



YEAR

2

UNIT C

ADVENT

ABOUT THE UNIT

This unit is designed to develop children's knowledge of the time, symbols and characters of the liturgical Season of Advent. It will focus on Advent being a season of preparation for Christmas through the story of John the Baptist and parish activities.

WHERE THE UNIT FITS IN

Builds on previous learning about Advent in Year 1 about waiting for Jesus to come.

PRIOR LEARNING

It would be helpful if children have:

- knowledge of the Advent Wreath as a symbol of the Season
- knowledge of some Christian customs during Advent.

SKILLS

Group discussion, observation skills, role-play, thinking, research, ICT, prayer writing.

VOCABULARY

Advent, preparation, Advent Wreath, Season, Prophet, Emmanuel, Zechariah, Elizabeth, John the Baptist, Messiah.

ASSESSMENT

At the end of this unit:

	A.T.1	A.T.2
Most children will that Advent is a season of preparation for Christmas; describe the Advent Wreath and explain why it is a symbol of preparation for Christmas. Know the story of John the Baptist about preparing the way for Jesus. Describe some ways the parish prepares for Christmas.	2a 2b 2c 3c	2a 2b 2c 2d
Less able children will that the Advent Wreath is a symbol of preparation for Christmas. Know some parts of the story of John the Baptist and a few details about Christians preparing for Christmas.	1a 1b	1a 1d
More able children will understand more deeply the message of John the Baptist and how it highlights the importance of preparing for Jesus' birthday and his coming again.	3b 3c	3a 3b 3d

PROGRAMME OF STUDY

C5 Become familiar with signs and symbols used by the Church.

C3 Become familiar with some ways the Church celebrates major seasons of the liturgical year.

R1 Hear, read, explore and reflect upon: A variety of scripture imagery which speaks of God in the Old Testament.

Ch1 God's call to key figures in the history of the people of God's past and present, e.g. John the Baptist.

TEACHING STRATEGIES

- Children to recall the names of different seasons and feasts in the Church year.
- Remind pupils that Advent is a time of waiting and preparing to celebrate the birthday of Jesus Christ.
- Recall the length of the season (e.g. the 4 weeks and the 4 Sundays symbolised by the 4 candles on the Advent wreath).
- Do the children remember why the third candle is pink?
- Look at the Advent wreath and discuss its circular shape and evergreen leaves.
- What is special about a circle? Can you find its beginning or end?
- Look at the evergreen leaves. Why are they given the name evergreen?
- Why do you think the circular shape and the evergreen leaves make up the Advent wreath?
- Do you think it might tell us something special about God?
- Children to write a description of what they can see on the Advent wreath.
- Create Advent wreaths for the classroom and school. This is better than a drawing and colouring exercise!
- Children to write and attach their own prayers to the wreath, about waiting and preparing to celebrate the birthday of Jesus.
- Recall some previous learning about the Old Testament being written before the time of Jesus. Explain that some of the books are about prophets who had a special message for God's people. The prophets wrote about someone special coming.
- Read *Isaiah 7:14*.
- What does the word "Emmanuel" mean?
- Who is the prophet waiting for?

- Other people in the New Testament had to wait for a special event. Children to hear the story of Zechariah and Elizabeth.

- Children to listen to the story of Zechariah and the visit of the Angel.
- Create a simple role-play of the event.
- Introduce children to incense and explain that this has been used in prayer and worship of God for a long time.
- What do you think Zechariah would have looked like as he stood in the temple with the Angel? Look at pictures from your Bible.
- Why was Zechariah struck deaf and dumb?

- Create a story plan highlighting the beginning, the middle and end and the actions of Zechariah and the Angel.
- What sort of appearance did the Angel have?
- If you had been Zechariah what would you have said to the Angel? How would you have reacted to the message?
- Can the children recall any other stories about the appearance of an Angel with a message?
- Compare and contrast this story with the story of the Annunciation. Find some similarities and some differences.
- Create passports for the Angel and Zechariah including important information about them, as well as children's own thoughts and impressions about them.
- Read the story of the birth of John the Baptist. Recall some of the special things that were said about him by his Father.

