

The Church Year

The whole gospel story, told again every year.

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| • Advent | <i>Four weeks before Christmas</i> | Waiting. Longing. Preparing to receive a coming God. |
| • Christmas | <i>December 25 – January 5 (12 days)</i> | The incarnation. God has come and taken on flesh. |
| • Epiphany | <i>January 6</i> | Christ is revealed to the wider world. |
| • Time after Epiphany | <i>January – February/March</i> | Walking through the life and teaching of Christ. |
| • Lent | <i>Forty days before Easter</i> | Repentance and self-examination on the way to the cross. |
| • Holy Week | <i>The week before Easter</i> | Palm Sunday, Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, Holy Saturday. |
| • Easter | <i>Fifty days, Easter to Pentecost</i> | The resurrection. The church's oldest and greatest feast. |
| • Pentecost | <i>Fifty days after Easter</i> | The Spirit is poured out on the church. |
| • Time after Pentecost | <i>Pentecost – Advent</i> | The long green season. Living the Spirit-filled life. |

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The story doesn't end when the year does. It begins again — every year, the same gospel, told again.

Keeping the Year at Home

Pick one thing per season. That's enough to start.

- **Advent**
Light a candle each Sunday. Keep an Advent calendar. Read one longing psalm a week and let yourself actually wait.
- **Christmas**
Keep celebrating for the full twelve days, not just the one. Let the season linger instead of packing it away on the 26th.
- **Epiphany**
Read the story of the Magi. Mark the day Christ was revealed to the wider world — including you.
- **Lent**
Choose one small discipline — fasting from something, adding a practice — not to earn anything, but to be shaped by the season.
- **Holy Week**
Attend a Good Friday service if you can find one. If not, read the Passion narrative slowly, start to finish, in one sitting.
- **Easter**
Keep celebrating for the full fifty days. Say 'Christ is risen' out loud, even alone, more than just on Easter Sunday.
- **Pentecost**
Read Acts 2. Pray for the Spirit's presence in a specific, concrete part of your life.
- **Ordinary time**
Let this long season be unremarkable on purpose. Not every season is a feast. Ordinary faithfulness is still faithfulness.

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A LAST WORD

You don't have to do all of this, or do it perfectly, or start with everything at once. Keep one season this year. Add another next year. The calendar will teach you slowly what it's for.

You can step into the year wherever you are. The year will meet you.