



Today we Light the Candles of Hope, Peace and Joy for the Third Sunday of Advent.

Focus on The Creche.

This week I honor our beautiful Creche. Look. Look closely to the olivewood carvings beneath our great tree. Mastercraft works from artists in our Holy Land selected and given by some of our own.

Our nuanced Creche pieces represent the parts played by everyday people like you and me. There are shepherds and wise ones, beasts and angels joined with The Holy Family. Tangible reminders of God's miracle. This very moment is what we have, what we know and what we share. We are followers of The Way of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, born in Bethlehem, City of David, son of Mary and Joseph.

How do we move from "That's impossible!" to "How can this be?" as we hear the words of Mary. "How can this be?" Great things happen when we pause and notice God in the everyday. Simple elegance captured prayerfully in olive wood reminds us to believe and experience Joy in Jesus and what is possible from humble beginning with the help of God.



Activities for Families of all ages with your Home Creche

- 1) Give each child a character from the nativity. Ask them to place their character far away from the manger. During the week(s) before Christmas encourage them to do special things for others either at home or out-and-about. NOTICE when they do something kind and have them move their character closer to the manger. See how close they get to the manger by Christmas Eve.
- 2) Go on a Nativity Scene Hunt throughout advent. Pay attention to all the different ways that the nativity is presented. You could even check off different materials as you find them.

___ glass ___ corn husks
___ cloth ___ paper ___ lace
___ porcelain ___ Gingerbread
___ wire ___ clay ___ plastic
___ cardboard ___ braided straw
___ felt ___ Pewter ___ Tin ___ wood

How many did you find? _____



- 3) Be a living Nativity Scene. Act out the Christmas story. Use fabric and scarves, even pillow cases for costumes. Have someone read the Christmas story. Share with friends and family with ZOOM. You may want to practice several times first! Consider heralding the blessed event with trumpets and flutes. Sing some Christmas Carols and know the joy you bring to Heaven. Pets and even stuffed-toys can help fill out your story. Film yourselves and share with loved ones.
- 4) Make a Gingerbread Nativity Scene. Simple shapes and candies can create characters or help them find their sparkle. You could get all the cookie-cutters or improvise with basics you have.
- 5) Make a “stained glass” ornament using the silhouette of the Creche in solid black cut out of paper. Modge-podge bits of tissue paper in jewel tones to the silhouette being careful to cover the entire space including the “empty space”. Dry. When dry, place in a window or on the tree to enjoy a stained-glass nativity scene. Thread a ribbon through the top to hang on your tree.

I would love to see picture of your creations when you make them or a few lines to share and connect our First Church Family.

May Peace, Grace and Much Joy be Yours this third week of Advent,

LeeAnne