



# Teaching Guide

FOR MORNING RICHES COMPANION TO THE JESSE TREE ADVENT PLAN

CREATED FOR YOUR FAMILY BY:



“A root shall  
sprout from  
the stump of  
Jesse and a  
branch shall  
grow out of  
its roots.”

-ISAIAH 11:1-

# CHRISTMAS SCHOOL

## Welcome to Christmas School during Advent!

Whether you're a public school family, a homeschool family, or a Charlotte Mason family (like us!), the Christmas season offers a chance to slow down and create a sacred rhythm at home. "Christmas School" provides the grace and freedom to make as many of the day's school subjects Holiday-themed. And the way you start your morning—long before getting to the traditional school subjects—can set the tone for a more gentle and pleasant day of learning while adding richness to your kids' lives!

While most families utilize our Jesse Tree Advent Plan in the evenings, this Morning Riches Companion provides corresponding scripture, poetry, art, and music studies that will add beauty, goodness, and truth to your family's day! To find comfort and joy in these activities, we encourage you to take only the parts that work for your family without any guilt of leaving something out. It takes great effort as a busy parent to hold space for something sacred in your household, so let any amount of those efforts count as enough!

Sending warm wishes for this Advent season,

*The Erb Family*



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# What's Included



## One hymn (a Christmas carol, of course!) to be recited weekly.

It features the carol we'll sing together on Dec. 25 in our Jesse Tree Advent Plan. Hopefully, your little one will be delighted to be so familiar with the carol after reciting it four weeks in a row.

**Why?** Charlotte Mason explains that "The singing of hymns at home should be a special delight; and the habit of soft and reverent singing, of offering our very best in praise, should be carefully formed." This starts with the familiarity of the tune, which is why we are practicing reciting it line-by-line weekly.

**Tips:** Share info about the author or composer and the story of that person or song so your child can connect appreciate it. Help them use these details to place the hymn into history. Then practice reciting the hymn by asking them to repeat you, line-by-line.

## One longer Bible passage to be recited weekly.

This features the passage we'll read together on Dec. 25 in our Jesse Tree Advent Plan!

**Why?** Recitation is the practice of asking your child to repeat, line-by-line, a high-quality piece of literature for the purpose of learning how to speak beautifully through your own modeling.

**Tips:** While memorizing the passage is not the goal, it's often a by-product. Encourage your child to say the lines in their most beautiful voice and be sure to commend them for giving it their best.

## Four weekly Bible memory verses.

These same verses will be featured on the following Sunday during the Advent candle lighting.

**Why?** Memorization helps your child store beauty and truth in their hearts forever.

**Tips:** Repeat that week's Bible verse every day together!

### Four weekly poem readings.

**Why?** Exposing your child to rich literature expands their vocabulary and shows by example how to choose words that create imagery and ideas in the listeners' minds.


**Tips:** Give background info about the poet, sharing what time frame they lived in, what inspired their writing, and why they might have written that piece before the reading. Help ensure your child gets the most out of this time with follow-up questions, like asking them what line they liked best, or what the poem made them think of, or what type of Christmas scene they might paint to match it, or even copying a line from the poem for today's handwriting practice. If your child is at the emergent reader level, consider asking them to scan the poem first, picking out three words they don't know, and perform a quick spelling lesson before reading the poem together.

### Four weekly art studies.

**Why?** Use this time to introduce your kids to good art while exploring Christ's profound effects on artists across time. Charlotte Mason describes a year of art studies as helping your child enjoy "a couple of hundred pictures by great masters hanging permanently in the halls of [their] imagination." The practice of studying an image can greatly contribute to a child's ability to take mental pictures (something they can store forever in their little minds while sharpening their observation skills).

**Tips:** Set expectations for your child if this is a new practice for your family. Explain that we're going to take one minute of quiet to stare at the painting and challenge them to close their eyes yet still recall details from the painting. Once that minute is up, hide the painting and ask a few prompting questions. First, ask the open-ended question of who can describe the painting. If you have multiple students, then ask who can add on. Other questions include what colors are most prominent or why an artist may have drawn the subject in such a way. Take time to look up the answers so you can share them at the end of the study.

# Optional Add-ons



There are great and numerous activities you can add to your Christmas School schedule to make it robust. But please take this to heart—you can't do ALL the things. Pick activities that enrich your life and leave the rest behind. You can find many great resources with lists of ideas, so rather than repeating those, we're going to instead direct you to those as you decide whether or not they fit into your mornings...

## Composer Studies:

Just take less than 10 minutes once per week to listen to one piece of music while learning a bit about the composer. Some of the Holiday pieces in the schedule below correspond with songs in our Jesse Tree Advent Plan:

- **Week #1:** **The Nutcracker, Op. 71** by Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky
- **Week #2:** **Jesu, Joy of Man's Desiring, BWV 147** by Johann Sebastian Bach
- **Week #3:** **Es ist ein Ros entsprungen** by Michael Praetorius
- **Week #4:** **Messiah, HWV 56: No. 12, For Unto Us a Child is Born** by George Frideric Handel

## Bonus:

[Watch a virtual singalong of Handel's Messiah!](#)

## Christmas Tales:

It's great to feature one special book per week, perhaps reading it more than once so a child can become familiarized with the tale. Charlotte Mason encourages prioritizing high quality, timeless tales and references these as "Living Books" because they span across timeframes.

## Great Sources:

[Learning Through Literature's 4-Week Reading Plan](#)

[Sarah McKenzie of Read Aloud Revival Mama's Learning Corner](#)

[Holistic Homeschooler](#)

Find other great books on Instagram using the hashtags: [#livingbooks](#) [#christmasbooksforkids](#) [#charlottesmasonchristmas](#)

## Nature Studies:

Winter nature topics could include Christmas plants, evergreens, winter birds, hibernation, and the winter night sky, just to name a few!