- Read the story of John the Baptist in the wilderness.
- What was his message about?
- What does "Prepare a way for the Lord" mean?
- Children to describe what John the Baptist looked like. Why do you think he was dressed like this?
- In groups, children to act in role taking the part of John the Baptist and the crowd.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

C5 Of the significance and variety of signs and symbols in their own lives and in the life of the Church.

C3 Know the stories and events that surround the major Feasts of the Church year.

- Know the name of the liturgical season Advent
- Know that the Advent wreath is a special symbol of preparation for the season of Christmas.
- Understand that the circular shape and the evergreen decorations mean that God has no beginning or end and that God's love lasts forever.
- Recall and write about all the symbols of the wreath.

R1 Know a range of stories which speak of God and his people in the Old Testament.

- Know that some Old Testament characters said that someone very special was going to come into the world.
- Understand why their message can help us prepare for Christmas.
- Recall some of these Old Testament characters.

- Know the story of Zechariah and the birth of John the Baptist.
- Be able to empathise with the thoughts and actions of Zechariah.

Ch1 That God calls individuals and communities to share life and show care for each other.

- Know the story of John the Baptist proclaiming the coming of the Messiah.
- Understand why John wanted the people to get ready for the

FURTHER DEVELOPMENT

Children to make Advent wreaths at home with their family.

Children to create Advent word banks.

Learn some new Advent hymns about waiting for the coming of Jesus.

Create a display of Zechariah in the Temple.
Find out how incense is used in church.

Children to reference the stories of appearance of Angels using their Bibles.

Create a class display of John the Baptist preaching in the wilderness.

Children to find any other story in the New Testament about John the Baptist.

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PROGRAMME OF STUDY

TEACHING STRATEGIES

- Write an account as John the Baptist telling everybody about your work in the desert.
- If John the Baptist was alive today where do you think he would proclaim his message?
- If you had to tell people today to get ready for Jesus to come again, what would you tell them to do? How would you tell them?
- Prepare and send e-mail to another class or school about preparing for Jesus to come.

- Explore with the children some of the things that happen in the Church Community as a way of preparing for Christmas. Make a list of things that are happening in your local parish.
- Explore the colour of the season and the use of purple vestments and drapes in the church. Why do you think purple is used?
- Find out about any special charity work that the parish is involved in at Christmas time.
- Create an Advent calendar with something special to do each day, in order to prepare a way for the Lord at Christmas.
- Write a prayer about preparing ourselves for the celebration of Jesus' birthday. Help the children to include in these prayers reasons for making special preparations.
- Explore some of the saints of the season of Advent and how they can help us prepare for Christmas. Include St. Lucy and the festival of light that surrounds her celebration.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

Messiah to come.

- Retell, dramatise and write about the story.

- Know that Advent is a special time of preparation in the life of the Church.
- Find out some of the preparations and the reason why the Christian Community prepares for Christmas.

FURTHER DEVELOPMENT

RELATED SCRIPTURE

Isaiah 7: 14 – The Coming of Emmanuel

Lk. 1: 1-24, 57-80 – The Story of Zechariah and the Birth of John

Mt. 3: 1-12 – The Proclamation of John the Baptist

Lk. 3: 1-16

OTHER LINKS

Multicultural links: Looking at how the Church celebrates the Season of Advent and prepares for Christmas in different parts of the world.

COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

- Read the Story of John the Baptist during Collective Worship.
- Reflect on the way in which we can try and live out this message during Advent.
- Learn some songs about Advent preparing a way for the Lord.

EVALUATION

What went well?

Which areas of planning need to be developed/adapted next time?

What needs to be revisited/developed in a later unit?