

Advent is the season in the Christian year that points us forward. In this season we look ahead to our Lord's birth at Christmas and we also meditate on Christ's Second Coming. It is a time of expectation in which we examine ourselves in preparation for the Lord's coming. We ponder the mystery of the Incarnation and see the love that God has for us, the children of God.

Take the time to keep Advent in your home as well as in your church. An Advent Wreath can be easily made or purchased. You need four purple (or blue) candles. You may use a rose candle for the third week of Advent if you desire. Each week an additional candle is lighted. You may add a white candle in the center, a Christ Candle, to be lighted Christmas Day.

While an Advent wreath in the church is a good seasonal focal point, its real value is in the home as a daily call to be prepared for the coming of Jesus, in our daily life and at the end of all things. The wreath should be in a place where the members of your family gather regularly. The dining table is a good place, if you gather there for meals. The Advent wreath may also be used in conjunction with other devotions, either the regular daily prayers of a family, or special Advent devotions, such as a Jesse tree. The daily lighting of the wreath does not need to be accompanied by elaborate ceremony, but it should involve more than merely lighting a candle.

Here is a simple devotion that may be used at the beginning of a meal. It could also be used at the beginning of Morning or Evening Prayer, or at the beginning of family prayers each day in Advent.

This form is not designed for use in public worship.

This devotional is adapted from The Book of Common Prayer and from an Advent Devotion from St. Andrew's Church in Harriman, TN.

The First Week of Advent

Dim or turn off lights, except as needed to read.

Leader: Watch, for you do not know when the master of the house will come, in the evening, or at midnight, or at cockcrow, or in the morning, lest he come suddenly and find you asleep. (Mark 13: 35, 36)

Light the first candle. Spend a few moments in silence.

Leader or all together: Almighty God, give us grace to cast away the works of darkness, and put on the armor of light, now in the time of this mortal life in which your Son Jesus Christ came to visit us in great humility; that in the last day, when he shall come again in his glorious majesty to judge both the living and the dead, we may rise to the life immortal; through him who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. *Amen.*

If a meal is to follow, the usual grace before meals is said.



The Second Week of Advent

Dim or turn off lights, except as needed to read.

Leader: In the wilderness prepare the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a highway for our God. (Isaiah 40:3)

Light the first and second candles. Spend a few moments in silence.

Leader or all together: Merciful God, who sent your messengers the prophets to preach repentance and prepare the way for our salvation: Give us grace to heed their warnings and forsake our sins, that we may greet with joy the coming of Jesus Christ our Redeemer; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. *Amen.*

If a meal is to follow, the usual grace before meals is said.

The Third Week of Advent

Dim or turn off lights, except as needed to read.

Leader: Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances. (I Thessalonians 5:16)

Light the first, second, and third candles. If there is a rose (pink) candle, it is the third candle. Spend a few moments in silence.

Leader or all together: Stir up your power, O Lord, and with great might come among us; and, because we are sorely hindered by our sins, let your bountiful grace and mercy speedily help and deliver us; through Jesus Christ our Lord, to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit, be honor and glory, now and for ever. *Amen.*

If a meal is to follow, the usual grace before meals is said.

The Fourth Week of Advent

Dim or turn off lights, except as needed to read.

Leader: Mary said, "Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word." (Luke 1:38)

Light all four candles. Spend a few moments in silence.

Leader or all together: Purify our conscience, Almighty God, by your daily visitation, that your Son Jesus Christ, at his coming, may find in us a mansion prepared for himself; who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. *Amen.*

If a meal is to follow, the usual grace before meals is said.



Christmas Day

Leader: Behold, I bring you good news of a great joy which will come to all the people; for to you is born this day in the city of David, a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. (Luke 2:10,11)

If desired, place a fifth candle (usually a white candle) in the center of the wreath and light all five candles. Spend a few moments in silence.

Leader or all together: Almighty God, you have poured upon us the new light of your incarnate Word: Grant that this light, enkindled in our hearts, may shine forth in our lives; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. *Amen.*

Advent Wreath Devotional



ADVENT

For use in the home