



Christian Education Bulletin Insert December, 2002

The Rev'd Patricia Drummond
Christian Education Director
460-8349, anged@nbnet.nb.ca

Extra Advent Activities

Most people are familiar with having an Advent wreath on the table and lighting the candles according to how many weeks before Christmas. Advent calendars are also popular in

households with children. Another tradition you may wish to adopt is to set an **extra place at the table** on the Sundays in Advent.

This is for Jesus, who is always with us.

An old German tradition is to place small squares of card, numbering from 1 to 150 in a small cloth bag. Before each family meal, a child takes a number from the bag and **reads that psalm** from the Bible. (Choose a Bible easily read by your children. You may also decide to limit the number of verses read to around 10, or the first natural break in the psalm. Otherwise your supper may get cold, especially if someone draws #119!

Christmas Decorations

This year have everyone take part in the house decorating, and do it in stages - putting away clutter and ornaments etc which will be in the way of the Christmas decorations on one weekend, doing the outside of the house the next weekend, then one room the next, another the next and so on. If you have a week of clear evenings you could even do it over several days rather than weekends. Decorating in stages is less overwhelming than trying to do it all at once, especially if it is usually a one person job, and since, for the children, the doing stage is usually much more fun than the admiring one, it makes sense to spread it out.

To Reduce Stress and Increase Energy

At least three times a week, even at this busy time of year, have fun

with your children by taking sleds to the nearest hill, going skating, cross-country or downhill skiing, building a snowman, or just going for a walk. (Think up a scavenger walk. This will depend on the area you live in but examples might be: who can find a tree with berries, a house with a blue front door, see a dog, see a certain make of car)

Make sure you have a container of celery and carrot sticks permanently in your fridge for good-for-you snacks. Keep the cookies and squares a little less accessible!

Christmas Cards

A day or two after Christmas assemble all your Christmas cards and have a secret ballot in which each person votes for the card which, to them, shows best what Christmas is all about. Talk about the choices. (No put downs!)

Choose a few of the cards and make a bristol board poster of them, printing a suitable Bible verse underneath each one. Parental help may be required with this.

Christmas Symbolism

Christmas trees have a triangular **shape** which might remind us of the Trinity, Father Son and Holy Spirit. They also point towards God if we imagine heaven as 'up.'

The **evergreen** Christmas tree represents eternal life, and the **gifts** under the tree show that this was the gift of Jesus to us.

The **lights** make us think of the stars in heaven. **Candles** also remind us that Jesus is the Light of the world and able to banish darkness.

As the circle never ends, so **wreaths** symbolize never-ending love. **Angels** brought the good news of Jesus' birth to simple shepherds. In some places sheep wear **bells** around their necks so they can be found more easily if they get lost. Bells are symbols of the return of the lost.

Santa Claus symbolises the generosity and goodwill people feel at this time of year.

For Fun

Why did Santa spell Christmas N-O-E ?

„TON., 'piɛɪ sɑɪ el ɛɪ tʃɪ smɪsɔːɪ