



# ***The Jesse Tree***

PACKET 1



**RESURRECTION**

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# ***The Jesse Tree Tradition***

This year, the 25 Advent and Christmas Day readings of the annual Advent Guide follow the tradition of the Jesse Tree. The name comes from a prophecy in Isaiah 11 in which we learn God's Messiah would come from the family of Jesse, King David's father. So the Jesse Tree tradition seeks to tell the story of Jesus's genealogy from creation to his birth through 25 readings taken from the Old and New Testaments. In other words, the Jesse Tree helps us remember God's love for the world in Jesus Christ.

Each passage has its own symbol. These symbols are often made into ornaments and placed on a symbolic Jesse Tree. Through Scripture and symbol, the Jesse Tree roots us in God's great love story.

There are different ways to organize the readings and symbols. For our Jesse Tree:

**#1** reminds us of Jesus's presence before creation and involvement in all of creation.

**#2-3** remind us of our sin, our need of God's salvation in Jesus Christ, and God's faithfulness to save us because of his love.

**#4-9** highlight the ways God established his covenant, or promise, with a chosen people through whom his love and salvation would be extended to all the world.

**#10-12** show us the continuing development of Jesus's earthly lineage and faithfulness of God to prepare the way for his Son, the Messiah for all the world.

**#13** illustrates God's ongoing faithfulness to those outside his chosen people as well as foreshadow the death and resurrection of Jesus.

**#14-19** take us through different prophecies about the coming Messiah.

**#20-25** retell the stories of Jesus's earthly family and the narrative of his birth.

What follows in the pamphlet are further descriptions for each passage and symbol, as well as additional passages for reflection. The pamphlet also includes ornament templates for each symbol. These were created by graphic designers from the congregations of Resurrection Brooklyn. We recommend printing on cardstock. Color and decorate the ornaments in whatever creative way you like and use them over the weeks of Advent and Christmas as you prepare and celebrate.

The Advent Guide and the Jesse Tree Pamphlet could be used together or independently. Regardless, we hope this pamphlet and the ornaments help you enter the joy of Advent.



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## DAY 1 - CREATION

**SYMBOL - THE WORLD**

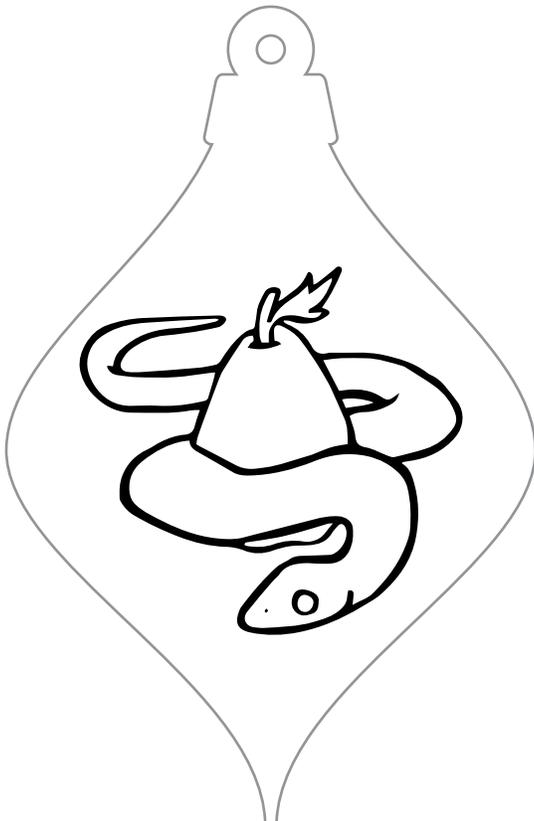
**MAIN READING:** Genesis 1:1; 2:5-8

**ADDITIONAL READINGS:** John 1:1-4, Colossians 1:16

**ARTIST:** Tony Leuci, leucidg.com

*We sometimes forget that Jesus is present in the Bible from the very first page. Jesus is the Light of the World, who scatters darkness and brings order to chaos. With the Father and the Holy Spirit, Jesus created all things, including you and me. The Bible reminds us over and over again that creation was an act of God's love.*

Cut ornaments out via gray line.



## DAY 2 - THE FIRST SIN

**SYMBOL - THE SERPENT**

**MAIN READING:** Genesis 3:1-15, 23

**ADDITIONAL READINGS:** 1 John 1:8-10, Isaiah 53:6

**ARTIST:** Katie Story, thefrisby.com

*God intended everything to reflect his goodness and beauty and he intended us to be in a loving relationship with him and one another. Sadly, we are prone to doubt and distrust God and his love for us. Adam and Eve's story reminds us of this and the way our sin (or our rejection of God and his love) breaks our relationships with God and one another.*

*What we see in Adam and Eve's story is that they were not alone in their disobedience! The symbol of the serpent reminds us how they doubted God because they listened to the lies of Satan. So in this story, we not only see the beginning of sin, but also God's promise (v.15) to overcome sin and Satan by sending a Savior who would come from Adam and Eve's family. This, of course, is Jesus!*



