

ADVENT PRAYER PRACTICES

Stars in the Sky

Make a starry sky throughout Advent with all of your prayer requests. Here's how to do it:

Find a large piece of black or dark blue poster board or butcher paper and hang it up in a central location in your home. Cut out a number of white paper stars and put them in a basket by that paper. Every time there is a joy or concern, write it on a paper star and attach it to the sky. As Advent progresses, you'll have a sky full of joys and concerns that can serve as a visual reminder of the season's joys and concerns.

From Faithful Families for Advent & Christmas by Traci Smith

Lectio Divina

This is a way to prayerfully encounter the living God through Scripture. *Lectio divina* requires an open, reflective, listening posture. Remember, the aim is to grow closer to God, not necessarily gather more information about God. To choose a text, you might use the daily Advent devotion texts we propose or the daily lectionary (found at presbyterianmission.org/devotion/daily).



1. **Silence:** Prepare your heart. Come into God's presence, relax, and center yourself.
2. **Read:** Read a Scripture passage slowly and out loud. When a word or phrase catches your attention, stop and attend to what God is saying to you. Be open to the word. Try not to analyze it.
3. **Meditate:** After a time of reflection, read the text aloud a second time. Listen for any invitation God is extending to you. Continue to reflect on words or phrases that stand out to you.
4. **Respond:** After a pause, read the text aloud a third time. Respond to God truthfully and authentically. Name the feelings the text has brought up. Talk with God about these feelings and the things you've noticed during this time.
5. **Contemplate:** Rest in the presence of God. Let the word of God sink in.

This exercise was adapted from the process found in Spiritual Disciplines Handbook by Adele Calhoun.