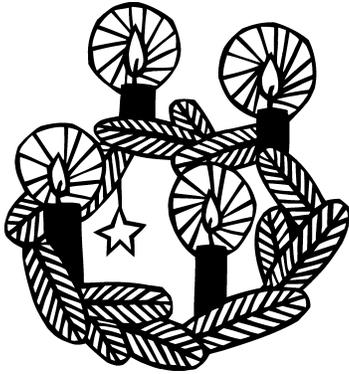


## Family Sunday School Lesson 1 - 0 Starry Night



**Introduction:** This advent season we will compare our waiting, for Jesus the baby and for Jesus' return, with this restful waiting time of year in nature. This week we will look to the heavens at night and take assurance from the moon, stars and planets.

### Start the Fun!

#### Observe the Night Sky

Read the tips on this website.  
<https://www.amnh.org/explore/ology/astronomy/a-kid-s-guide-to-stargazing>

Go outside on a clear night and find the Big Dipper, the Little Dipper and Draco.

Watch this video and play "Star or not a star." <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=M41yLjQ2ot0>

Younger children can learn about the moon and stars with Elmo in this read-aloud: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xyLkL8Vwqpc>



## **Read together**

### **Mark 13:24-37**

24 “But in those days, following that distress,  
“the sun will be darkened,  
and the moon will not give its light;

25  
the stars will fall from the sky,  
and the heavenly bodies will be shaken.’

26 “At that time people will see the Son of Man coming in clouds with great power and glory. 27 And he will send his angels and gather his elect from the four winds, from the ends of the earth to the ends of the heavens.

28 “Now learn this lesson from the fig tree: As soon as its twigs get tender and its leaves come out, you know that summer is near. 29 Even so, when you see these things happening, you know that it is near, right at the door. 30 Truly I tell you, this generation will certainly not pass away until all these things have happened. 31 Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will never pass away.

#### The Day and Hour Unknown

32 “But about that day or hour no one knows, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. 33 Be on guard! Be alert! You do not know when that time will come. 34 It’s like a man going away: He leaves his house and puts his servants in charge, each with their assigned task, and tells the one at the door to keep watch.

35 “Therefore keep watch because you do not know when the owner of the house will come back—whether in the evening, or at midnight, or when the rooster crows, or at dawn. 36 If he comes suddenly, do not let him find you sleeping. 37 What I say to you, I say to everyone: ‘Watch!’”



## **Discuss:**

*Ask:* How would you feel if the sun and moon were dark and the stars were falling? Why would you feel that way?

*Discussion points:* It would be scary, right? That's because God set the sun, moon and stars in the sky. They shine and move in the way God intended and have done so for millions of years. We count on them to always stay the same. This is reassuring to us.

*Ask:* What are some other things that stay the same year after year that we count on? Think about the seasons and what happens in each one.

*Discussion points:* We can count on the seasons to continue in their cycle year after year. The temperatures aren't always exactly the same, but we do have warm summers and cold winters. Leaves fall every autumn. Buds grow every spring. Days lengthen and shorten.

*Ask:* At some time, all of these predictable cycles will end. What is the passage telling us will happen then?

*Discussion points:* Jesus will come again in glory. This will be totally different than when He came as a baby. We may be able to predict when spring will come, but we cannot predict when Jesus will return.

## **Pray**

Thank God for cycles. The earth travels around the sun. The moon travels around the earth. The seasons occur in their cycle. Thank God for the time of restful darkness that we are in now and the brighter times that are to come.

## **Participate**

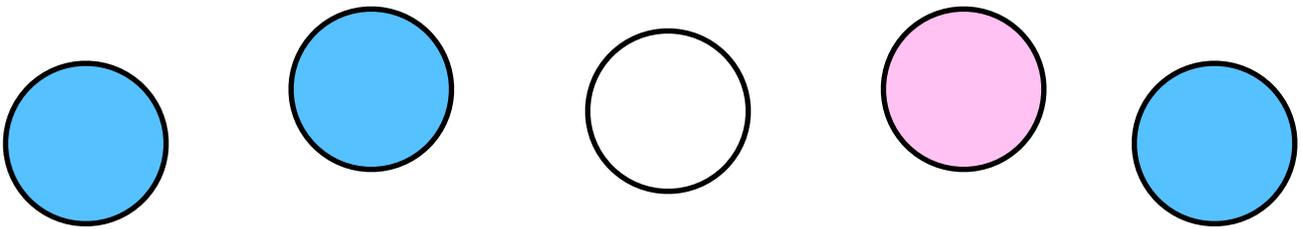
### **Craft Time!**

#### *The Advent Wreath*

##### Materials:

- A wreath with evergreen boughs,
- three blue or purple candles,
- one pink candle
- (Optional: a white candle in the center; holly)

First Sunday of Advent- light one blue or purple candle. Focus on the shape of the wreath. Its circular shape reminds us of the cycles of nature and God's promise of everlasting life. The first candle, hope, symbolizes that God is keeping God's promises to humanity. As you light it this week, remember that the darkest season will not last forever.



#### *Have You Tried the Circle Challenge?*

##### Materials:

- Printed circle template [https://drive.google.com/file/d/1UNZOWPuvvx5Hf45hhAvAISK2zZb\\_CCVZ/view](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1UNZOWPuvvx5Hf45hhAvAISK2zZb_CCVZ/view)
- Colored markers or pencils

Directions: Each family member uses the circles as open-ended drawing prompts. In this creative activity, participants have complete freedom to transform the circles into whatever their imaginations dream up!

Draw inside and a little bit outside, as space allows, to create different things (objects, animals, etc.) with the circles. Try to fill a page or even two with lots of ideas. Stretch your brain!

Once you finish your drawings, share your ideas with each other. It's fun to see how the same drawing prompt leads to so many different ideas!

## **Wrap Up**

God loves us. The orbs God set in motion are still circling. The day we await to celebrate the birth of Jesus will arrive, no matter how impatient we feel. The Lord will come again some day, as promised.

## **Take a Moment to Breathe**

### **Candle Breath**

Find a comfortable seated position and hold up your pointer finger in front of you as if it was a candle. Take a deep breath in through your nose and then purse your lips to slowly blow out the candle.

See how long you can make the (pretend) flame flicker before you run out of air.

Repeat two to four times.