## **DAY 3 - NOAH & THE ARK**

### **SYMBOL - THE ARK**

**MAIN READING:** Genesis 6:5-8, 7:1-5, 9:16

**ADDITIONAL READINGS:** 1 Peter 3:18-22

**ARTIST:** Logan Emser, [loganemser.com](http://loganemser.com)

*The end of Genesis 3 tells us that that Adam and Eve had to leave their garden home as a consequence of their sin. As their family multiplied and filled the earth, many of them forgot about God and his love, and out of selfishness they did terrible things. In response, God sent a flood. But out of his great love and mercy, God saved Noah, his family. By doing so, God remained faithful to his first promise to Adam and Eve.*

*The ark reminds us of the destructive power of sin and that God cannot ignore it. At the same time, the ark (and rainbow) reminds us that God is faithful to keep his promises and always makes a way to save us from sin.*



## **DAY 4 - ABRAHAM'S CALL**

### **SYMBOL - A CAMEL WITH A TENT**

**MAIN READING:** Genesis 12:1-7

**ADDITIONAL READINGS:** Genesis 17:5, Matthew 1:1, Hebrews 11:8

**ARTIST:** Chi Ling Moy

*A descendent of Noah, Abraham was chosen by God to establish a people and nation, Israel, through whom all the world would be blessed. This promise was sealed through a covenant. This nation would not only testify to God's love, but would also be the birthplace of the Messiah. Again, we see God's faithfulness to fulfill his original promise.*

*Scripture also holds Abraham as a person of great faith. Although he made many mistakes, he returned over and over again to God's promises and exercised trust in God and his ways.*

## DAY 5 - ISAAC & THE RAM

**SYMBOL - RAM AND BUNDLE OF STICKS**

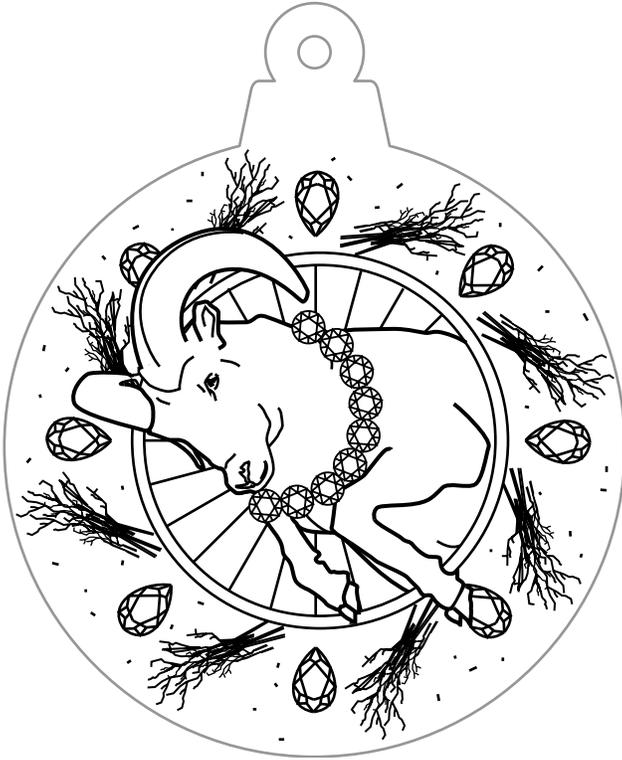
**MAIN READING:** Genesis 22:1-13

**ADDITIONAL READING:** John 1:29

**ARTIST:** Chi Ling Moy

*God's promise to Abraham--to make his descendants numerous and into a great nation-- seemed like an impossible one: Sarah, Abraham's wife, was unable to have her own children. As they grew older, they didn't know how God would keep his promise. Genesis 17 recounts how both Abraham and Sarah laughed when they were told she would finally conceive at the age of 90. Indeed, she did and had a son, whose name was Isaac, which means laughter.*

*God's promise again seemed like an impossible one when God asked Abraham to give up his only son as an offering. Ever trusting, Abraham obeyed, but before he could offer Isaac, God provided a ram instead. Centuries later, Jesus would sacrifice himself as the perfect "Lamb of God" to save the world from sin.*



