

How to use the BUMCSM Calendar:

Each day has a 5-7 minute activity based around our month's theme. December's theme is the church seasons of Advent and Christmas.

DECEMBER

ADVENT

This month we will be focusing on the church season of Advent . For Advent we will be talking about Incarnation through Adam Hamilton's book *Incarnation*.

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUEDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
		1 READ MATTHEW 1:18-23	2 SEND A CHRISTMAS CARD TO A SOLDIER - USE USASOA.ORG	3 SEND OUT CHRISTMAS CARDS TO YOUR LOVED ONES	4 PICK A FRIEND TO ENCOURAGE DURING THIS SEASON	5 BUY A TOY AND DONATE IT THROUGH BUMC'S TOY DRIVE
6 WATCH WORSHIP & VISIT BUMC'S CHRISTMAS VILLAGE	7 TAKE A WALK IN YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD - CHRISTMAS LIGHTS STYLE!	8 CHECK OUT BUMCSM'S PODCAST TO THE TABLE	9 TALK WITH YOUR FAMILY ON WAYS TO HELP YOUR COMMUNITY	10 READ JOHN 1:1-18	11 MAKE PAPER SNOWFLAKES TO DECORATE YOUR ROOM	12 MAKE A CHRISTMAS BUCKET LIST WITH YOUR FRIENDS
13 JOINS US FOR LIVESTREAM BUMC WORSHIP	14 WATCH YOUR FAVORITE CHRISTMAS MOVE WITH YOUR FAMILY	15 READ LUKE 2:16-20	16 CHECK OFF THINGS ON YOUR BUCKET LIST!	17 TELL YOUR FAMILY ABOUT YOUR FAVORITE CHRISTMAS TRADITION	18 MAKE SOMEONE SMILE: WEAR A SANTA HAT IN PUBLIC	19 BAKE A TREAT FOR SOMEONE YOU LOVE - SPREAD THE CHEER!
20 JOIN US FOR LIVESTREAM BUMC WORSHIP	21 LISTEN TO A SONG ABOUT JESUS' BIRTH AND WRITE DOWN WHAT STANDS OUT	22 GIVE YOUR SMALL GROUP LEADER A GIFT FOR THE PAST SMALL GROUP SEMESTER	23 READ YOUR FAVORITE CHRISTMAS BOOK WITH YOUR FAMILY	24 ATTEND A CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICE VIRTUALLY OR IN PERSON	25 MERRY CHRISTMAS!	26 GIVE A PERSONAL THANK YOU TO THOSE WHO GAVE YOU GIFTS
27 JOIN US FOR LIVESTREAM BUMC WORSHIP	28 ENJOY CHRISTMAS DECOR FOR 9 MORE DAYS! WHICH IS YOUR FAVORITE?	29 LOOK AT 2020 - WHAT CHANGES ARE <u>YOU</u> GOING TO MAKE IN 2021?	30 READ 2 CORINTHIANS 5:17	31 PREPARE TO RING IN THE NEW YEAR!		

ADVENT - INCARNATION

USE THESE DEVOTIONS TO HELP DIVE DEEPER INTO THE ADEVNT SEASON. THESE SHOULD TAKE YOU ABOUT 10 MINUTES IN LOOKING UP THE PASSAGES, READING THROUGH THEM, AND THE DEVOTION & THEN LIVING IN THE SEASON OF ADVENT. THESE DEVOTIONALS WERE BASED IN ADAM HAMILTON'S BOOK INCARNATION: REDISCOVERING THE SIGNIFICANCE OF CHRISTMAS.

1ST SUNDAY - ANOINTED

TRY THIS ON
NOVEMBER
29TH

SCRIPTURE

Old Testament: Exodus 30:22-30

New Testament: Matthew 2:1-2

Oil is a powerful symbol both in scripture and in the Christian tradition. We get the word Messiah from the Hebrew word *mashiach*, which literally means 'anointed' (with oil) or 'anointed one' This usually refers to the setting apart for God's purpose for rulers. This anointing, for us, is a sign for the one being baptized, confirmed, or anointed. That they (and you!) too belong to God, are holy & set apart for God, and that the Holy Spirit's presence is with them. As we see in our scriptures, Jesus being called the Messiah before his birth sets him apart for God's purpose even before, but it also set a connotation for Jesus's path for kingly conquest and ruling. Which we know now, is not the path that he took. Anointed, Jesus showed us how we should live as set apart and for God's purpose in our world.

