

Embrace Advent Calendar

Below are the activities for days 1, 3, 10, 17, 19 & 21. You may wish to look over them in advance (particularly the playdough recipes) to make sure you have all the materials required (although we tried to keep it simple!).

Whether you do every activity, or just pick a few, this calendar is intended to keep Christ at the center of your conversations and activities. By marking off the days on the calendar you're keeping little hands busy and helping little hearts anticipate the arrival of our Savior.



Advent Calendar

1

Start the cotton ball sheep calendar*

2

Bake a cake & sing Happy Birthday to Jesus

3

Complete the "Serving Others" page with your kids*

4

Select & purchase a household item for a teen "aging-out" of foster care from EmbraceTexas.org

5

Take flowers & a note to your school secretary

6

Snuggle up and read Luke 2:1-20

7

Clean out your toy box & donate a few things to those in need

8

Bake 2 batches of cookies: 1 to keep & 1 to share with a neighbor

9

Create a Christmas playlist & have a dance party

10

Complete the "Serving Your Family" activity*

11

Eat a red & green themed meal (think red & green veggies or holiday sprinkles on oatmeal)

12

Call or FaceTime your grand-parents

13

Have a cotton ball "snowball" fight

14

Pop & string popcorn & hang on an outside tree for the birds

15

Turn junk mail into snowflakes & hang them around the house

16

Choose a country and Google how they celebrate Christmas there

17

Complete "Serving Your Neighbors" activity*

18

Watch funny Christmas Caroling videos on YouTube

Mix up red & green play-doh using our recipe*

19

Mix up red & green play-doh using our recipe*

20

Try a new dinner recipe, & cook enough to take dinner to a friend or widow

21

Christmas Light Scavenger Hunt*

22

Make s'mores by fireplace or oven

23

Use Christmas mugs for all drinks all day

24

Hop in the car and go caroling to:
1. someone you miss
2. someone at work
3. someone you don't know

25

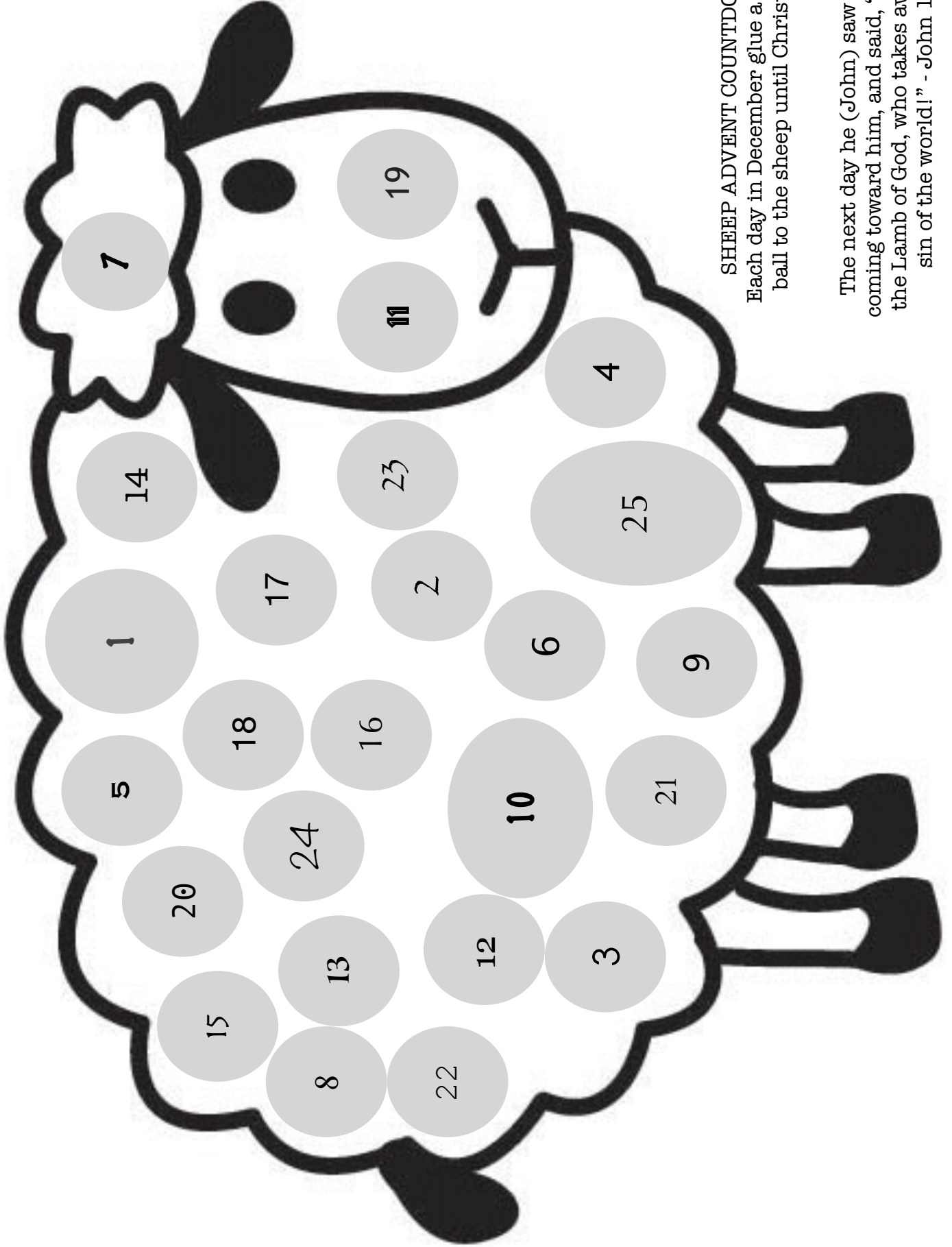
Merry Christmas!
Celebrate with family & friends!