## DAY 6 - JACOB'S LADDER

**SYMBOL - LADDER**

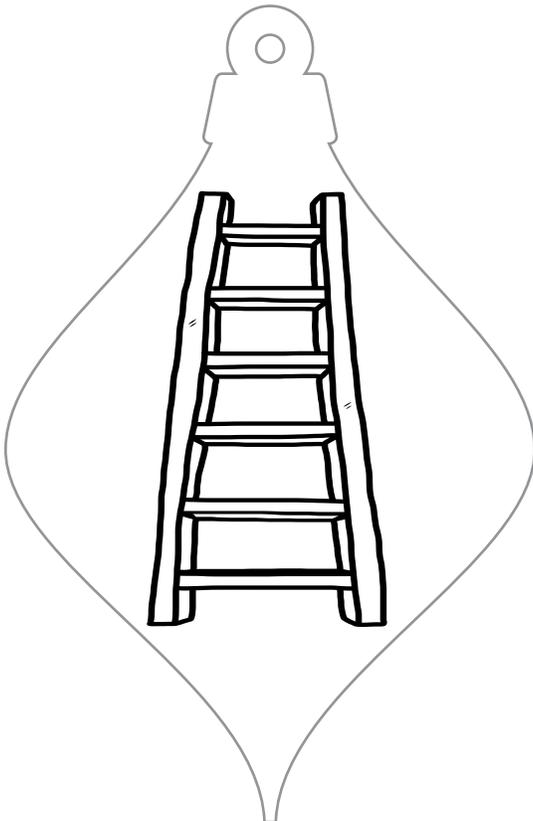
**MAIN READING:** Genesis 28:10-17

**ADDITIONAL READING:** Matthew 1:2

**ARTIST:** Tony Leuci, leucidg.com

*Isaac had twin sons, Isaac and Esau. Isaac disgraced himself by cheating his brother out of his inheritance. A scoundrel, Isaac fled his home. Although alone and a failure, God showed Jacob extraordinary kindness. One night, God appeared to Jacob in a dream and showed him a ladder connecting heaven and earth. This meant God was close to him despite his sin, and that God would come to him no matter what. In the dream, God also told Jacob that about his promise to Abraham and that he would fulfill it through Jacob and his family. In Jacob, we see again how God does not despise the weak, but instead embraces them and blesses them abundantly.*

*The ladder also points to Jesus Christ, who gave up his glory and condescended to us so that we could know the nearness of God and enjoy communion with God again.*



## DAY 7 - JOSEPH'S COAT

**SYMBOL:** A COLORFUL COAT

**MAIN READING:** Genesis 37:3-36, 50:18-21

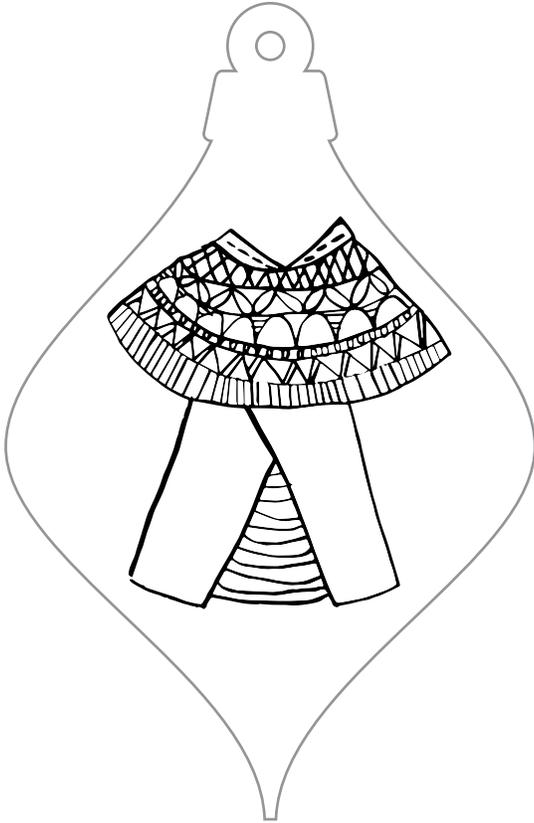
**ADDITIONAL READING:** Hebrews 11:22

**ARTIST:** Georgia Steadman, Freshman, LaGuardia H.S.

*Jacob had many sons. Joseph was the 2nd to youngest and also a favorite. His relationship with his older brothers became strained after he received an expensive coat from their father and after Joseph had dreams about ruling over them.*

*One day, his brothers decided to sell Joseph to be a slave in Egypt. Although tragic, God protected Joseph and used him to save many from famine, including Joseph's family, who left their home of Canaan and resettled in Egypt under Joseph's protection. What his brothers meant for harm, God meant for good. Once again, we see God preserving his people to keep his promise to send a Messiah.*

*Joseph's story also points to Jesus Christ, who was betrayed, beaten and unjustly hung on a cross. What others meant for harm, God meant for good: it is through his suffering Jesus redeems the world.*



## DAY 8 - MOSES AND THE 10 COMMANDMENTS

**SYMBOL:** TWO STONE TABLETS

**MAIN READING:** Exodus 20:1-20

**ADDITIONAL READING:** Psalm 119:11, Galatians 2:16

**ARTIST:** Tom Eaton, goodeaton.com

*Joseph's family and tribe remained in Egypt for many years and they flourished. Unfortunately, they became slaves of Egypt. After centuries of enduring terrible hardship, their prayers for deliverance and freedom were answered: God sent Moses to lead his people out of Egypt to Canaan, the Promised Land.*

*After leaving Egypt and before entering Canaan, God gave Moses and his people the 10 Commandments, or the Law. God's Law not only distinguishes his people by showing them how to live, but it also shows us our their need of his Messiah by revealing the depth of our sin and imperfection.*