TRY THIS: Read Luke 7:36-48, Matthew 26:6-13 and John 12 . What do these readings show us about Jesus' anointing? Write out the similarities and differences. What can we tell about Jesus through these passages? Does this fit with what you alerady know about Jesus? Why or why not?

3RD SUNDAY - EMMANUEL

TRY THIS ON
DECEMBER
13TH

SCRIPTURE

Old Testament: Isaiah 7:14-16

New Testament: Matthew 1:18-25 & 28:20

At both the beginning and end of Matthew, we see Jesus' role: the Incarnation. This is encompassed in the use of the word Emmanuel or "God with us." It is not just that God was with us in Jesus, but that Jesus continues to be with us everyday. Since God is with us, we need not fear. (peep Mary & Joseph's angels) In God being with us, we look at Jesus' human experienes mixing with divine genealogy. This is the heart of the Christmas story. We, as Christians, look at this as a challenge. Our mission, should we choose to accpet it, is to incarnate the love of God this season. That could be as simple as punting fear for the month of December, sending words of wisdom to a friend, or organizing a family service project.

TRY THIS: Make a list of all the ways God has loved you. For each bullet point, name someone or something that needs this type of love in thier life. Use this second list as a guide for your actions this upcoming week. Open your mind and schedule for Emmanuel.

2ND SUNDAY - FORGIVE

TRY THIS ON
DECEMBER
6TH

SCRIPTURE

Old Testament: Isaiah 61:1-2

New Testament: Matthew 2:1-2

When we read about the Christmas story, usually we talk about Jesus being born was to save us from our sins. We see it as forgiveness, but it's that and so much more. It is Christ's transforming work in our lives. It is God drawing us to a path of strength and away from our inner sin. Christ being born was to redeem us, restore us, reconcile us, forgive us and so much more. Jesus the flesh or "Incarnation" is also a beautiful way we can see God's idea of sin, mercy, and love. Romans 5: 8 says, "God proves his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us." Have you ever thought of the birth of Jesus as a sign of love? Jesus becoming part of our world was indeed to save us from our sins, but it was also to make a new path. To show us service, kindness, grace, justice, mercy, and ultimately to show us that we are loved.

Think of a time when you were forgiven or forgave someone when you didn't feel like it. Or when someone showed you grace but you did not deserve it. Read Luke chapter 7 about the woman who sensed Jesus compassion. Do your friends, family, loved ones sense your compassion? Read & reflect.

4TH SUNDAY - LIGHT

TRY THIS ON
DECEMBER
20TH

SCRIPTURE

Old Testament: Genesis 1:1-5

New Testament: John 1:1-5

Darkness and Light play a big part of our Christian history as well as our own present lives. Darkness is often used to describe evil, adversity, ignorance, despair, gloom, and death. Light is associated with God, goodness, joy, hope, and life. Ultimately what Christmas is for believers, is the celebration of light piercing through th darkness and God's light coming to us to enlighten our lives. As John 1 says, the word was God, and God was the light of the world. God's word to us was sending the most beautiful example of love, Jesus. When Jesus entered the world, a tiny glimpse of light was able to be seen. Just like on Christmas Eve when we light the candles -it starts with one tiny light and spreads throughout the room as we share our little light with the person next to us. Jesus was our tiny light and through time, people began to accept, share, and carry out that light, That is the meaning of Christmas, to shine light becuase darkness cannot overcome it.

TRY THIS: Find a place, person, or thing that you can be light to. Somedays can be hard and really dark. What does it look like for you to remind those around you of this light and hope we believe in? Could be paying for someone's meal behind you in a drive thru line or sending a card to a love one. Find a way to be light in a dark world this week.

