Make a Jesse Tree for Advent with Trinity Baptist Church

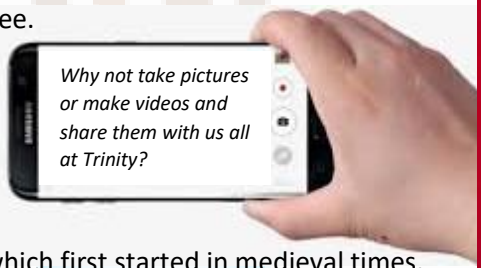
Here's an idea for something a bit different that you can do each day during advent this year, as well as or maybe instead of opening your advent calendar. It's aimed at children, young people and families, but it can be used by anyone.

There'll be a worksheet that will look at a Bible character (or sometimes an object) that is part of the history (His Story – get it!?) of Jesus, with maybe a video or something else, and a craft activity making a decoration for a Jesse Tree.
There'll be suggestions on how to make the decorations – but be creative and use your imagination, you don't have to follow our instructions. Try to make your decorations as bright and colourful as you can.

Use your Jesse Tree to share the story with others – if they ask you what it's about tell them the stories and how they are part of the history of Jesus whose birth we celebrate at Christmas.

Plan beforehand

- Decide beforehand where you are going to put your Jesse Tree – will it be inside or outside?
- What are you going to use for the tree? You could use a tree or bush already in the garden or a twiggy branch that you secure in the ground or a pot, or a Christmas tree, or draw or make a tree.
- Make your decorations bright and colourful. Find crafty stuff you might need – paper, material, glue, plastic, paints, scissors, wool, ribbon or string for hanging, etc – now to save yourself time later.
- Any decorations you make for an outside tree will need to be weatherproof – make them out of material or maybe use old plastic containers and bottles to craft with (be careful plastic has sharp edges when you cut it!), or use paper then cover them in Sellotape to protect them. Use your imagination.
- You might want to put lights on your tree.
- Display your tree in a prominent place.



What is a Jesse Tree?

Jesse Trees are a very old Christmas tradition which first started in medieval times. They are used to illustrate the stories of the Bible from creation to Christmas using decorations which helped people who couldn't read remember the stories.

The name comes from Jesse who was King David's father. One prophecy about Jesus in Isaiah, says:

> *A shoot will come up from the stump of Jesse; from his roots a Branch will bear fruit.*
> *The Spirit of the LORD will rest on him - the Spirit of wisdom and of understanding, the Spirit of counsel and of power, the Spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the LORD - and he will delight in the fear of the LORD. He will not judge by what he sees with his eyes, or decide by what he hears with his ears; but with righteousness he will judge the needy, with justice he will give decisions for the poor of the earth.* Isaiah 11:1-4 (NIV)

A branch is a sign of new life and new beginnings. Jesus was a descendent of King David and we believe that Jesus is this new branch.