseph sharing with Joseph’s family about their journey to Bethlehem, visitors arriving to greet Jesus, and the children coming to visit and talking with Mary and Joseph and Jesus.

Craft stick tree ornament

Make a [nativity](#) tree ornament. Write across the top of the nativity “God with Us” and hang it on your tree.

Craft a [dream catcher](#) to remember all of your dreams and cherish the angels that might appear in your sleep.

Make a [Good News Bell](#) on this week’s activity sheet.



During the Week

Have a family movie night

Watch the good news of Jesus' birth unfold while cuddled up together on the couch with a big bowl of popcorn. *The Star* (2017) is a great streaming option. You might choose to continue the conversation on emotions by paying special attention to how Joseph and Mary react to the angel's news.

Be an angel and bring good news

Share in one act of kindness as a family to bring good news to someone who might not be finding the joy of Christmas this year. You might deliver cookies, carol, or invite someone over for Christmas dinner. Or you might find [more ideas here](#). Or choose to have each person in your family choose their own action to bring many angel blessings to your community.

Prayer

Come to us, O Emmanuel,
to show us again how
the ordinary becomes extraordinary
in the birth of your love. Amen.

Listen to the song "He Is Born// *Il Est Na*" (MP3 available [here](#) for purchase and download).
Visit [Lection Connection](#) for current events that connect with this week's scriptures.

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