



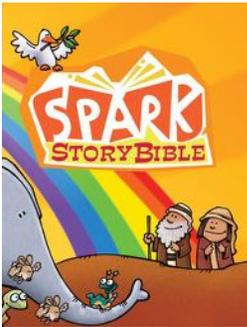
# ***Jesus is Coming!***

***Simple Family Activities  
for Advent and Christmas***

**2019**

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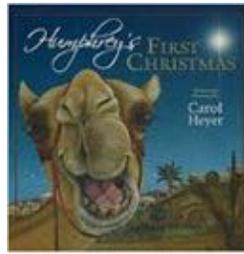
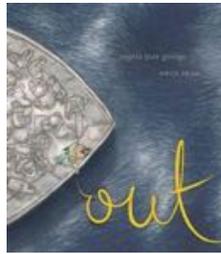
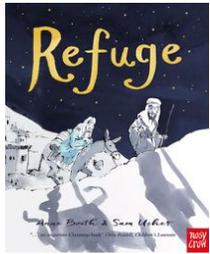
***bible stories, picture books, family  
movies, and wonder-filled conversations***



For younger children hearing bible stories read directly from scripture can be a challenge. Hearing these same stories retold from a good children's bible storybook can help the stories come alive and become memorable. For families with children you will find in this booklet both scripture references as well as bible storybook references for you to choose from.

This booklet makes use of the *Spark Story Bible* published by Sparkhouse. Many of our churches use the *Spark Story Bible* in their Sunday Schools and also encourage their families to use the same story bible at home. It is a colourful and engaging book that seeks to make the stories come alive for young children. Your church may have a copy of this book in the library, extra copies to loan out from the Sunday School or you can purchase your own copy from Amazon, Chapters/Indigo or Parasource

## Children's Books for the Flight to Egypt, John 1, and the Visit of the Wise Men



*Refuge*, by Anne Booth (Little, Brown and Co., 2015)

*Out*, by Angela May George (Scholastic Canada, 2016)

*Humphrey's First Christmas*, by Carol Heyer (Worthy Kids, 2012)

**A Movie to Watch Together - *The Chronicles of Narnia: The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* (2005)**

## Simple Ways Of Waiting for Christmas

Advent is a time for waiting!

And, it's incredibly hard to wait for wonderful and exciting things to happen.

And, waiting for a baby to be born has to be one of the hardest things of all.

But, just like Mary and Joseph, we too have to wait for Jesus to be born on Christmas Day.

But, just like Joseph and Mary, we can spend some of this time doing extra special things to help us get ready for that very special day.

As families there is a lot to do during the season of Advent. There is Christmas shopping and baking to do. There are meals to plan and visits to make. There may even be school projects and church pageants that need to happen before Christmas Day arrives. You already have a lot to do as a family while you wait.

This little booklet isn't designed to make your family even busier and more overwhelmed during Advent. Instead, it has been designed to point to some easy and gentle ways for your family spend some quality time together while enjoying marvellous stories and poignant movies that highlight the major texts and themes of Advent.

So, pop some popcorn, stir up some hot chocolate and settle down with these cozy opportunities to be together as you wait for the most special of all births to happen.

Jesus is coming!

Enjoy the wait!

## Advent 1 - HOPE December 1 - 7, 2019

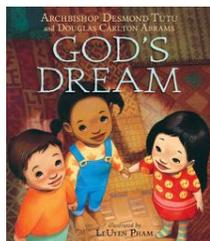
Each week there is a bible text to read together as a family along with a child's version of the story from the *Spark Story Bible*. If your church follows the lectionary, you will hear each of these stories read in worship, and if your church uses the 'Spark Lectionary' curriculum you will hear these stories in Sunday School too. Repeating them again at home helps us remember each of the weekly themes that shape our waiting. Add a children's book or two along with a family movie and you have the opportunity for some great family conversations.

This week the prophet Isaiah brings a message of hope more than 500 years before the birth of Jesus. God promises them peace during a time of war; great hope for a day yet to come.

