

Supplies: Advent wreath with 5 candles (3 purple, 1 pink, 1 white), matches or lighter, Bible or Bible passages provided . (You may choose to read portions of the Christmas story from Luke 2:1-20 and Matthew 2:1-12 in addition to the verses provided.)

First Sunday of Advent

Say: Today is the first Sunday of Advent. Do you know what advent means? (It means coming.) Today we remember the coming of Someone. Do you know who that Someone is? (Jesus) How many candles does our advent wreath have? (five) What colors are they? (three purple, 1 pink, 1 white) Each candle represents something special about the coming of Jesus.

The first purple candle is the candle of hope. God promised the Old Testament prophets that He would send someone to deliver His people from their troubles.

Isaiah 9:2, 6

“The people who are now living in darkness will see a great light. They are now living in a very dark land. But a light will shine on them. A child will be born to us. A son will be given to us. He will rule over us. And he will be called Wonderful Adviser and Mighty God. He will also be called Father Who Lives Forever and Prince Who Brings Peace.”

In the New Testament God made a promise to a young couple named Joseph and Mary. Do you know what that promise was? (God would send his son, Jesus, to save us from our sins.)

Matthew 1:20-21

“An angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream. The angel said, ‘Joseph, son of David, don’t be afraid to take Mary home as your wife. The baby inside her is from the Holy Spirit. She is going to have a son. You must give him the name Jesus. That is because he will save his people from their sins.’”

(Light first candle.) As we light the first candle, let’s remember that it stands for the hope that God would send his son Jesus, to save us from our sins.

Jesus gives us hope.

Second Sunday of Advent

Say: Today is the second Sunday of Advent. What does Advent mean? (the coming of Jesus) What shape is our advent wreath? (a circle) Where is the beginning and the end of the wreath? (There is no beginning and no end.) The Bible teaches that, if Jesus saves us, He will give us life that would never end. Just like this wreath, there will be no end. Do you remember what the first candle reminds us of? (hope) People had hope in their hearts as they waited for a savior, someone who would come to set people free. (Light first candle.)

Today we’re lighting the second candle. (Light second candle.) The second candle is the candle of peace. It reminds us that only Jesus can give us peace. What is peace? God gives us an example of perfect peace in the Old Testament.

Isaiah 11:6-9

“Wolves will live with lambs. Leopards will lie down with goats. Calves and lions will eat together. And little children will lead them around. Cows will eat with bears. Their little ones will lie down together. And lions will eat straw like oxen. A baby will play near a hole where cobras live. A young child will put his hand into a nest where poisonous snakes live. None of those animals will harm or destroy anything or anyone on my holy mountain of Zion.”

He also tells us about perfect peace in the New Testament.

Philippians 4:6-7

“Don’t worry about anything. Instead, tell God about everything. Ask and pray. Give thanks to him. Then God’s peace will watch over your hearts and your minds because you belong to Christ Jesus. God’s peace can never be completely understood.”

Only Jesus can give us peace.

Third Sunday of Advent

Say: Today is the third Sunday of Advent. What color is our Advent wreath? (green) Green is the symbol of life. When grass is alive and growing, it is green. The color of the Advent wreath reminds us that Christ came to give us life – and not just an ordinary life, but we get to live forever with him.

Light first two candles. What do the first two candles remind us of? (hope and peace) Jesus is our hope. Jesus is our hope of peace. The third candle stands for joy. Light third candle, which is pink. Remember what the angel said to the shepherds while they were watching their flocks the night of Jesus’ birth. “I bring you good news of great ____.” (joy) When we think of the life that Jesus gives us, it gives us great joy.

1 Peter 1:8

“Even though you have not seen him, you love him. Though you do not see him now, you believe in him. You are filled with a glorious joy that can’t be put into words.”

Our life in Jesus gives us joy.

Fourth Sunday of Advent

Say: Today is the fourth Sunday of Advent. The three candles we have already lit on our Advent wreath are the candles of hope, peace, and joy. (Light first three candles.) The fourth candle is the candle of love.

John 3:16

“God loved the world so much that he gave his one and only Son. Anyone who believes in him will not die but will have eternal life.”

As we light the fourth candle, remember that because of His love for us, God the Father sent His Son Jesus to be born and later to die so we can live forever with him. (Light fourth candle.)

1 John 4:9

“How did God show his love for us? He sent his one and only Son into the world. He sent him so we could receive life through him. What is love? It is not that we loved God. It is that he loved us and sent his Son to give his life to pay for our sins. Dear friends, since God loved us that much, we should also love one another. No one has ever seen God. But if we love one another, God lives in us. His love is made complete in us.”

Jesus loved us so we can love each other.

Christmas Eve/Christmas Day

Light first four candles. Say: Today we remember lighting the candles of hope, peace, joy, and love. Today we're lighting the fifth candle. The white candle is the Christ Candle. The Christ Candle is white to remind us that Jesus never sinned. It stands in the middle of the wreath to remind us that He should be in the center of our lives – the most important part of our lives.

At Christmas, we remember Jesus' birth, but that is really only the beginning of the story of Jesus. He grew to be a man who liked to talk to children, who healed the sick, fed the hungry, comforted the sad, and showed everyone that God is a loving Father. Ever since then, his followers have tried to help others the way Jesus did.

1 John 4:11

“Since God loved us that much, we should also love one another.”

Every time we bring love and happiness to those around us and to those far away, we are spreading Jesus' hope, peace, joy, and love to others.

The fifth candle reminds us that the Christmas story keeps going on and on. And it reminds us that one day God will keep his promise to send Jesus back to Earth again.

Revelation 22:12

“Look! I am coming soon!”