

Blessing and Prayers for Advent Wreath

During the Advent season families should spend time together preparing for the approaching celebration of the birth of Christ. An Advent wreath can be a great focal point for family prayers and holiday celebrations.

An Advent wreath is a wreath of laurel, spruce or similar foliage with four candles that are lighted successively in the weeks of Advent to symbolize the light that the birth of Christ brought into the world. Traditionally three of the candles are purple, the colour of kings and of penance. A rose-colored candle is used to mark the Third Sunday of Advent as a time to rejoice over the closeness of Christmas and the coming of Christ.

BLESSING OF THE ADVENT WREATH

It starts at the evening meal on the Saturday before the first Sunday in Advent with the blessing of the following prayer can be used.

Leader: This week we begin the season of Advent, when the days grow short and darkness closes in. We are preparing to celebrate at Christmas the birth of Jesus, who is the light of the world. Let's spend some quiet time being aware of the darkness and longing for the light.

(Pause a few moments and then pray the [Sign of the Cross.](#))

Leader: Lord God, bless this wreath and bless us as well. May this wreath remind us of the hope and joy that Jesus brings into the world. Lord God, let your blessing come upon us as we light the candles of this wreath. May the wreath and its light be a sign of

Christ's promise to bring us salvation. May he come quickly and not delay. We ask this through Christ our Lord.

All: Amen.

Leader: *Advent* means "arrival." In the season of Advent, the church prepares to celebrate the coming of Jesus. We recall the past, celebrate the present, and look to the future with hope. We prepare to celebrate not only the birth of Jesus but also his presence in our family. We wait for the return of the Lord at the end of time when all hopes will be fulfilled. We await the coming of the light that will shine in the darkness, shining light on our path to peace. **All:** Amen.

The wreath would then be sprinkled with water. Then follows the prayer which is said before the evening meal each night of the first week in Advent.

FIRST WEEK (Family members can also take turns lighting and blowing out the candles on each night.)

Leader: This week we recall the hope we have in Christ. The prophets of Israel all spoke of the coming of Christ, of how a saviour would be born, a king in the line of David. They spoke of how he would rule the world wisely and bless all nations. **All** Let us pray - Loving God, we thank you for the hope you give us. Help us prepare our hearts for the Lord's coming. Bless our worship. Help us live holy and righteous lives. We ask it in the name of the one born in Bethlehem, Jesus our Lord. Amen.

The candle is allowed to burn during evening meals for the first week.

SECOND WEEK

Leader: The second candle of Advent is the Candle of Peace. It is sometimes called the Bethlehem Candle to remind us of the place in which preparations were made to receive and cradle the Christ child. Peace is a gift that we must be prepared for. God gives us the gift of peace when we turn to him in faith. **All:** Loving God, we thank you for the peace you give us through Jesus. Help us prepare our hearts to receive Him. Bless our worship. Guide us in all that we say and do. We ask it in the name of the one born in Bethlehem, Jesus our Lord. Amen. Amen.

The two candles are allowed to burn during the evening meals of the second week.

THIRD WEEK

Leader: The third candle of Advent is the Candle of Joy. (Rose/pink coloured candle) It reminds us of the joy that Mary felt when the angel Gabriel told her that a special child would be born to her - a child who would save and deliver his people. **All:** Loving God, we thank you for the joy you bring us. Help us prepare our hearts for this gift. Bless our worship. Help us to hear and to do your word. We ask it in the name of the one born in Bethlehem, Jesus our Lord. Amen.

The three candles are allowed to burn during the evening meals of the third week.

FOURTH WEEK

Leader: The fourth candle of Advent is the Candle of Love. Its light is meant to remind us of the love that God has for us. Jesus shows us God's perfect love. He is God's love in human form. The Bible says that "God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that whoever believes in

him should not perish, but have eternal life." **All:** Let us pray - Loving God, we thank you for your gift of love - shown to us perfectly in Jesus Christ our Lord. Help us prepare our hearts to receive Him. Bless our worship. Help us to hear and do your word. We ask it in the name of the one born in Bethlehem, Jesus our Lord. Amen. Amen.

