

## MWA - HOME AND OVERSEAS PAPER - NOVEMBER 2022

Advent 2022 begins on Sunday 27<sup>th</sup> November. I'm sure many of you have an Advent Calendar, perhaps with chocolate to count down the days to Christmas. Some of you may use a special daily devotional to help you reflect upon the message of Advent and Christmas. In church we put up the Advent star and many congregations also have an Advent wreath. The Jesse Tree is an old tradition, which I had not previously heard of so I thought I would describe this to you. If you like the idea, you have time before Advent starts to put one together.

The tradition of the Jesse Tree started in medieval times. The name comes from Jesse, the father of King David – the great Jewish king. These words found in Isaiah 11:1-4 are seen by Christians as a prophecy about Jesus:

*There shall come forth a shoot from the stump of Jesse,*

*and a branch from his roots shall bear fruit.*

*And the Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him,*

*the Spirit of wisdom and understanding,*

*the Spirit of counsel and might,*

*the Spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord.*

*And his delight shall be in the fear of the Lord.*

*He shall not judge by what his eyes see,*

*or decide disputes by what his ears hear,*

*but with righteousness he shall judge the poor.*

The first Jesse trees were large carvings, tapestries or stained-glass windows which taught people Jesus' family history. It is the original use of the family tree as a representation of family history or genealogy.

Jesse Trees are now used as a type of Advent calendar. People use a normal Christmas tree, or a banner in the shape of a tree or even a large branch with smaller branches coming off. A small decoration is hung on the tree each day to represent a particular character or story in the Bible.

Perhaps this is something you could make for use at home or in Church during the season of Advent. You could make everything yourself or there are resources available to purchase.

Eden.co.uk – an online Christian resources seller – sells a book called "The Jesse Tree" for £5.96 and I found some resources on etsy.com also.

For those of you who like to craft or have children who may enjoy the activity; overleaf is a table which shows the Bible Story, where it might be found and its symbol for each day of December. If you want to download some drawings of the symbols to turn into decorations, these can be found on [faithward.org](http://faithward.org).

You can of course just read the appropriate story each day.

I hope you find this a helpful way of preparing for the birth of Christ during Advent.

Sr Janet Cooper

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<b>Bible Story</b>	<b>Scripture</b>	<b>Symbol</b>
The Jesse Tree	Isaiah 11:1-2	Stump with a branch
Creation of humans	Genesis 1:26-31	Globe/Adam and Eve
The Fall	Genesis 3	Snake and apple
Noah's Ark	Genesis 6:11-14; 7:17-8:3; 9:8-13	Noah's Ark
The Promised Land	Genesis 12:1-7	Tent and Camel
God's promise to Abraham	Genesis 15:1-6	Starry Sky
Joseph	Genesis 37:1-36	Joseph's coat of many colours
The 10 Commandments	Deuteronomy 5:1-22	Tablets
Rahab	Joshua 2:1-21	Red rope
Ruth and Boaz	Ruth 2:1-4;12	Grain
God chooses David to be King	1 Samuel 16:1-15	Crown
David the Shepherd King	2 Samuel 5:1-5	Sheep/shepherd's crook
Solomon builds God's Temple	1 Kings 5:5; 1 Kings 6	Temple
Esther saves her people	Esther 4	Sceptre
Isaiah's Prophecy of a Saviour	Isaiah 9:2-7	Sun
Isaiah's prophecy of the Second Coming	Isaiah 11:6-9	Wolf and lamb
Jonah and the Whale	Jonah 3:1-5	Whale
Daniel and the Lion's Den	Daniel 6	Lion
Prophecy of a Saviour born in Bethlehem	Micah 5:1-5	City of Bethlehem
Elizabeth and Zechariah	Luke 5:1-5	Praying hands
John the Baptist	Matthew 3:1-6	Baptism Shell
God chooses Mary	Luke 1:26-38	Mary
Angel appears to Joseph	Matthew 1:18-25	Angel
Mary and Joseph go to Bethlehem	Luke 2:1-5	Sandals
Jesus is born	Luke 2:6-21	Baby in manger