

Ready for His Return

Theme

Watching for Christ's return. First Sunday of Advent, Year B

Object

A regular calendar and an Advent calendar (see below)

Scripture

Be on guard! Be alert! You do not know when that time will come. Mark 13:33
(NIV)

I am sure all of you know what this is. (Hold up a calendar.) That's right, it is a calendar. Most of us use a calendar like this one every day. Sometimes we write important things that we want to remember on the calendar. Today I also have another type of calendar. (Hold up the Advent calendar.) Have you ever seen a calendar like this one? It is called an Advent calendar. Advent means the arrival of an event or a person. Now, what event or person do you think we might be looking forward to at this time of year? Yes! The Advent calendar helps us to count down the days until Christmas and the celebration of Jesus' birthday.

Since some of you might not have seen an Advent calendar before, let me show you how it works. As you see, there is a picture of a manger scene and above it, there are twenty-five numbered stars. Today, we are going to color the manger scene. We'll color the stable, Mary, Joseph, the baby Jesus, the angel, shepherd, the king, and the animals. Then, beginning tomorrow, we will color one star each day, starting with star number one. Finally, we will color the large star that is right above the manger. That's when we will know it's Christmas day, the day we've all been waiting for!

While we are waiting for Christmas, we should remember that we are also waiting for something else. We are waiting for Jesus to come again. When will that be? We don't know. We don't have a calendar that tells us when he will come again, but he promised that he would.

Jesus said that even the angels in heaven don't know the day or hour of his return. Well, what should we do? We should do what the Bible tells us to do, "Be on guard! Be alert! You do not know when that time will come."

What else should we be doing while we are waiting and watching for Jesus to return? We should be worshiping him, praising him, serving him, loving him, and loving one another as he commanded us to do. When we do those things, we will be ready, no matter when he comes.

Dear Father, we are watching and waiting for Christmas when we celebrate the day that you sent your Son, Jesus, to earth. We are also waiting for him to come again. Help us to be ready. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

Interactive Group Activities

by Carol Williams

Sermon Title: "Ready for His Return"

Scripture Reading: Mark 13:32-37

BE READY RELAY: Divide the children into groups and tell the children to BE READY to do whatever is called out to do, but to be WATCHING the teacher for new commands when they're least expecting it (such as walking around the outside of the room area, march with hands over their heads, turn in circles, walk quickly to get a cookie treat, count the Bibles in the room, etc).

MUSICAL CHAIRS: Play the musical chairs game and tell children to be alert and watching for a free chair and listening carefully for the music to stop and to be on GUARD!

READY, SET, GO GAME: Divide the children into 2 or more teams. Have a poster board for each group to run to when the teacher says, READY, SET, GO! Children will run as a group to their poster board area (with the poster board color that the teacher has given to each group). The children will work as a team to try to fill in the missing words of the Bible verse that the teacher has written out for them. When the group thinks that they can SAY the Bible verse together, they will stand and shout -- WE'RE READY!! Give each group an opportunity to say the verse together to their other classmates!

CHRISTMAS DRAWINGS ALERT: Let the children number off and the first child will begin by drawing a part of the Christmas story on a large poster board or the chalk board until the teacher shouts --- BE READY --- CHANGE! Then the next child will run to the board and continue to draw something from the Christmas story until the teacher shouts, BE READY ---- CHANGE! This will continue until all the children have had a chance to draw something from the Christmas story (manger, Mary, Joseph, baby Jesus, angels, shepherds, star) and then tell today's story and what is on the Advent Calendar.

CALENDAR CREATIONS: Give the children the supplies needed to make a December calendar to decorate with Christmas stickers and bright colored crayons. Give the children 25 star stickers to stick around the calendar. The children will take their calendar home and hang it on their bedroom walls to remind them to be "Watching for Christ's Return"!

GARLAND BIBLE: Give the children supplies to draw the outline of a large Bible. Put glue all around the edges of the Bible and put thin Christmas garland on the glue so that the Bible is outlined with Christmas garland. Write in BIG and BOLD letters, WATCH FOR CHRIST'S RETURN, and in smaller letters, older children can write today's Bible verse (Mark 13:33) on the "garland Bible"! Younger children could glue on a small piece of paper that the teacher has written today's Bible verse.

