



The Advent Wreath



A Family Christmas Project



The Advent Wreath

The word "advent means "arrival". The four weeks before Christmas are call the "advent season", a time when we wait for the arrival of the Baby Jesus. The advent wreath helps us stay focused on the coming of Jesus, which is what Christmas is all about.

A wreath is used because it is a circle – which has no beginning or end. This signifies the love of God which always has been and always will be. The evergreens symbolize continuous life which is available to us through Jesus Christ.

The four candles help us stay focused on and look forward to the arrival of the Son of God as a Baby into the world that so disparately needs God's limitless love. Every Sunday for the four weeks leading up to Christmas a candle is lit as a remembrance of the Savior's coming.

The first, second and fourth candles are purple, which is considered to be a royal color. The Jewish people were waiting for the coming of their King. We light them as they remind us that Christmas is the birthday of the King of kings. On the third Sunday the rose-colored candle is lit as a symbol of the joyous arrival of the Christ Child.

Week 1 - The Candle of Hope

(Read together as you light the 1st purple candle)

The first candle, which is purple, symbolizes hope. It is sometimes called the “Prophecy Candle” in remembrance of the prophets, especially Isaiah, who foretold the birth of Christ. It represents the expectation felt in anticipation of the coming Messiah.

Today, the word “hope” is often used to mean wishful thinking. “I really hope I get the gifts I asked for this Christmas”. As we light the candle of hope there is a certainty of the return of Christ to gather all those who believe in Him to Himself.

“...hope in the Lord; for he is loving and kind and comes to us with armloads of salvation.” Psalm 13:7 (TLB)



Week 2 - The Candle of Faith

(Light week 1 candle, read together as you light the 2nd purple candle)

The second candle, also purple, represents faith. It is called the "Bethlehem Candle" as a reminder of Mary and Joseph's journey to Bethlehem. In faith, this young couple married and believed the angel's announcement that Mary was carrying the Savior of the world. Mary and Joseph were chosen because of their simple, obedient faith. May we also be people of faith.

For it's by God's grace that you have been saved. You receive it through faith. It was not our plan or our effort. It is God's gift, pure and simple...." Ephesians 2:8 (VOICE)



Week 3 - The Candle of Joy

(Light week 1 and 2 candles, then read together as you light the pink candle)

The third candle is pink and symbolizes joy. It is called the "Shepherd's Candle," and is pink because rose is a traditional color for joy. On this Sunday we are reminded of the joy that the shepherds received as they heard news of the birth of the Messiah. It also signifies the joy the world experienced at the birth of Jesus.

Let us be filled with joy at the thought of Jesus' birth.

"There were shepherders camping in the neighborhood. They had set night watches over their sheep. Suddenly, God's angel stood among them and God's glory blazed around them. They were terrified. The angel said, "Don't be afraid. I'm here to announce a great and joyful event that is meant for everybody, worldwide: A Savior has just been born in David's town, a Savior who is Messiah and Master. This is what you're to look for: a baby wrapped in a blanket and lying in a manger." Luke 2:10 (MSG)



Week 4 - The Candle of Peace

(Light the 2 previous purple candles and the pink candle, then read together as the last purple candle is lit.)

On the fourth week of Advent, we light the final purple candle to mark the final week of prayer as we wait for the birth of our Savior. This final candle, the "Angels' Candle," symbolizes peace. It reminds us of the message of the angels: "Peace on Earth, Good Will Toward Men."

"I have told you all this so that you will have peace of heart and mind. Here on earth you will have many trials and sorrows; but cheer up, for I have overcome the world." John 16:33 (TLB)



Directions:

1. Crumple tissue paper and glue around the inside the outer rim of the paper plate.
2. Tie the purple and pink ribbons around the candles. You may want to put some glue on the ribbon to help hold it in place to make for easier tying.
3. Place candles in the center of the plate.





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