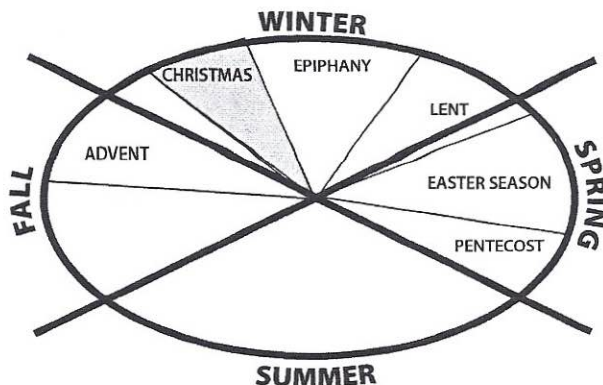


# The Church Year: Christmas



## Christmas:

### The Second Season in the Church Year

We've been waiting for the birth of Jesus throughout Advent and finally Christmas arrives with the birth of baby Jesus on Christmas.

God's son has come to live with us! He is 100% human **and** 100% God! The season of Christmas begins on Christmas morning (Dec.25) and lasts for 12 days, through January 5<sup>th</sup>.

We have been lighting the four Advent candles one by one for the month prior to Christmas and now the final center candle, **the Christ candle**, is lit because Jesus Christ is born!

The manger scene grows throughout Advent, more and more figures are added as Christmas Eve draws near. Shepherds are on their way to visit Jesus. Angels are singing in the fields, and all the animals watch and wait for Jesus to be born. Finally, on Christmas Eve the baby Jesus is added to the manger. Don't add the Wise Men yet, they haven't arrived.

### An interesting thing about Christmas

Many people think that the three wise men were present at Jesus' birth on Christmas Eve. Actually, the three wise men were most definitely **NOT** present at Jesus' birth. Remember, the wise men came from hundreds of miles away from Bethlehem; it took them a while to get there. In fact, it might have taken two years for the Wise Men to finally reach Jesus!

### The Sounds of Christmas

During Christmas we sing hymns that are *very* familiar. These hymns are often called "Christmas carols". We even hear these carols on TV, the radio and while shopping, although not all Christmas *songs* are Christmas carols. Christmas carols tell the story of Jesus birth, and some of our favorite Christmas songs (like Rudolph or Jingle Bells) don't mention Jesus at all.

### The Sights of Christmas

Candles are a major focus during Christmas Eve worship. Candles are a symbol of Jesus being the light of the world. Then, that light spreads through all of us and we begin to share the light of Christ. Most people decorate their homes with lights too (inside and outside)!

### Christmas color in the Church:

White – symbolizing the light and purity of Jesus.

### The Season of Christmas

1. In which church season is Jesus present (with us)?
2. What is the name of the special candle that is lit on Christmas Eve?

3. What are Christmas carols about?

4. Can you name three RELIGIOUS Christmas carols? (*Not* Frosty, Rudolph or Jolly Old St. Nick, etc...)

1.

2.

3.

5. Who were some of the people who visited Jesus right after his birth? Who visited a little bit later?

6. Look up Matthew 2:1. What does it tell us about when the wise men (or magi) visited?

6. Why do you think we give presents at Christmas?

**\*Bonus Question:** What was the name of Jesus' cousin, who was just a few months older than Jesus?

## **Family/Friend-Time**

What are some special ways or traditions that you and your family do to celebrate Christmas?