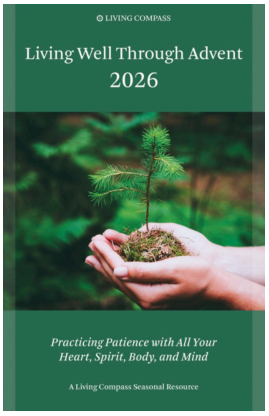
# PLANNING FOR ADVENT

*Think about your congregation's goals for the season of Advent and pick one area to focus on. It is better to do one thing well than to spread your church thin trying to do everything. Here are some possible goals & activities to consider:*

Goal 1: If you're seeking to deepen your church's understanding of the season, consider picking one of the following Advent devotionals to reflect on as part of Sunday school or a weekday group.

- *Living Well Through Advent: Practicing Patience with All Your Heart, Spirit, Body & Mind*, a daily devotional and group study (available for free download at livingcompass.org, or copies available for $1 each)
- *The Weary World Rejoices*: Daily devotional and group study (available for free download at katebowler.com/advent)
- *Halleluia! An Advent Devotional on Handel's Messiah* (available for $45 for congregational use available at saltproject.org)




Goal 2: If your goal is to bring together people of all ages to share in the anticipation and joy of the season, consider some of the following activities:



- On the first Sunday of Advent, make Advent wreaths together (you can find floral foam wreaths and candles online; ask people to bring greenery)
- On the second Sunday of Advent, consider a visit from St. Nicolas (go to stnicholascenter.org for ideas about how to celebrate)
- On the third Sunday of Advent, write Christmas cards for nursing home residents or assemble gifts for a local outreach ministry
- After your service on the fourth Sunday of Advent, gather to decorate the church for Christmas

Goal 3: If your goal is evangelism and making community connections, consider offering some special services, perhaps in collaboration with other local churches, and invite the community. Some offerings to consider:

- Advent Lessons & Carols (find an example at sccms.org under "Liturgy Library")
- An Advent "quiet day": you could include reflections from one of the devotionals listed above along with the daily offices and a meal
- Longest Night/ Blue Christmas Service (search online for examples)