

Celebrating Advent at Home

Advent Information

On November 27, we enter into the season of Advent. This is a season marked by waiting. The scripture readings of Advent focus on the prophecies about the coming of a Savior-Jesus being born in a manger-and the way that the people of Israel waited for their Savior to come. These same readings still apply to us today as we wait for the second coming of our Savior on the Last Day. While the rest of the world rushes full speed toward Christmas, Advent gives us a chance to slow down and remember the true reason for the season-the promised savior who has come and will come again. One of the ways we are able to celebrate Advent is through the use of an Advent wreath. These wreaths, while normally found in churches, began as a tradition for the home. This year, consider bringing an Advent wreath into your home and using it, and the following brief devotional activity, with your family as a way to focus your attention on the promise of a Savior and the discipline of waiting for him to come at the time he has already determined.

How to Make an Advent Wreath

A traditional Advent wreath has four candles (three purple and one rose or pink color)- available in stores in the Christmas department, placed in the greenery of a wreath. A fifth, white candle may be placed in the center of the wreath. Advent wreaths may also be decorated with ribbons or other decorations. Many examples can be found in stores or online.

How to Use Your Advent Wreath

Advent wreaths are normally used in conjunction with family devotional services and during meals. The candles are lit at the beginning of the service and snuffed out at the end of the service or the family meal. Please note that you are encouraged to snuff, not blow, out the candles in order to prevent the splatter of hot wax and the possible fire hazard associated with an open flame. Never leave an open flame unattended.

The Advent devotions of the family should be overseen by the head of the household and incorporate the entire family. If you already follow a family devotional ritual, feel free to incorporate or adapt the Advent wreath tradition into the activities in which you are already engaged. If not, the following readings and prayers can serve as a starting point for your family. You can modify them as you see fit by adding other readings, prayers, hymns or carols or other activities to the family devotion time.

If you would like further suggestions or guidance, please ask either pastor or Miss Kristy for advice regarding the use of family devotions.

Suggested Devotional Activities

First Sunday in Advent (November 27)

- Light one purple candle
- Read Isaiah 11:1-10
- Pray: Lord God, we thank you for your Son, our Savior, Jesus Christ, who is the one you promised would save your people and give peace and hope to all the nations. We give you thanks and praise in Jesus' name, because he lives and reigns with you in glory forever. Amen

Second Sunday in Advent (December 4)

- Light two purple candles
- Read Isaiah 40:1-8
- Pray: Lord God, we thank you for your Son, our Savior, who came to provide comfort to all people. Grant this comfort to all who suffer and to each of us that we may always know that your Word stands forever. We give you thanks and praise in Jesus' name, because he lives and reigns with you in glory forever. Amen.

Third Sunday in Advent (December 11)

- Light two purple and the pink candles
- Read Isaiah 35:1-10
- Pray: Lord God, we thank you for your Son, our Savior, who has brought everlasting joy to your people. Give strength to those who are weak and joy to those who sorrow that all may come to know you and the gift of your Son. We give you thanks and praise in Jesus' name, because he lives and reigns with you in glory forever. Amen.

Fourth Sunday in Advent (December 18)

- Light all purple and pink candles
- Read Isaiah 9:2-7
- Pray: Lord God, we thank you for your Son, our Savior, who has been given to us so that we would no longer live in the land of darkness but dwell in the light of his joy forever. We give you thanks and praise in Jesus' name, because he lives and reigns with you in glory forever. Amen

Christmas Eve (after dark) or Christmas Day

- Light all the candles
- Read Luke 2:1-20
- Pray: Lord God we give you thanks for the birth of your Son, who you have given this day to be our Savior. Help us to be like the shepherds praising and glorifying you for all we have seen and heard. We give you thanks and praise in Jesus' name because he lives and reigns with you in glory forever. Amen.