



WORLDWIDE
CHURCH OF GOD

Living and Sharing the Gospel

GC2 equipper

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Equipping workers and leaders for Great Commandment–Great Commission (GC2) ministry

Dear Child of God:

This combined November-December issue brings us to the Advent season and to the end of GC2 equipper's first year of publication.

Thanks to all who have contributed tips, questions and short articles to the 2007 issues of GC2 equipper. Your input is invaluable as we co-minister with the Spirit in equipping one another for active and skillful participation in Jesus' Great Commandment - Great Commission (GC2) ministry. This publication is a tool to help us grow in heart (character), head (ministry knowledge) and hands (ministry skill). Please consider sending your input in 2008. You may do so by emailing me at Ted.Johnston@wgc.org.

I wish all our readers a joyous Advent as we celebrate Jesus' multiple "comings." We look forward with hope to his future coming when he will usher in a "new heaven and a new earth" (2Pet. 3:13). We look back with rejoicing considering his coming in the flesh (his incarnation). And we look around us with awe and appreciation as we experience together Jesus' present coming through his Spirit of Grace.

Come Lord Jesus!

In the WCG, a growing understanding of Trinitarian (or Christ-Centered) Theology deepens our appreciation for the astounding miracle of Jesus' incarnation. Think of it—the eternal Son of God adding our humanity to his divinity—not as a *temporary* accommodation to our need, but as a *permanent* addition within his own person by which humanity has been born again and continues to live as God's adopted children. Through Jesus, God has made permanent "room" for us in his love and life!

Joy to the world—we have a place with God!

My prayer is that through your Advent celebrations you, your congregation and your family will truly encounter the living Jesus who is now and forever fully God and fully human. He is our "all in all" and worthy of worship. May he help us share together in his joy and peace as we join the heavenly hosts in celebrating our Lord's Advent this year.

O come, let us adore him!

- Ted Johnston, GC2 equipper editor



Advent wreath

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- 1** Planning for Advent
- 2** Advent tips and resources

Q: Why and how is Advent celebrated?

A: Consider the following summary and resource tips:

Christmas in many Christian traditions is part of the several-week-long Advent season in which we celebrate the coming (advent) of Jesus into the world.

Advent begins with the end of the salvation story by celebrating Jesus' "second coming." By starting at the end, we see more clearly the great meaning of the beginning, namely Jesus' incarnation where the new creation has its historic beginning.

Without the incarnation, there is no sacrificial death, no resurrection from the tomb, no ascension and thus no hope of Jesus' future return at the end of the present age. The central truth of the Advent season is thus Jesus' incarnation—God becoming flesh. In fact, "Christmas" can rightfully be referred to as the "Incarnation Celebration."

In many traditions, the celebration of Christmas itself lasts from December 25 (which ends the Advent season) through the early part of January, as the church celebrates the presentation of Jesus, who is the light of the world.

For additional information about the history and meaning of Advent see "*Calendar, Christ's Time for the Church*," by Laurence Hull Stookey, Abingdon Press, 1996.

For ideas about celebrating Advent as a family, see:

- Celebrate Advent—And Have A Merrier Christmas!
www.navpress.com/EPubs/DisplayArticle/1/1.54.15.html
- Using Christmas to teach children about Jesus
www.christianodyssey.com/children/childrenx.htm

On the C2 equipper webpage we have posted a series of Advent themed dramas/readings written by WCG pastor Rick Shallenberger. See the links at the bottom of the page at <http://fly2.ws/cZmZswm>. You are free to copy and distribute these resources.

