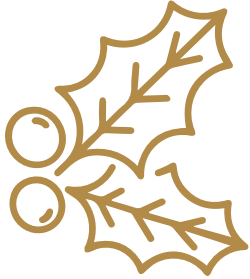


# Countdown to Christmas



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

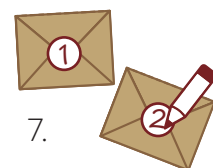
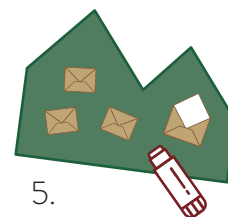
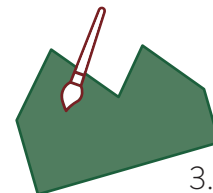
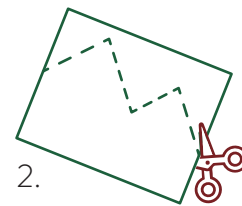
# Advent Calendar Setup & Instructions

## SUPPLIES NEEDED

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

## 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.

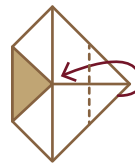
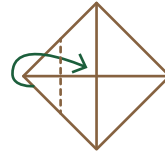


Open and fold in half the other way.



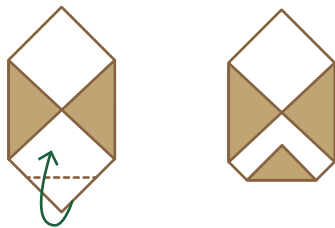
## STEP 2

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