WATCHING AND WAITING CHART: Give each child a STAR shape to cut out. (The star can be two triangles, putting one upside down and the other right side up to form a 6 pointed star). Write WATCH AND WAIT in the middle of the star to hang in the classroom. On each POINT of the star, write ways to watch and wait, such as worshiping, Praising, Serving, Loving Him, Loving One Another, and on the 6th point, write JESUS IS COMING AGAIN! Add glue and glitter around the edges of the Star and add a piece of yarn for hanging!

CHRISTMAS STAR CUPCAKES: Tell children to BE READY AND ALERT as they take a walk around the room, following the teacher until they spot a Christmas Star cupcake or cookie for each child! The teacher can use imagination in hiding the cupcakes in a secluded spot.

SING A SONG: Away in a Manger, using motions and actions.

Song: "Away in a Manger"

[Words and Music \(pdf\)](#)



[MP3 Accompaniment Track](#)

Song: "Come, Thou Long-expected Jesus"

[Words and Music \(pdf\)](#)



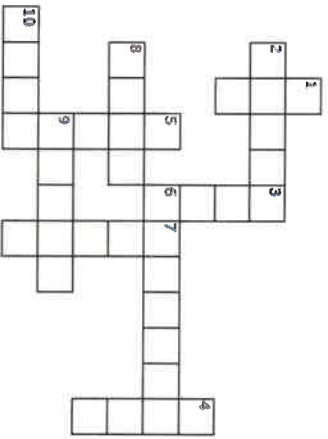
[MP3 Accompaniment Track](#)

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About Carol Williams

Carol and her husband have served churches in Illinois, Minnesota, Mississippi, Michigan, and Indiana. Carol loves to work with children so you will find her teaching in Junior Church and children's Sunday School. She also has clowning ministry in which she is known as Bubbles tc (the clown).

Crossword Puzzle



- ACROSS**
- To keep an eye on; to guard
 - An adult male chicken
 - To have information about something; to be aware of something
 - To be in a period of rest such as when we go to bed at night
 - A particular moment in the day, such as eight o'clock
- DOWN**
- A period of 24 hours
 - A period of sixty minutes
 - The loud cry of an adult male chicken
 - The place where a person or family lives
 - The person who has something such as property

HOUR	DAY	WATCH	OWNER	KNOW
CROW	TIME	ROOSTER	SLEEP	HOUSE



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Children's Worship Bulletin

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Mark 13:32-37

Word Search

X S Y U H H R S L E E P I N G
J I E C E U N C F P R N C A F
B N T R T E D V W U C Z R P L
T A P R V R C E O X Y R O Q U
W T E A A A Y H O S S Z K O Y K
T L E U Z V N G B T S F S W J
A H G J L M M T L C W J T U S
M I D N I G H T S O Z G E H N
F M L Q O E I N N S K S R O N
A T W R V V X K O N L N Y U X
T V H E V E D A Y E W E C S K
H J L Z Z N G E G A W J E E C
E D T X W I I N D D O O R S N
R K D D R N A T U M B Q K O C
A T I M E G P D D I K Q S F O

GUARD	DOOR	HOUR	ALERT	HOUSE
HEAVEN	SON	WATCH	ANGELS	CROWS
MIDNIGHT	FATHER	DAWN	ROOSTER	EVENING
DAY	TIME	SLEEPING	SERVANTS	KNOW

Church Name
Address
City

Decoder Puzzle

Each number represents a letter of the alphabet. Substitute the correct letter for the numbers to reveal the coded words.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26
S	F	N	M	P	I	Y	U	H	D	A	Z	R	J	B	K	V	X	E	Q	L	O	G	T	C	W

- 10-11-26-3 _____
- 10-11-7 _____
- 16-3-22-26 _____
- 19-17-19-3-6-3-23 _____
- 1-21-19-19-5-6-3-23 _____
- 26-11-24-25-9 _____
- 11-21-19-13-24 _____
- 4-6-10-3-6-23-9-24 _____
- 9-22-8-13 _____
- 23-8-11-13-10 _____

HOUR	WATCH	KNOW	DAY	DAWN
MIDNIGHT	EVENING	SLEEPING	GUARD	ALERT



Color Me!



Color the picture of Mary, Joseph, and Jesus. Then, beginning December 1st, color one star each day until Christmas.



Color the picture, then each day color one star beginning with number one.
(You could also use star stickers instead of coloring the stars.)