* Start by downloading and printing the activity guide that contains additional directions for some activities.

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SHEEP ADVENT COUNTDOWN

Each day in December glue a cotton ball to the sheep until Christmas.

The next day he (John) saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, "Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!" - John 1:29

Serving Others

Read the Christmas story from a children's book or Bible. Play a guessing game with your children about the many people who were present for the Nativity. Ask your children to say or shout "I am" statements from characters surrounding the Christmas story. For example: "I am the one who told the shepherds about Christ's birth." The rest of the family guesses who the child is pretending to be.

We can describe ourselves in many ways: "I am a daughter"; "I am a sister"; "I am a student." Jesus described himself as "I am," too, but He didn't always add a title or other description afterward. Through this statement, He was describing himself as God. Jesus is God, and He needs no explanation or title. He simply is and therefore can say, "I am." Matthew 20 tells us that Jesus came to serve. Take some time this week to encourage your children (and self!) to serve others as Jesus served.

Ideas for serving siblings, or friends:

Cut up slips of paper and put ideas of how to serve others. Every day this week, draw out an idea to complete during the day. At suppertime, talk about how it went.

- * **Pray for him.**
- * Say something nice.
- * *Do one of her chores.*
- * Surprise him with a small gift.
- * *Let her go first.*
- * **Surprise him by cleaning up a mess he made.**
- * Give her the biggest piece of dessert- even when it's your favorite.
- * **Let him sit "shotgun".**
- * *Make his bed.*
- * Write a letter telling to a sibling why you love them.
- * Rub someone's shoulders or brush their hair.

Serving Your Family

1 Timothy 2:5-6

*For there is one God, and there is one **MEDIATOR** between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, who gave himself as a ransom for all, which is the testimony given at the proper time.*

Tell your family that if they want to talk to you, they must find someone else in the house to “connect” the two of you. The “connector” must hold your hand and a hand of the person who wants to talk with you. After playing this game awhile, explain that the person who serves as a connector is a “mediator.”

Jesus is the mediator between God and us. We were separated from God, who is holy, because of our sin. But Jesus reconciles, or connects, us with God. Because Jesus suffered and died for humankind’s sins, He has become the perfect mediator between us and God. Challenge your kids to find ways to serve you, and find joy in serving them as well!

