

Celebrating Our Lord

Advent

UNIT

3

Lesson
One



Prayer Starter

In the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit ...
Dear Lord, help us prepare and learn about Jesus and his birth in our world. We hold his light in our hearts and hope these coming days of Advent will be filled with your spirit and grace. Thank you for all your gifts. Amen.

Daily Bread

The word “Advent” means “coming,” the coming of Christ! In the Armenian Church, Advent is a 50-day period that leads right up to Armenian Christmas. It is a time for us to look inside our own hearts to see how we can follow Jesus more closely.

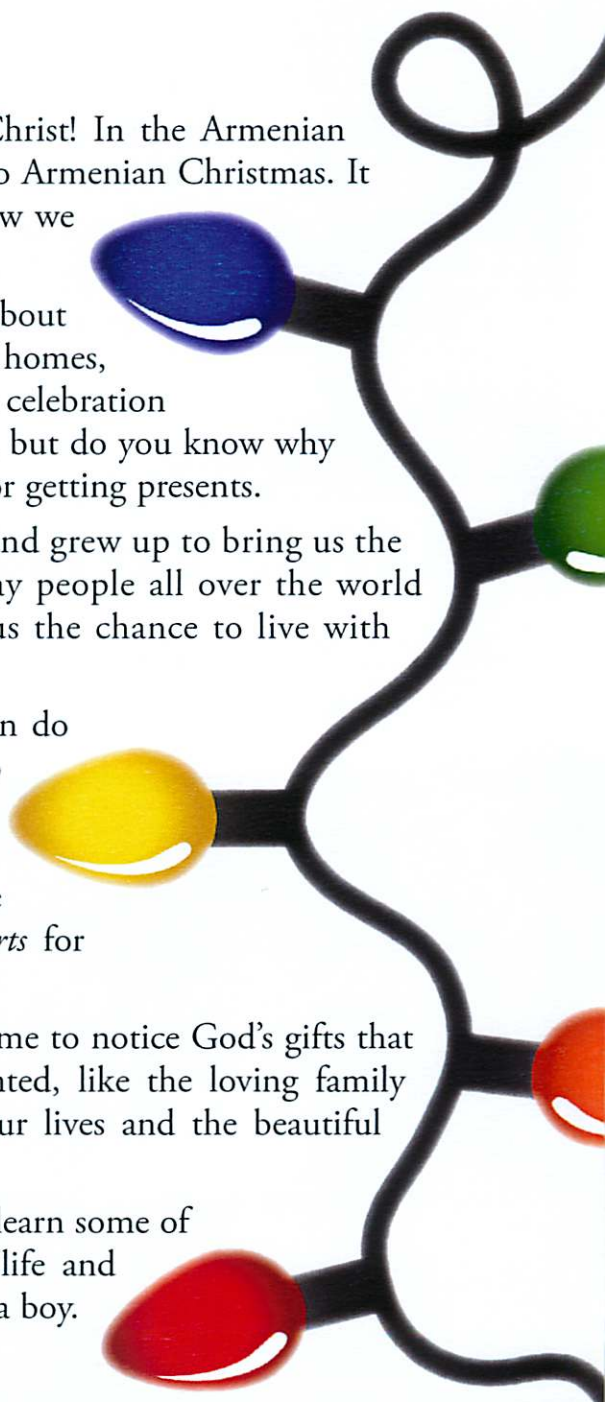
Every year in the middle of November, we start to think about and prepare for this celebration. People decorate their homes, send greeting cards, and have holiday parties. It is a great celebration for all Christians. We make a big deal out of Christmas, but do you know why we do these things? It is not just for putting on a show or getting presents.

It is to celebrate the amazing fact that Jesus was born and grew up to bring us the word of God. His love and teachings changed the way people all over the world lived. It was Jesus whose sacrifice on the cross gave us the chance to live with God forever.

During Advent, we can do things to feel closer to Christ through our actions, thoughts, and prayers. What can we do to prepare our *hearts* for Jesus’ birth?

Advent is also a good time to notice God’s gifts that we might take for granted, like the loving family members we have in our lives and the beautiful earth that we live on.

We can use this time to learn some of the things about Jesus’ life and family while he was still a boy.



BIBLE BYTES

Behold *The Bible uses this word often. It means “to look at or to see” something. It is a word that we still use sometimes, but not very often. In the Bible, it means something a little bit deeper – not just to see but also to know and understand. When the angel Gabriel tells Mary, “Behold, you will conceive . . .” Gabriel is telling her to consider this news very carefully.*



SCRIPTURE SOURCE

Jesus is the Reason for the Season!

The angel came to Mary and said to her: “Greetings, you who are highly favored! The Lord is with you.” Mary was greatly troubled at this and wondered what kind of a greeting this might be. But the angel said to her: “Do not be afraid, Mary, you have found favor with God. You will give birth to a son and you will name him Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his father David, and his kingdom will never end.” *Luke 1: 28-33*

Well Versed

“And the angel said, ‘Do not be afraid Mary, for you have found favor with God. For behold, you will bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus.’” *Luke 1:30-31*

In the Armenian Tradition

In the Armenian Church, we call the season of Advent “Hisnag,” which comes from the word for “50” in Armenian. It is the 50 days before we celebrate the Feast of Theophany on January 6th. We do something different in the Armenian Church than other Christian churches do because we celebrate not only the birth of Jesus, we also celebrate his baptism on the same day. Jesus’ birth and baptism mark the beginning of his mission. At first, all churches celebrated them together; but for different reasons, this changed over time.



CELEBRATE WITH GOD

Make an Advent Calendar!



The Feast of Nativity and Theophany is the “church” name for the Feast of Christmas on January 6. The word “Theophany” has the dictionary meaning of “the appearance of God in material form.” We, as Armenians, use this word because Christ himself, in his whole life, work, and death, is really about God on earth.

Did you know...!?

Family Focus

This week’s lesson was about Advent. The children learned today about the importance of preparing during this 50-day period for the Feast of Theophany. We discussed the different ways we prepare for Christmas in our homes and then how we prepare for Christmas in our hearts. They made an Advent calendar to keep track of the days until that amazing day.

Living Your Faith

- Use the advent calendar in the coming weeks to mark off each day until Armenian Christmas.
- Make a list with your child of your pre-Christmas preparations. Then get his or her help in getting them done, whether it’s preparing Christmas cards, decorating the house, baking cookies, etc.
- Along with each activity above, help your child prepare for Christmas in his or her heart. Read Bible stories, pray, help others through donations.