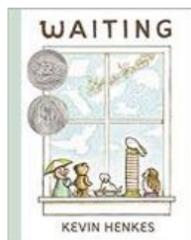
**Scripture Reading** - Isaiah 2:1-5

**Spark Bible Story** - 'God Will Bring Peace', pg. 164

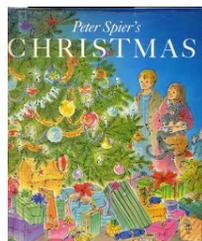
### Children's Books on Hope



*God's Dream*, by Bishop Desmond Tutu (Candlewick Press, 2008)



*Waiting*, by Kevin Henkes (Greenwillow Books, 2015)



*Peter Spier's Christmas*, by Peter Spier (Bantam Doubleday Dell, 1983)

**A Movie to Watch** - *The Muppet Christmas Carol* (1992)

## The Season of Christmas and Epiphany December 29, 2019 - January 4, 2019, January 5 and January 6, 2020

Christmas Day is not the end of the Christmas season.

No, Christmas actually lasts 12 days and ends with Epiphany on January 6. Remember the song The Twelve Days of Christmas? The 12 days of celebration and gifts actually start on Christmas Day and conclude with Epiphany. In the middle of these days we will hear about the Holy Family's flight to Egypt and read John's different telling of Jesus coming to the world.

Epiphany is the day we celebrate the arrival of the wise men who came from the East to worship and bring special gifts to Jesus.

So, keep enjoying the readings, stories, books and a movie during this season of Christmas.

**Scripture Reading for the Week of December 29** -  
Matthew 2: 13-23

**Scripture Reading for January 5** - John 1:1-9

**Scripture Reading for January 6 (Epiphany)** -  
Matthew 2:1-12

**Spark Bible Story for the Week of December 29** -  
'Escape to Egypt', pg. 224

**Spark Bible Story for January 5** - 'Jesus the Word',  
pg. 240

**Spark Bible Story for January 6 (Epiphany)** - 'Wise  
Men', pg. 218

(turn the page for the books and movie for these dates)

## Christmas Eve and Christmas Day December 24, and December 25, 2019

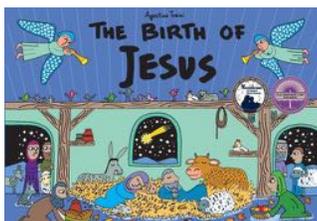
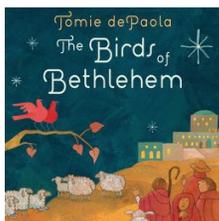
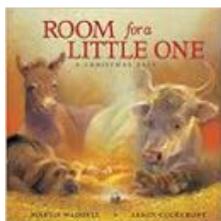
In the midst of all of the activity of Christmas Eve and Christmas Day take time to remember that this is the moment we have been waiting for; the birth of Jesus, come as the light of the world. Take a moment to read the biblical story, and/or read the *Spark Story Bible* together. Pick a book to curl up with together on the couch and enjoy the movie one night this week.

Happy Christmas!

**Scripture Reading** - Luke 2:1-20

**Spark Bible Story** - 'Jesus is Born', pg. 212

### Children's Books on the Nativity



*Room for Little One: A Christmas Tale*, by Martin Waddell (Little Simon Inspirations, 2004)

*The Birds of Bethlehem*, by Tomie dePaola (Nancy Paulsen Books, 2012)

*The Birth of Jesus*, by Agostino Traini (Spark House Family, 2016)

**A Movie to Watch Together** - *A Charlie Brown Christmas* (1965)

## Advent Two - PEACE December 8 - 14, 2019

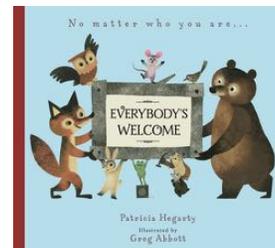
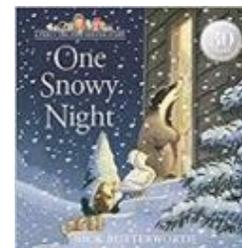
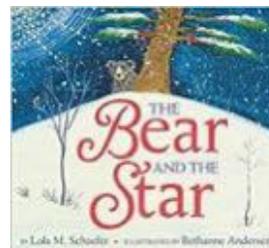
The second week of Advent brings a wonderful vision of the peaceable kingdom, where the wolf lives with the lamb and a little child leads the people of God with wisdom and equity. Isaiah says that this promised child shall come from the family tree of Jesse, the father of King David. Listen carefully for David's name to show up again very soon.

