

# Advent 1

## Background

Focus: the prophets

## Material

The basket for Advent is on one of the center shelves.

It contains:

- a blue felt underlay
- 4 blue votive candles
- 5 advent cards

You'll also need the model of Bethlehem.

And you'll need the snuffer and matches from the Christ candle basket.

## Movements

*When the children are settled, go to the shelves and bring the Advent basket to the circle. In separate trips, get Bethlehem and the snuffer and matches. Take your time, treating the materials with care and respect. Be seated and wait until everyone is ready, then begin.*

*Place the model of Bethlehem in the center of the table. Start to roll out the underlay as you introduce the color of Advent. Only unroll as much underlay as is needed to hold the first Advent card.*

*Move your hand over the blue.*

## Words

Watch carefully where I go so you will always know where to find this lesson.

Everything is changed. It is now the time of the color blue.

Blue is the color of getting ready. It is the color of the sky just before dawn. Advent is the season of getting ready.

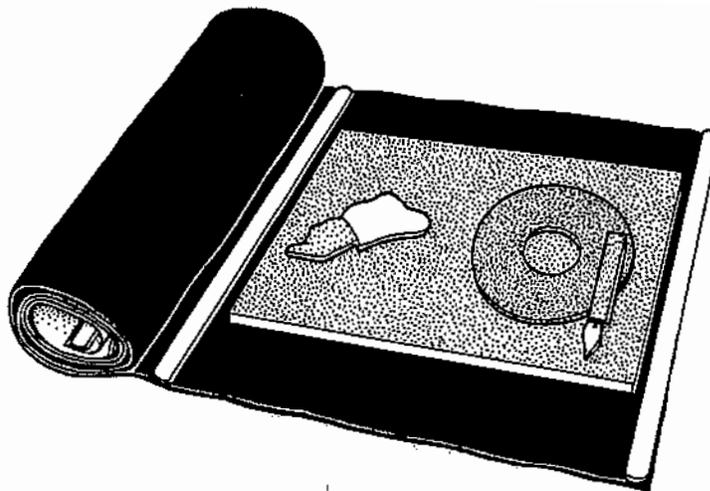
Blue is also the color of Mary, the mother of Jesus. She is about to have a baby. But this will be a very special baby. This baby will be a king. But the king who is coming is not the kind of king that people thought was coming. This king had no army, no great house, and no riches. This King was a baby who was born in a barn.

The King who was coming is still coming. This is full of mystery. You know, a mystery is hard to enter sometimes. That is why this time of Advent is so important. Sometimes people can walk right through a mystery and not even know it is there. This time of year you will see people hurrying in the malls buying things and doing this and that, but they will miss the Mystery. They don't know how to get ready or maybe they just forgot.

The Church learned a long time ago that people need a way to get ready to enter or even come close to a mystery like Christmas. The Church set aside four weeks to get ready. This is such a great Mystery that it takes that long to get ready. During this time, we are all on the way to Bethlehem. We are all making the journey. We are all getting ready to enter the Mystery of Christmas, so let's go with the prophets, the Holy Family, the shepherds, the angels, and the Magi and all the rest to make the journey that was not just back then. It is also now.

*Place the first Advent card in its section of the underlay. The first card shows one lit Advent candle and a prophet pointing the way.*

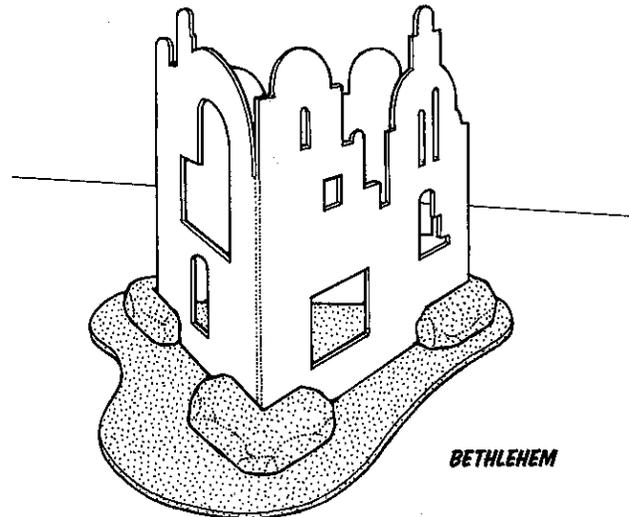
Prophets are people who come so close to God, and God comes so close to them, that they know what is most important.



***THE FIRST ADVENT CARD (STORYTELLER'S PERSPECTIVE)***

*Point to the model of Bethlehem that you put in the middle of the circle when the lesson began.*

They pointed the way to Bethlehem. They didn't know exactly what was going to happen there, but they knew this was the place.



This Sunday is the time we remember the prophets. Here is a prophet pointing the way to Bethlehem, showing us the way, too.

*Point to Bethlehem again. Be emphatic, bold, definite.*

Stop. Watch. Pay attention. Something incredible is going to happen in Bethlehem.

*Place the first of the blue candles between you and the section of the underlay with the card on it. Light the candle.*

This is the light of the prophets. Let's enjoy the light.

*Sit for a moment and genuinely enjoy the light of the prophets.*

Prophets are the people who know the most important things. They knew which way to go. They are the ones who showed us the way. Now we can go to Bethlehem, too.

*Pick up the candle snuffer.*

I want to show you something very strange and very important. Look.

I want to show you what happens when the light is changed. Sometimes people don't pay attention to this. They miss this part.

Look. Do you see how the flame is in just one place now? It is right here. When I change the light, it will no longer be in just one place. You can't see it after it spreads out all over the room, but it is there.

*Snuff the candle. Hold the snuffer over the flame for it to fill with smoke. When you lift it, the smoke will rise and begin to spread out.*

Watch. Do you see it? It is no longer here in this one place. Now it is spreading out, getting thinner and thinner as it fills up the room with the light of the prophets. Anywhere you go in this room you will be close to the prophets.

There may even be one sitting in this circle. Peophets can be boys, and prophets can be girls. They pay attention. They know things.

*Enjoy the moment and then begin to put the material back. There is no wondering at the end of this lesson. It is better to let the presence of the prophets rest in the room.*

Now watch carefully where I go with this material, so you will always know where to get it when you want to work with it.

*Carry Bethlehem back to its shelf first. Then put the card, the underlay, and the blue candle back in the Advent basket and return it to the center shelf. Return the matches and snuffer to the Christ candle basket.*

*When everything is put away, come back to the circle and begin to help the children make their decisions about what work to get out next.*