

# R.E. NEWSLETTER FOR PARENTS

God Matters

During December your child(ren) will be studying ADVENT in Religious Education:

## RECEPTION

The children will be introduced to the idea of special days and seasons in the churches' year i.e. Sunday and the season of Advent. They will look at why Sunday is a special day and the four special Sunday's during Advent. They will develop an understanding that Advent is a time of preparation and when we prepare for the birth of Jesus. They will look at how they can prepare in terms of prayer and actions. They will also focus on making the sign of the cross.

### Help at Home

- **Make a family advent wreath and follow the weeks through saying a prayer at the start of each new week. Discuss the use of the colour purple as a sign in the church of getting ready and make links with the colour vestments the priest wears.**
- **Practise making the sign of the cross.**

## Year 1

Children will develop further understanding of the season of Advent. They will be looking at getting ready for the Birth of Jesus through the eyes of Mary and Joseph. The main focus will be looking at their responses to God and the qualities they demonstrated by responding to him in the way they did. Year 1 will particularly be focusing on the joy of the Advent season.

### Help at Home

- **Have an advent wreath and focus upon the symbols of the wreath i.e. the shape of a circle signifying God's love has no beginning and no end, the purple candles linked with the colour used in Advent and the vestments, and explore the pink candle for the third week.**
- **Suggest ideas how, as Christians, we might prepare for the birth of Jesus. Write the ideas, or promises, onto pieces of card and read one out each day at the time of opening a window on the Advent calendar. The number of ideas is not important: it can be five (which are regularly repeated), or twenty-four (a promise for each day we count down to Jesus' birth).**

## Year 3

This unit deepens the children's understanding of the season of Advent. The story of the Annunciation details the response of Mary to the news that she is to be the mother of Jesus. We will focus on Mary's acceptance and explore what we are required to do in order to prepare for the presence of Jesus.

### Help at Home:

- Read the story of the Annunciation, discuss the qualities of Mary and why God chose her to have such a special job.
- Discuss the way we prepare ourselves to welcome Jesus' presence.
- Revisit the Advent wreath and the idea that Advent is the time of preparation.

## Year 2

- This unit looks at the main themes and messages linked to Advent. The children will learn about some of the symbols and customs used to prepare during Advent and will focus on how Christians get ready for Jesus' coming.

### Help at Home.

- **Revisit the Advent Wreath and its meaning. Make an Advent Wreath to use at prayer times.**
- **Discuss ways we prepare ourselves to welcome Jesus at Christmas by being kind to others during Advent.**

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## Year 4

This unit is designed to deepen the children's understanding of what God promised when he promised to send his son. The ancestry of Jesus will be explored to enable a deeper understanding of the nature of the Messiah; this will link the work to what we celebrate and prepare for in Advent. Titles such as 'Messiah' and 'Emmanuel' will provide insight into the nature of Jesus, as well as the role of the prophets, who help us prepare for the presence of Jesus.

### Help at Home

Look at the symbols on a Jesse Tree.

Understand how people are prophets today and help within their own community.

## Year 5

The children will begin this unit by examining how we can personally prepare ourselves during the season of Advent. They will explore in depth the character of John the Baptist, his ministry and how it is linked to Advent as a time to make a change in our lives. They will also consider whether Advent has lost its true meaning in the modern age.

### Help at Home

- When going to church during Advent look at the preparations the church makes and discuss how they are linked with what they know from scripture about Advent.
- Has Advent lost its true meaning? Discuss at home.

## Year 6

In this unit, children will focus on Advent as a season of preparation and penance. By exploring in depth the parables of 'The Bridesmaids' and 'The Sheep and Goats', the children will consider how to respond as a follower of Christ. These parables will provide for a deeper opportunity to explore the responses demanded of Christ's followers in today's world. This unit will also explore Advent as preparing for the second coming of Christ.

### Help at Home

- **Revisit the advent wreath and its meaning as well as the meaning of Advent and how as a people we celebrate and prepare during this season.**
- **Discuss why Jesus told parables and the impact they have on us. Ask which parables your child likes and why and how they impact on their life.**



