

## What are the Seasons of Advent and Christmas?

In the Episcopal Church, Advent marks the beginning of a new liturgical year and is the first season of the church year. It begins with the fourth Sunday before Christmas and continues through the day before Christmas (Christmas Eve.) The name is derived from a Latin word for “coming.” The season is a time of preparation and expectation for the coming celebration of our Lord’s nativity, and for the final coming of Christ “in power and glory.” In many parishes, the main liturgical celebrations of Christmas take place on Christmas Eve.

In the Episcopal *Book of Common Prayer (BCP)*, the Christmas season is the second season of the church year and lasts twelve days, from Christmas Day until January 5, the day before the Epiphany. The season includes Christmas Day, the First Sunday after Christmas Day, the Holy Name of Our Lord Jesus Christ, and may include the Second Sunday after Christmas Day. Christmas Day is one of the seven principal feasts in the Episcopalian tradition. *The Book of Occasional Services (BOS)* is a companion volume to the BCP. It includes a variety of resources for use during Christmas, including a form for a Station at a Christmas Crèche, a form for a Christmas Festival of Lessons and Music, and seasonal blessings for use during the Christmas season.