

## FAMILY ADVENT AT HOME: WEEK 4: AWAY IN THE MANGER

December 20, 2025

The four weeks before Christmas are a special time for God's people and your family to come together in anticipation of Christ's birth. This time is called Advent.

[Click here](#) for complete instructions on the Advent candles. Three of the candles can be purple, the traditional color of Advent. In the third week, the pink candle represented joy, and in the fourth week, a purple candle represents love.

Light the fourth Advent candle, love. You will also light the previous weeks' hope, peace, and joy candles.



Ask someone to say, "This is the fourth week of Advent. We first light the candle of hope, peace, and joy from previous weeks. Today, we light the candle of love."

### Dig Deeper

- Talk about the devotion [Advent at Home: Away in a Manger](#). You can use the prayer at the end of the devotion or your own prayer.
- To learn more about what love means in the Bible, you can select readings from [Proverbs 10:12](#), [John 3:16](#), [John 13:34-35](#), [1 Corinthians 13:1-13](#), and [1 John 4:7-21](#).
- Ask this self-reflection question: **"In Jesus' ministry, he showed love and compassion for people using words and actions. In what ways can we show our love to our family, friends, neighbors, and community?"** Allow space for kids to share. Maybe list their answers on a piece of paper. You can decide as a family if the lists can be shared or kept private. Ensure that everyone knows they can talk to you anytime, anyplace, about things that worry them. If you wrote a list, write, "Jesus is love!" Or "Love" in capital letters over the entire list. Then ask, **"Prayer is one way to show our love. Who can we pray for? What's happening that we need to pray about?"** After sharing, spend some time together in prayer.
- Listen to (or sing!) a family-favorite Christmas carol about love, like "Away in a Manger," or find an Advent/Christmas playlist. You might play more songs as you discuss the optional family activity.
- Check out *Kids Corner's* audio Bible story, [The Birth of Jesus](#).

### Optional Family Activity: Show Love and Comfort with Christmas Cards.

One of the most heartwarming traditions during the Christmas season is sending cards filled with love and cheer to friends, family, and those we pray for. This year, turn Christmas card writing into a meaningful family activity, encouraging creativity, kindness, and connection.

#### How It Works:

##### 1. Set Up a Festive Workspace

Gather your family around the dining table or a cozy spot in your home. Fill the area with holiday music, hot cocoa, and a few Christmas decorations to make the activity feel special.

##### 2. Choose or Make Cards

Pick a set of holiday cards, or get crafty and make your own! Provide children with colorful paper,

markers, stickers, stamps, and glitter so they can personalize their creations.

### 3. **Encourage Thoughtful Messages**

Teach children the power of kind words by helping them write encouraging notes on each card. Some ideas include:

- Sharing what they appreciate about the recipient.
- Writing a cheerful holiday wish like, *"May your Christmas be filled with joy and God's love!"*
- Adding an uplifting thought, such as, *"You make the world brighter just by being you!"*

### 4. **Include Personal Touches**

- Encourage kids to draw small holiday-themed doodles (like snowflakes, stars, or Christmas trees) or include a short poem or joke to spread extra smiles.
- Add a colored picture from [Bible Story Coloring Packet 3: God Sends a Savior](#). Pictures include "Mary and the Angel," "Mary and Elizabeth," "The Journey to Bethlehem," and "The Birth of Jesus."

### 5. **Spread the Cheer Widely**

- Write cards for family and friends, but also think about those needing holiday cheer. Consider sending cards to:
  - Neighbors
  - Older Adults
  - Church community members
  - Missionaries and Aid Workers Abroad
  - Teachers or coaches
  - Nursing home residents
  - Veterans, military members, or first responders
  - Local refugees or immigrants
  - Community helpers like mail carriers, sanitation workers, or animal shelter workers.

### 6. **Deliver the Cards Together**

Plan a special outing to hand-deliver some cards to neighbors or local community members. For those farther away, make a trip to the mailbox together.

This activity strengthens family bonds and teaches children the impact of thoughtful words. It's a simple way to bring smiles to others and foster gratitude, empathy, and creativity in young hearts.

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