

# Countdown to Christmas




THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND

There's something very special about the Advent Sundays leading up to when Jesus was born. Join in with these activities as we prepare for and celebrate Christmas – and as we remember the Comfort and Joy that Jesus brings to us all.



**Comfort**  
and Joy

Date	What brings joy today?	Who needs comfort today?
<b>29th Nov, the First Sunday of Advent</b>	<p><b>Counting down with excitement</b></p> <p>Look at your Advent Calendar – just 2 days until you can open the first door! Give a jump for joy or fist bump your family at the excitement of looking forward.</p>	<p><b>Those who are anxious about Christmas</b></p> <p>Look at the floor. Some people are anxious about Christmas. Ask God to be close to them in the coming days.</p>
<b>6th Dec, the Second Sunday of Advent</b>	<p><b>Being able to give presents to others</b></p> <p>Christians sometimes call Jesus 'God's gift to us' – that's why we give gifts to each other at Christmas. Make a list of the people your family will give gifts to this Christmas. Thank God for each person.</p>	<p><b>Those worried about money</b></p> <p>Christmas can be expensive. Some people are worried that they do not have enough money for gifts or food. Could your family help by giving a gift to your local foodbank?</p>
<b>13th Dec, the Third Sunday of Advent</b>	<p><b>Access to water</b></p> <p>Count the number of taps in your home. Pour yourself a glass of water and give thanks for access to clean water for washing, cooking, drinking, and cleaning.</p>	<p><b>Children of the world</b></p> <p>Pour a glass of water. Add a teaspoon of mud to it, stir and place it in your kitchen. In some parts of the world children only have access to water like this. Each time you see your glass today, pray for agencies like Water Aid, trying to bring clean water to children across the world.</p>
<b>20th Dec, the Fourth Sunday of Advent</b>	<p><b>Health and people who care</b></p> <p>Draw a rainbow. Around it write the names of your local doctors, hospitals and pharmacies. Colour a heart by each one to show you are thankful for them.</p>	<p><b>People who are feeling sad</b></p> <p>Find a sticking plaster. Draw a sad face on it. Stick the plaster onto your bathroom mirror to remind you to pray for people who are sick or sad.</p>
<b>Carol Service</b>	<p><b>The gift of music</b></p> <p>What's your favourite Christmas Carol? Record your family singing it and send it to your wider family and friends.</p>	<p><b>Those who can't get to church</b></p> <p>Some people will be sad that they can't go to a carol service. Make a poster of your favourite carol to put in the window to cheer everyone up.</p>
<b>Christmas Eve</b>	<p><b>Everything that makes Christmas exciting</b></p> <p>Gather round your Christmas tree and look at the decorations. Tell each other which is your favourite and why.</p>	<p><b>Those who are home alone</b></p> <p>Do you know someone who will be home alone this Christmas? Surprise them with a phone or video call.</p>
<b>Christmas Day</b>	<p><b>The gift of God's love in Jesus</b></p> <p>Today we celebrate Jesus' birthday. Light a candle (safely) and sing Happy Birthday for Jesus before you open your presents. (Remember to blow the candle out!)</p>	<p><b>People who have no homes</b></p> <p>Some people don't have their own homes where they can celebrate Christmas. Pray for charities like Crisis who will provide safe space for them to eat and sleep today.</p>

Date	What brings joy today?	Who needs comfort today?
<b>Boxing Day</b>	<p><b>Those who serve us in shops, cafes, and entertainment</b></p> <p>Go for a walk with your family. As you pass shops and cafes, thank God for the people who serve us in them. (If there are no shops or cafes near you, think of the ones you last visited.)</p> 	<p><b>Those who have no work to do</b></p>  <p>Some shops and cafes have closed because of the Covid crisis. This means people no longer work there. As you pass closed shops and cafes on your walk, ask God to be close to the people who used to work in them.</p>
<b>27th Dec, 1st Sunday of Christmas</b>	<p><b>Wider family who love us, grandparents, etc</b></p> <p>Look at your Christmas cards. Find the ones that came from grandparents, aunts, uncles and godparents. Thank God that they love and care for you and your family.</p>	<p><b>Families who cannot be together</b></p> <p>Find a jigsaw puzzle. The pieces need to join together to complete it. Some families cannot be together this Christmas. As you put your puzzle together, ask God to be with families who have been separated during the holidays.</p>
<b>28th Dec</b>	<p><b>The children in our family</b></p>  <p>Make a chain of paper dolls. On each doll, write the name of a family you know and all the children and adults in it. Put the dolls in a place where you can see them and thank God for the people they represent.</p>	<p><b>Those who are grieving for loved ones this Christmas</b></p> <p>Make another chain of dolls. During this year some people died, and their families are sad. As you write the names of people who have died on the dolls, talk about something you remember about each person.</p> 
<b>29th Dec</b>	<p><b>Holiday time to be together</b></p> <p>Shout out 'Group Hug' and get everyone in your household to either have a household huddle or hug themselves tight. Thank God that you can be together at holiday time.</p>	<p><b>Those who are hungry</b></p> <p>Open your fridge or food cupboard and look at what's inside. Some people have very little food and very little money to buy more. Next time you go to the supermarket, buy some extra tins to put in their Food Bank collection.</p>
<b>30th Dec</b>	<p><b>Remembering all those journeying to find out about faith</b></p> <p>Some people who visited Jesus followed a star to find their way. Make or draw and decorate a large star. As you hang it on your front door or in a window pray for people who want to know more about Jesus.</p> 	<p><b>People struggling with illness of whatever kind</b></p> <p>Hospitals don't close over Christmas. They carry on caring for people who are ill. Send a card to your local hospital to thank the staff who were working over the holiday.</p>
<b>31st Dec</b>	<p><b>For all the good things the past year brought to us</b></p> <p>Have a family huddle with your favourite hot drinks. As the drinks cool, tell each other the things you have really enjoyed in 2020.</p>	<p><b>Those who have found this year very difficult</b></p> <p>Squeeze your hands into fists until it feels uncomfortable. 2020 was uncomfortable for some families. Slowly open your hands and ask God that 2021 would be less difficult for them.</p>
<b>1st Jan</b>	<p><b>For the good things in store this year</b></p> <p>Draw around your hand. Inside it write or draw the things you are looking forward to in 2021.</p> 	<p><b>People worried about the future</b></p> <p>Draw around your other hand. Some people are worried about 2021. Draw hearts inside this hand and ask God to hold the people and their worries.</p>
<b>2nd January to Epiphany</b>	<p><b>That Jesus is for the whole world</b></p> <p>How many countries can you and your family name? Jesus came to be God's Good News for all the countries of the world. Jump for joy that Jesus is God's Good News for you too.</p>	<p><b>Those in the Middle East</b></p> <p>Jesus was born in Bethlehem and grew up in Nazareth. He came to bring peace but today there are many conflicts in that part of the world. Find the two towns on a map. Place your fingers on them and pray for the people who live there.</p>