Our books talk about animals who don't always get along. Yet, in these stories they do. What does a peaceable kingdom mean to you? How might you become a leader of peace at school, work and in your neighbourhood?

**Scripture Reading** - Isaiah 11:1-10

**Spark Story Bible** - 'God's Peaceful World', pg. 172

### Children's Books on Peace



*The Bear and the Star*, by Lola M. Schaefer (Greenwillow Books, 2019)

*One Snowy Night*, by Nick Butterworth (HarperCollins Children's Books, 2011)

No Matter Who You Are...Everybody's Welcome, by Patricia Hegarty (Caterpillar Books, 2017)

**A Movie to Watch** - *The Star: The Story of the First Christmas* (2017)

**Advent Three - JOY  
December 15 - 21, 2019**

In the midst of our waiting we have a week of joy.

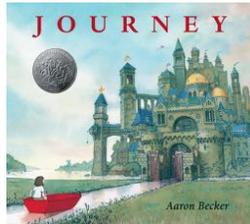
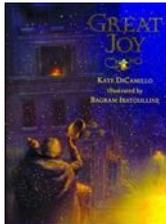
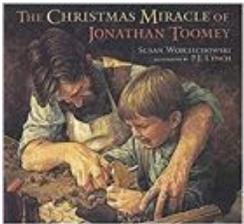
In our bible story we find John the Baptist, a cousin of Jesus', asking if Jesus is the one Isaiah promised. After answering, Jesus turns and tells the crowd that John is more than a prophet; he is a very special messenger sent by God to prepare the people for Jesus's coming. John lived differently than most people, but his message was one of joy for everyone.

Our books and our movie introduce us to some people who also lived differently. Two were very sad, and one very poor, and the Grinch didn't want anyone to have joy. Yet, each learned through others that God wants us to live with great joy. Jesus brings joy; joy to celebrate and joy to be share with others.

**Scripture Reading** - Matthew 11:2-10

**Spark Story Bible** - 'John the Baptist', pg. 234

**Children's Books on Joy**



*The Christmas Miracle of Jonathon Toomey*, by Susan Wojciechowski (Candlewick Press, 1995)

*Great Joy*, by Kate DiCamillo (Candlewick Press, 2007)

*Journey*, by Aaron Becker (Candlewick Press, 2013)

**A Movie to Watch** - How The Grinch Stole Christmas (1966, or 2000)

**Advent Four - LOVE  
December 22 - 23, 2019**

Our waiting is almost over.

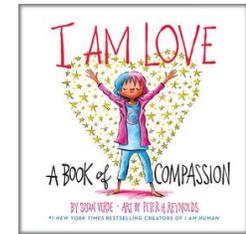
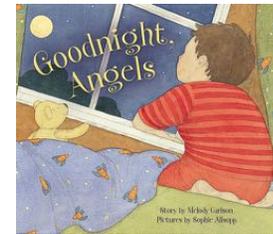
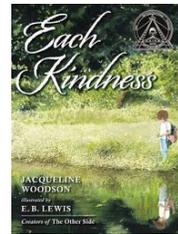
Has it been hard to wait?

This week our theme is love. In our story we meet Joseph and Mary. Mary has told Joseph that she is going to have a baby, and the baby is to be the son of God. Joseph loves Mary, but is very confused and worried. As Joseph wonders what he should do, an angel visits him and tells him to keep loving Mary and to care of her and this very special baby. The angel says Jesus is God's son and that he is coming into the world as the greatest gift of love there is.

**Scripture Reading** - Matthew 1:18-25

**Spark Story Bible** - 'Angels Visit', pg. 196

**Children's Books on Love**



*Each Kindness*, by Jacqueline Woodson (Nancy Paulson Books, 2012)

*Goodnight Angels*, by Melody Carlson (Zonderkidz, 2011)

*I Am Love*, by Susan Verde (Abrams Books, 2019)

**A Movie to Watch** - Angela's Christmas (2017)