

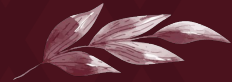


MCCC

Advent

Wreath 2023

Guideline





Purpose

To learn and reflect
on the Biblical meaning of
Christmas







What is Advent?

The word Advent means “coming” or “arrival.” The focus of the season is the celebration of the birth of Jesus the Christ.

Advent also symbolizes the spiritual journey of believers as they affirm that Christ has come, that He is present in the world today, and that He will come again in power.



What is Advent wreath?

The Advent wreath symbolizes the beginning of the church year.

It is a circular evergreen wreath (real or artificial) with five candles, four around the wreath and one in the center. Each aspect of the wreath has special meaning, contributing to the compelling story it communicates as a whole.



How to make the wreath?

Please feel free being creative to make the wreath! Craft video:
<https://youtu.be/TPVntcnmxXc>

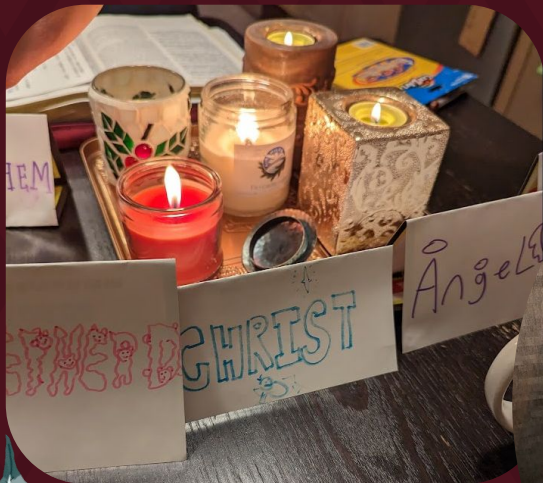


Photo and Video Sharing

We would encourage you to take pictures or videos of this event and share those in the album:

<https://photos.app.goo.gl/KKc1J1zaLhoCvPF99>

Advent 2023

Nov 19 · Shared



Candle Safety



Never leave a lit candle unattended

Advent



Advent is a time of waiting and anticipation, for at the end of Advent we celebrate Christmas and the Christ child. Each devotion during this Advent season explores what each group was waiting for.





01

*The Candle of
Prophecy*

Week of December 3





Light one purple candle.

Say: This is the candle of hope. The prophets in the Old Testament were full of hope that, eventually, the Messiah would come. The prophets were waiting, waiting on God's rescue plan. They talked about Jesus without knowing him, and were waiting and prophesying about someone they would never see.



Scripture reading and story: Isaiah 6:3, 7:14

“What Isaiah Saw”





Reflection

How could Isaiah's sins be forgiven? What was the vision of the burning coal supposed to represent? The rest of Isaiah fills in the picture. It speaks of a servant who would suffer so that our sins could be forgiven (Isaiah 53). It tells us that the sign of his coming would be a virgin (Mary!) conceiving and bearing a son who would be known as "Immanuel," which means "God with us." And it says that this deliverer would sit on David's throne and rule over a never-ending kingdom of peace (Isa. 9:7). Any guess who this could be? That's right! Jesus! The sacrifice on the altar that allows our sins to be forgiven isn't ultimately a piece of coal. It's Jesus, who gave himself up so that we could be forgiven.



Prayer

Thank God that the prophets never gave up, that they continued to tell people that the Messiah was coming. Ask God for help in pressing on when it seems like what we wait for will never happen.



02

The Bethlehem Candle

Week of December 10



Light two purple candles.

Say: “This is the second week of Advent. Today we light the candle of hope from last week, as well as the Bethlehem Candle or candle of love. These candles remind us of the hope that Jesus brings as well as the love that God Shows for us through Jesus. The Bethlehem candle reminds us of the waiting that Mary and Joseph did as they prepared for the arrival of Jesus.”



Scripture reading: Luke 1:26-38

Mary and Joseph waited for a miracle to happen for nine months. They knew that Jesus, the Son of God, would change their whole lives. And so they waited with anticipation for Jesus’ birth. There are things we wait for that change our whole lives: perhaps it is a move to a different state, the birth of a sibling, going to high school, change of new job or starting new living in another country. These are things we look forward to, but at the same time they make us nervous. In moving to another state, we wonder if we'll make new friends, if things will be good, and if we will like our new home. Any time a big change happens, we wait with excitement, but also with anxiety.

A white lightbulb icon inside a green square, which is itself inside a white square frame with a hanging string at the top. The background of the slide is dark red with green leaves and berries in the corners.

Reflection


Mary and Joseph must've been the same way. Here they were, a young engaged couple, when all of a sudden an angel appears to tell Mary that she would be the mother of the Son Of God. How excited they must've been to meet Jesus! And yet how anxious they must've been that they were going to be his parents. Can you imagine trying to parent the Son of God? As Mary and Joseph prepared for Jesus, we too prepare for Jesus' birthday. We Prepare for the time when we remember how Jesus came into the messiness of this world to show everyone how great God's love is.

Discussion: Talk about changes that you and your family have gone through over the years: what was it like waiting for the change to happen? How did you prepare?

A white icon of hands clasped in prayer, inside a green square, which is inside a white square frame. The background of the slide is dark red with green leaves and berries in the corners.

Prayer

Thank God for time to prepare for the celebration of Jesus' birth. Ask God to show you how you can help others who are going through big changes.

A cluster of yellow flowers with green leaves in the bottom right corner.

