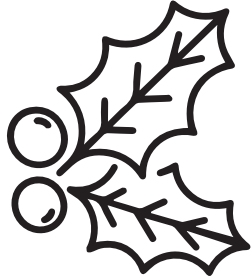


Countdown to Christmas



Montreat Conference Center's
2023 Christmas Collection

*Wishing you meaningful simplicity during
this season of Advent.*

"For in hope we were saved. Now hope that is seen is not hope. For who hopes for what is seen? But if we hope for what we do not see, we wait for it with patience." - Romans 8:24-25

The first season of the liturgical year, Advent is a liminal time spent in both reflection and anticipation; reflection on the wonder and mystery of the Christ Child's birth, and anticipation of his triumphant return. The word "Advent" is derived from the Latin word *adventus*, which means *arrival*. Through the centuries, Christians have marked Advent in varying ways, but anticipation and waiting have always featured prominently.

Advent Calendars, which first appeared in Germany in the 19th century, are a now familiar element of the season. We hope you will enjoy the opportunities for reflecting and waiting presented in *Countdown to Christmas*, Montreat Conference Center's 2023 Christmas Collection.

Special thanks to Sarah Peters who created this calendar for us and to staff members Celeste Abney-Crowe from our communications department and Emma Goldrick and Martha Todd Sloan from our development office who worked behind the scenes to bring this collection to you. Additional thanks to the development office's summer staffer, Courtney Parrish, who worked on the formatting of the materials.

-The Staff at Montreat Conference Center

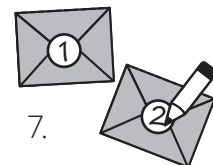
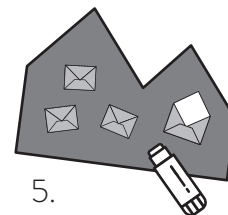
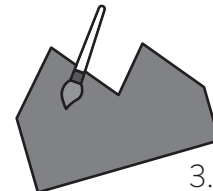
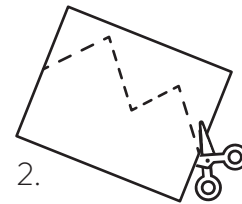
Advent Calendar Setup & Instructions

SUPPLIES NEEDED

- 1 Large piece of foam board or stiff cardboard
- Hot glue gun or glue stick
- Tempera or acrylic paint
- Paper to make the envelopes (this can be wrapping paper, scrapbook paper, or construction paper)
- Paint brushes or foam brushes
- Markers or colored pencils
- Scissors
- Advent activities (printable included)
- 24 1/2" Round labels

CREATING THE CALENDAR

1. Use your marker to draw the shape of a mountain on your large piece of foam board/cardboard. We recommend creating a mountain that is roughly 18" wide and 12" tall.
2. Use your scissors to cut out your mountain shape. Use the remaining foam board/cardboard to make a stand for your mountain. Attach it to the back with glue.
3. Paint the mountain. Embrace your creative side! When finished, allow the paint to dry.
4. Cut your pieces of paper into 24 3"x3" squares. Then, fold each square into an envelope using the attached instructions.
5. Glue the 24 completed envelopes onto your mountain.
6. Use markers or colored pencils to decorate your Advent activity sheet. Cut out each square and tuck them into the envelopes on your mountain.
7. Number your round stickers 1-24, then use them to seal your envelopes.
8. Feel free to add stickers, ribbons, or bells to add a fun touch to your calendar!



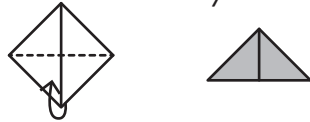
Envelope Instructions

STEP 1

Fold the paper in half corner to corner.

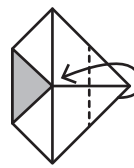
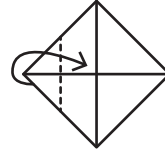


Open and fold in half the other way.



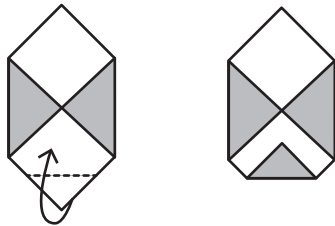
STEP 2

Fold the left and right corners to meet at the center.



STEP 3

Fold the bottom corner to slightly below the center.



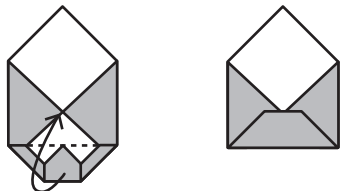
STEP 4

Fold the bottom left and right corners up to the same place you folded in step 3.



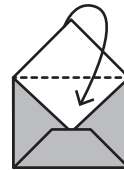
STEP 5

Put glue on the bottom edges and then fold so that the bottom of the envelope is a straight line.



STEP 6

Fold the top triangle down to complete the envelope!



Advent Activities

DAY 1

Read Isaiah
9:6



DAY 2

Donate a
toy to
charity



DAY 3

Make a card
for a
friend



DAY 4

Drink hot
chocolate



DAY 5

Hug a loved
one



DAY 6

Read a
Christmas
book



DAY 7

Take a
nighttime
walk



DAY 8

Read Luke
2:10-
14



DAY 9

Have a family
game
night



DAY 10

Dance to
Xmas
music



DAY 11

Take flowers
or a card to
your pastor

DAY 12

Wear green
or
red



DAY 13

Ask an older
person about
a Christmas
memory

DAY 14

Donate food
to a
food
bank



DAY 15

Sing an
Xmas
hymn



DAY 16

Look at old
Christmas
photos



DAY 17

Wrap a gift
for someone



DAY 18

Go caroling



DAY 19

Go outside
and look at
the stars



DAY 20

Bake & eat
Christmas
cookies



DAY 21

Sing Silent
Night and sit
quietly for a
little bit

DAY 22

Look at
Christmas
lights



DAY 23

Read
John
3:16



DAY 24

Read 'Twas
the Night
Before
Christmas