Kids: Serve your Parents	Parents: Serve your Kids
Do something without being asked.	Read an extra bedtime story.
Be ready to leave for school or church early.	Offer to do the dishes if the kids normally do them.
Obeys without talking back.	Warm their pajamas in the dryer so they are extra comfy.
Write a letter or draw a picture to tell your parents you love them.	Give grace when a child doesn’t live up to your expectations.
Think of something nice you want someone to do for you, and do the same thing for your parents.	Serve a food that is your child’s favorite.
Pick up your toys.	Allow children to do a chore their way, as long as it gets done.
Go to bed without complaining.	Set your “to-do” list done and spend an hour playing.
Make breakfast.	Make hot cocoa and sit around and talk about the day.
Offer to do the dishes even when it's not your night.	Bring out photographs of your children and share a special story with each one.
Ask them how their day was and listen to the answer.	Watch your children’s favorite show with them, all the way through.
Wash your parents car OR clean out the inside of it.	Write letters to your children telling them why you love them.

Serving Neighbors

Isaiah 7:14

*Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign. Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name **IMMANUEL**.*

Jesus has a special name—Immanuel—which means “God with us.” When Jesus was born in Bethlehem, He was truly God in human flesh.

Today, we can't see God with our eyes or touch Him with our fingers but, during Jesus' earthly ministry, people really could see and touch Him. And because Jesus was human (while still being God), He completely understood what it was like to be human—to be tired, hungry, thirsty and tempted. This week, spend some time meeting the needs of others. Specifically, your neighbors! Below we've given some suggestions for ways to serve your neighbors:

- Invite them to a Christmas service at your church
- Organize a donation drive to help those in need (Embrace can help with ideas!)
- Write a letter or draw a picture for them
- Talk with older neighbors about Christmas memories when they were your age
- Host a bake sale and donate the proceeds to a family pursuing adoption
- Leave treat in the mailbox for the mailman
- Bring trashcans up from the curb
- Offer to feed the pets while they are out of town
- Sing Christmas carols at their door
- Shovel their sidewalk or driveway (or, if in Texas, rake leaves or mow their lawn!)
- Take baked goods or lunch to the Fire Department
- Write a holiday greeting or pictures in sidewalk chalk on their driveway
- Bring the bus driver hot chocolate or coffee

Playdough Recipes



Kool-Aid Playdough

2 c flour

1 c warm water

1/4 c salt

1 1/2 T vegetable oil

1 package Kool-Aid (flavor decides the color of your dough!)

Mix together until smooth

Peanut Butter Playdough

1 c peanut butter

1/2 c honey

2 c powdered sugar

Mix together until smooth

CHRISTMAS LIGHT

Scavenger Hunt

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Santa | <input type="checkbox"/> Toy Soldier |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Candy Cane | <input type="checkbox"/> Snowflake |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Wreath on a Door | <input type="checkbox"/> Reindeer on a Roof |
| <input type="checkbox"/> North Pole Sign | <input type="checkbox"/> Poinsettia |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Snowman | <input type="checkbox"/> Tree in Window |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Carolers | <input type="checkbox"/> Gingerbread Man |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Elf | <input type="checkbox"/> Dancing Lights |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Giant Present | <input type="checkbox"/> Snowglobe |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Angel | <input type="checkbox"/> Inflatable |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Peace Sign | <input type="checkbox"/> Grinch |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Rudolph | <input type="checkbox"/> House with Red Lights |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Spiral Tree | <input type="checkbox"/> Christmas Train |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Giant Ornaments | <input type="checkbox"/> Mrs. Claus |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Joy Sign | <input type="checkbox"/> Twinkling Wreath |
| <input type="checkbox"/> House with White Lights | <input type="checkbox"/> 3 Deer in Yard |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Polar Bear | <input type="checkbox"/> House with Blue Lights |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Teddy Bear | <input type="checkbox"/> Sleigh |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Nativity Scene | <input type="checkbox"/> Stocking |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Star | <input type="checkbox"/> Mickey Mouse |

How many can you find?