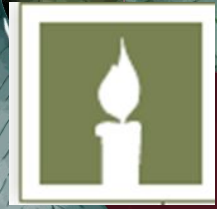


03

The Shepherd Candle

Week of December 17





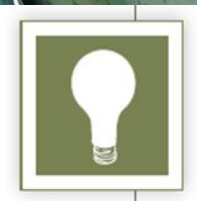
Light two purple candles and one pink candle

Say: “Today we light the pink candle, known as the candle of joy. We also light the candle of hope as well as the candle of love. Today we remember that Jesus is the hope of the world. We also remember that Jesus brought God's Love to us as well as joy. As we light this candle, we remember the shepherds who were in the field watching their flocks when, all of a sudden, everything changed.”



Scripture reading: Luke 2:8-20

The shepherds were waiting for morning. They were waiting for the sky to turn pink and the sun to come up, because that meant another night was over and their sheep were safe. When the sun came up, there would be other shepherds to help watch the flocks by day. Night was more dangerous for sheep: it was easier for them to wander off, and there were more predators around. So the shepherds waited for morning. And instead of morning, they saw something totally unexpected: a sky full of angels, singing the praises of God and the Savior who had just been born. Their normal night was turned into something extraordinary and a night they would never forget. They were busy waiting for the night to be over, but something better than morning was coming.



Reflection

Most of the time, our days are normal. But sometimes, amazing things happen. Like the shepherds, we don't always expect extraordinary things to happen in our ordinary days. But sometimes, God breaks into our days and we are awestruck. Maybe God does something big, like answer a prayer in a huge way. Or maybe it's something small, like when someone gives you a hug and makes your day better. Whatever it is, spend your days waiting with anticipation that God will do something. God is always at work even we don't always see it. God probably isn't going to send tons of angels to sing the good news like He did for the shepherds when Jesus was born. But as we go through our normal days waiting for them to be over, make sure to also be on the lookout for God to do something. He always is.

Discussion: Talk about any extraordinary things that have happened to your family on any days that started out normal. Talk about small ways that God reminds us He is there in the midst of our normal days.



Prayer

Ask God to help you be on the lookout for ways that He is working in the world.





04

The Angel Candle

Week of December 24



Light three purple candles and one pink candle

Say: “Today we light the last purple candle. This candle is the angel candle, or the candle of peace. This candle reminds us of the peace Jesus gives to us. We also light the other two purple candles, candles that remind us that Jesus brought hope and love to the world. We light the pink candle to remind us of the joy Jesus brings. As we light the candle of peace, we remember the angels and how long they waited to be able to tell the world the good news, that God had a rescue plan and that God Was changing the world.”



Scripture reading: Luke 2:9-15 and John 3:16-17

Throughout the Old Testament, there are angels who appeared to prophets to deliver God’s message to them. But they had to wait until the world was ready for the best message. Then one day, God said, it’s time! Go shout for joy and sing hallelujah because the Christ is born this day. And off they went, appearing to shepherds and telling everyone about how God had just changed the world.

A white lightbulb icon inside a green square, which is itself inside a white square frame with a hanging string at the top.

Reflection

In the time before Jesus, the angels were allowed to deliver bits and pieces of the good news. But finally, on that day when Jesus was born, finally they could announce it all. And in the blink of an eye, the world would never be the same.

Discussion

Talk about times in life when it felt as if you were waiting forever for something to happen. How did it feel when that something finally happened?

A white icon of two hands clasped in prayer, inside a green square, which is inside a white square frame.

Prayer

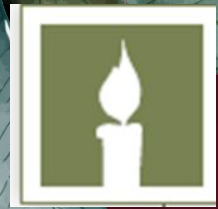
Thank God for changing the world in the blink of an eye. Thank God for times of waiting that teach us to listen for God.



05

The Christ Candle

Week of December 25



Light all the five candles

Say: “Christmas Day has finally come! Christ is born! Today, we light the Christ Candle in the center of our Advent wreath. All the candles glow today. The world is bright and warm. Today, Jesus is born! It’s Christmas Day!”



Scripture reading: Matthew 1:21-25 and Luke 2

On Christmas, we celebrate the birth of Jesus. You know that. But you may not know the strange way Matthew begins the story of Christmas. He starts with a long list of names, called a genealogy. Genealogy is just a fancy way of saying family tree. Why would he tell the story of Christmas with a genealogy? When we read the long list of names, we’re reminded of how sinful people are. There are some bigtime sinners on the list.

What does all this have to do with Jesus? Well, Jesus wasn’t a big-time sinner. Instead, he was a big-time Savior from sin. Even though he was fully human, he was also fully God. And even though he came from a long line of sinners, he was born in a special way so he could do some special rescuing: he was from God. And since God is without sin, Jesus could be born free from the sin that marked his genealogy.



Reflection

Now here's where the story gets really interesting. Mary was engaged to Joseph. He was shocked to find out Mary was pregnant! He decided the best course was to quietly break up with her. But God sent an angel to let him in on what God was doing. "Joseph," the angel told him, "Marry Mary, for the baby in her has been conceived from the Holy Spirit" (see Matt. 1:20). Joseph listened. The angel continued, "The baby will be a boy. When he is born, your job is to name him Jesus." Joseph must have wondered, "Why that name? It's not a family name." The reason was that the name means "Yahweh saves.(The Lord is salvation)" The angel explained, "Call him Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins" (see v. 21). Joseph and Mary obeyed the angel's orders. They got married, she gave birth and Joseph called the baby Jesus.

Today, as we light the Christ Candle, we give God thanks for the precious gift of salvation through his Son and our Savior, the babe in the manger—Jesus.



Prayer

God, thank you for loving us so much that you sent Jesus to come into this world in the form of a baby to grow and mature and to become our Savior. Jesus is truly the best Christmas Gift ever given. Thank you, God. Amen.





Merry
Christmas