

FAMILY TABLE *FOR* *THE* CHRISTIAN YEAR

2006-2007

I know! It's confusing. First there is the “real” New Year—January 1. Then there is the “functional” New Year when school and church programs start in September. Then there is the *Christian* New Year—starting in Advent.

Together, with your family members, it is both fun and helpful to follow the Christian New Year. It helps us see some things in our Christian experience that are unique to us as followers of Christ.

Have a wonderful time with your family as you travel through the church year!

The dates for the Christian year vary from year to year. Here are the dates for 2006-2007 to cut out and put on the fridge!

ADVENT: December 3 – December 24, 2006

CHRISTMAS SEASON: December 25 – January 6, 2007

EPIPHANY SEASON: January 7 – February 18, 2007

LENT: February 19 – April 7, 2007

EASTERTIDE: April 8 – May 26, 2007

PENTECOST: May 27 – December 2, 2007
(ordinary time)

In each of the seasons you may:

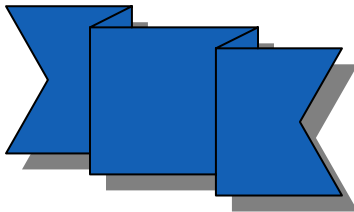
- use the sheets in any order
- use the sheets any day of the week
- continue some of the activities for days
- add items that are meaningful for your family (special prayers, songs, etc.)

(There are enough sheets for each season that you can have a new one each week.)

THE VARIOUS PARTS *OF THE* CHRISTIAN YEAR

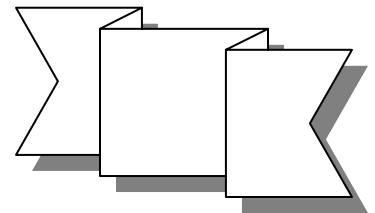
As you will see when you read the descriptions below, there are wonderful colours that match the seasons of the Christian year. Work with your family to find or buy squares of cloth in these colours—blue, white, green, purple, red. If you wish, you may also add a square of black that is only used on Good Friday.

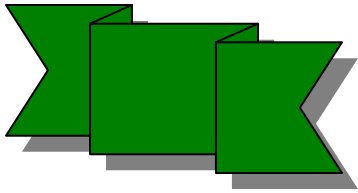
Spread the appropriate square in the middle of your eating table and, as the season changes, change your coloured cloth.



Advent: The colour of Advent is **purple or blue**. (Traditionally, the Advent colour was purple, but, recently, some Christians use blue to avoid confusion with Lent, which is also purple.) Blue is the colour of hope and expectancy. Advent is the season of waiting for the coming of the Messiah. Advent is 4 weeks long.

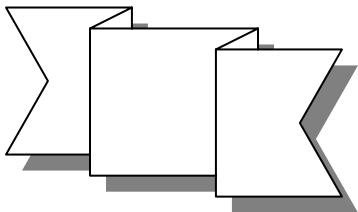
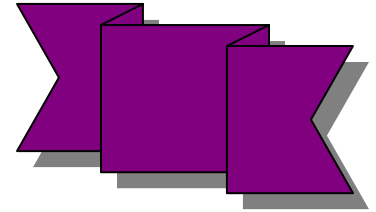
Christmas season: The colour of the Christmas season is **white**. White represents light, purity, and joy. The Christmas season is 12 days long. In the Christmas season, we celebrate the mystery that God comes to us in human form.





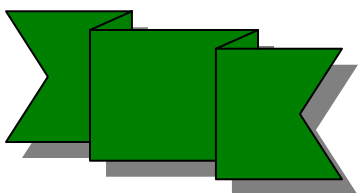
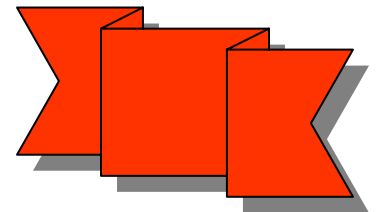
Epiphany season: The colour of the Epiphany season is **green**. Green is the colour of growth. The season of Epiphany goes until Ash Wednesday, the beginning of Lent. In the Epiphany season, we celebrate that we can see God's nature in Jesus Christ, who is a Light to the world

Lent: The colour of Lent is **purple**. Purple represents repentance and preparation. It is also the colour of royalty and suggests the coming of the King of Kings. Lent is 40 days long (not counting the Sundays). Lent is a time for thoughtful reflection, a time to remember what it means to be a disciple of Christ.



Eastertide: The colour for Eastertide is **white** which represents light, purity and joy. There are 50 days in this season (including Sundays). Eastertide is a joyful season to celebrate the death, resurrection and ascension of Jesus.

Pentecost season (ordinary time): The colour of Pentecost Day is **red**. Red is the colour of fire. (On Pentecost day people reported that God's Spirit came to them like dancing flames – Acts 3:2.) On Pentecost day we celebrate the gift of the Holy Spirit to the church.



In Pentecost season (the long ordinary time after Pentecost Day) we use the colour **green**. Green represents growth and reminds us of the ongoing work and life of the church in the world. Throughout the long Pentecost season—a time to grow and mature—we explore how God's Spirit helps us do our work as Christians.

Use the calendar on the next page to colour the seasons of the Christian year.