### Great Sources:

[Exploring Nature with Children Winter Journal](#) by [Raising Up Wild Things](#)  
[Firefly Nature School](#)  
[Conifer Flashcards](#) by [Fiddlesticks Education](#)  
[Christmas Plant Mini Study](#) by [Stephanie Hathaway Designs](#)

## Handicrafts:

Pick a weekly project to work on. Charlotte Mason puts emphasis on activities that either build a usable skillset in the future or that result in the creation of something useful (in other words, she gives permission to YOU, Momma to skip the papercrafts that serve no purpose other than cluttering your fridge—instead focus on something with more meaning!).

### Great Sources:

[Hand-rolled beeswax candles](#)  
[Popcorn & cranberries garland](#)  
[All natural birdseed feeders](#)  
[Salt dough ornaments](#)  
[Loom work](#)  
[Salt/sugar scrub](#)

## Holiday Baking:

It's hard to resist some Holiday baking! Not only does baking with your children make great memories, but it's also a chance to sneak in a little math through measuring skills.

### Our Favorite Recipes:

[Sugar cookies](#)  
[Graham cracker gingerbread houses](#)  
[Chocolate pomegranate clusters](#)  
[Salted caramel popcorn](#)  
[No bake protein balls](#)  
[Chocolate oatmeal bars](#)

## Blessing Hour:

Call it what you will—Random Acts of Kindness, a service project, etc. and use this time in servitude to bless someone else during the Holiday season.

## Christmas Bucketlist:

How about just making a list from scratch of all the things you'd enjoy doing in December and add it to your schedule! But if you need a few ideas, [Encouraging Moms at Home](#) has graciously shared one.

# Daily Schedule



The following is a suggested schedule, but it's always encouraged to create your own based on your family's needs! Don't forget to add in our daily [Jesse Tree Advent Plan](#) via candlelight each day!

Week #1				
MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
MEMORY VERSE: MATTHEW 3:3	MEMORY VERSE: MATTHEW 3:3	MEMORY VERSE: MATTHEW 3:3	MEMORY VERSE: MATTHEW 3:3	MEMORY VERSE: MATTHEW 3:3
POEM STUDY: CHESTERTON	RECITATION: HYMN	ART STUDY: COPLEY	RECITATION: BIBLE PASSAGE	COMPOSER STUDY: TCHAIKOVSKY
CHRISTMAS TALE	BLESSING HOUR	WINTER NATURE STUDIES	HANDICRAFT	HOLIDAY BAKING
Week #2				
MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
MEMORY VERSE: PSALM 5:11	MEMORY VERSE: PSALM 5:11	MEMORY VERSE: PSALM 5:11	MEMORY VERSE: PSALM 5:11	MEMORY VERSE: PSALM 5:11
POEM STUDY: HARDY	RECITATION: HYMN	ART STUDY: HUGHES	RECITATION: BIBLE PASSAGE	COMPOSER STUDY: BACH
CHRISTMAS TALE	BLESSING HOUR	WINTER NATURE STUDIES	HANDICRAFT	HOLIDAY BAKING



*Week #3*

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
MEMORY VERSE: JOHN 3:16-17	MEMORY VERSE: JOHN 3:16-17	MEMORY VERSE: JOHN 3:16-17	MEMORY VERSE: JOHN 3:16-17	MEMORY VERSE: JOHN 3:16-17
POEM STUDY: TEASDALE	RECITATION: HYMN	ART STUDY: TISSOT	RECITATION: BIBLE PASSAGE	COMPOSER STUDY: PRAETORIUS
CHRISTMAS TALE	BLESSING HOUR	WINTER NATURE STUDIES	HANDICRAFT	HOLIDAY BAKING

*Week #4*

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
MEMORY VERSE: JOHN 14:27	MEMORY VERSE: JOHN 14:27	MEMORY VERSE: JOHN 14:27	MEMORY VERSE: JOHN 14:27	MEMORY VERSE: JOHN 14:27
POEM STUDY: LONGFELLOW	RECITATION: HYMN	ART STUDY: JELLET	RECITATION: BIBLE PASSAGE	COMPOSER STUDY: HANDEL
CHRISTMAS TALE	BLESSING HOUR	WINTER NATURE STUDIES	HANDICRAFT	HOLIDAY BAKING

*Our Planning Notes:*

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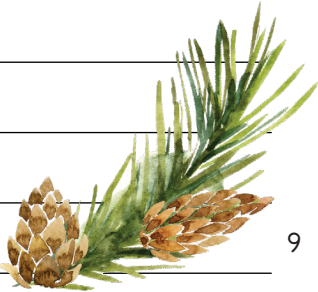
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# Getting Started



**Prepare Materials** Print out a copy for each student and use either a binder with sheet protectors or an empty restaurant menu to create a “Morning Menu” for easy reference. Just don’t forget to change them out each week!

**Prep Lessons** Take a few minutes to pull up any links and have any info ready to share on a specific author, artist, or composer. If you’re new to some of these teaching tactics, it may also be helpful to review the “Tips” section of today’s activity so you feel equipped.

**Create a Family Rhythm** Let the kids know you’ll be gathering for this special time first thing in the mornings before other school lessons (perhaps gather in the same spot you’ll be using for your nightly Jesse Tree Advent!). Consider making the first day extra special with a special snack or treat.

**Keep At It!** There will be days missed, but do your best to hold space for this new rhythm, keeping this time with your children sacred.