

Family Connections

November 26 - December 17



Advent

Family Connections - Unit 4: Nov. 26 – Dec. 17

During the season of Advent, our lessons will focus on Mary's visit from the angel Gabriel, and on John the Baptist.

We honor Mary because of her willingness to obey God's plan. Even though Mary accepted God's plan with great faith, we have to appreciate just how frightening, perplexing and amazing this event truly was.

Gabriel's announcement declared how great Mary's child would be: "He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give to him the throne of his ancestor David. He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end" (Luke 1:32-33).

Imagine being told that your offspring would be divine! Mary responds with wonder-filled faith and awe, as though she is saying, "Wow! That's amazing! How will it happen?" Gabriel replies to Mary's question with the explanation: "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be holy; he will be called Son of God." (Luke 1:35). This verse describes the mystery of God becoming human.

John the Baptist was God's appointed messenger. Before Jesus began his ministry, John had been announcing to the people throughout the regions of Jerusalem and Judea to prepare for the coming Messiah. John was a renowned kind of eccentric and he is usually thought of as being off in the desert wearing unusual clothes. But he is also a prophetic figure ... one who was calling for change. He was a critic of society and worldliness, who seemed to be calling for a change in religious life and a return to an intensely Jewish piety ... to follow the way of the Lord ... to make oneself pure ... to be right with God.

With Mary and John as our models, we will use our Advent lessons to prepare for the coming of Jesus!

Special Events for all:

- On Sunday Dec. 17th we will have a whole-group Advent Celebration. A sign up sheet will be posted for snack items. Please sign up if you would like to bring some “goodies” for our party.

November 26th

Gabriel’s visit for PS, K/1: Nothing is impossible with God!

- An angel visited Mary to bring her news about Jesus
- God can send angels to us too. God uses angels to send us messages, to keep us safe, and to help us.
- Can you think of someone in your life who is like an angel? Who helps you and keeps you safe?

John the Baptist for Grades 2/3, 4/5: “Prepare ye the way of the Lord; make his paths straight.” Mark 1:3

- John was a prophet who brought God’s messages to the people
- He told everyone to repent and be baptized. One day Jesus came to be baptized. John recognized him instantly – he was the Messiah!
- Advent is a very special time of the year. What do we need to be doing during the season of Advent? (Preparing our hearts for Jesus’ coming, asking forgiveness for our sins, and beginning to live in a better way.)
- What do you think John meant when he said, “make his paths straight?” (get rid of the ‘bumpy’ things that make it hard for Jesus to be part of your life, take time to think about how God wants you to treat other people, make time to do kind things for others, share what you have with others, etc.)

Dec. 3: Gabriel's visit for all grades: Nothing is impossible with God!

All Grades

- Who are the people in your life who help you to learn about God? These people are also like angels who bring us messages of God's comfort and guidance.
- Can you think of a time when you were scared, or confused, or worried? How might God try to send a message to you when you need help?
- When we pray to God, we remember that God promises to always be with us. We may still be scared, but we know we are never alone.
- When we pray, we remember what God has taught us about loving others. That can help us to make good decisions if we are angry, upset, or confused.
- Where do we get the help we need to do God's work? (From God's Holy Spirit)

December 10:

Preschool: Jesus is born! The children played a BINGO game as they heard elements of the Christmas story.

K/1: Learning about John the Baptist using our five senses! Ask your children to tell what they saw, smelled, heard, felt and tasted in this lesson.

Grades 2 through 5: Continue with Gabriel's visit (same as above).

December 17: C-H-R-I-S-T-M-A-S

It is fun and exciting to receive gifts on Christmas, but today we will find out why we celebrate Christmas Day by hearing an old song and learning to spell the word "CHRISTMAS." We will make books to help remember the song. A link to the song is provided here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZhtUu1cvVJY>

No Church School on December 24th. See you on January 7th.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!