CHRISTMAS

USE THESE DEVOTIONS TO HELP DIVE DEEPER INTO THE SEASON OF CHRISTMAS. THESE SHOULD TAKE YOU ABOUT 10 MINUTES IN LOOKING UP THE PASSAGES, READING THE DEVOTION & TRYING OUT THE DIFFERENT ACTIVITIES.

TRY THIS ON DECEMBER 27TH

FIRST SUNDAY OF CHRISTMAS

WHAT HAPPENS NOW?

Think back to last week, what were you doing? Thinking? Planning? We had five more days until Chrismtas, we were celebrating our last Sunday in Advent and now? Now what? This time is usually a time of rest and relaxation, a time with family who stayed over, or time to return Christmas gifts that don't quite fit. What if we took the same joy and wonder through the 12 days of Christmas as we do in the months leading up to December 25th? The joy we find in leading up to Jesus' celebrated birthday can be spread throughout the Christmastide (the 12 days of the liturgical calendar) Just like the disciples had a choice of what to do when Jesus ascended into the heavens.

READ & DISCUSS: John 21

Reality of Resurrection: Look at the ending of other gospels - How does the story end in these settings? In John 21 we see another type of last chapter: one that demonstrated, in story form, the resurrection. Why do you think John needed to put this into the gospel? Why was it important?

The Reality of Birth: When we look at the "Christmas story", in John 1 we see the absence of Mary, Joseph, camels, and stars. Instead John simply states what the other gospels already shared. (remember, John was probably the last canon gospel to be written) Instead of focusing on the birth story, John states it as fact and looks toward what that birth can mean for people who were not around when Jesus' walked the earth. Going back to the end of the book, we see that John stating Jesus as doing acts that could fill volumes. (look at the last verse!) What would you like to hear about Jesus? What, in according to Jesus' actions in this chapter, tell us is important?

TRY THIS:

Taking down your Christmas decorations before January 4th? Stop! Channel your inner TSwift and leave them up until after Christmastide ends. What we **do**, not necessarily what we say, determines what we think is important. Look forward toward the next year - what do you think is important? Write a list of your top 5. What are actions you can take in the next year to really show that these are important?

Example: Family - for every family birthday I will write them a letter telling them how they have made an impact in my life.

TRY THIS ON JANUARY 5TH

SECOND SUNDAY OF CHRISTMAS

HOW ARE WE DOING?

January rolls around and as the holidays end, the celebrations stop, decor goes down, and fun sometimes seems to go away. However, the beautiful thing about Christmas is that it sets the example of how we should live all year long. Jesus birth is a time to rejoice, but even more so his life on earth and the goodness he brought to us in his lifetime. May sound weird, but we should live our lives all year long rejoicing, celebrating, and in ancitpation of who God is. Christmas is the precedent to how we should act and live our lives. We should be full of compassion kindness , faithfulness, and joy becuae that is the example Christ set before us.

READ & DISCUSS: Peter 2:21-24

Read this piece of scripture and reflect.

This passage is reminding us of the life Jesus lives. He did not stoop down to evil, when he was suffering he did not give up. instead Jesus healed those sick, he cared for those that were outcast, he walked with people that the world hated. Jesus wants us to live righteous lives by learning from his example set. We can continue to celebrate and find Joy in our year ahead becuae we have the hope of Jesus and the life he lived. How are you going to continue spreading joy? How do we continue to celebrate when the decor, parties, and fun seem to be over?

TRY THIS:

Think of something that brings you joy during the holiday season and find ways you can carry that on into the year ahead.

For example-you may love the idea of gift giving during Christmas, usually everyone is exchanging little small" happys" to remind those around them that they are grateful and they care. What if you gave little "happys" or small acts of kindess throughout the year. Shop the dollar bin at Target, fold some oragami, or bake some cookies - have an extra mit or soccer ball? Think of the person who you would love to share happiness with and then find something that is less than \$3 to give to them.