



Advent Family Devotional

For to us a child is born, to us a son is given,
and the government will be on his shoulders.

And he will be called
Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God,
Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

Isaiah 9:6

What is Advent?

The word advent means “coming”. Christians know and celebrate the season of Advent as a time of preparation and reflection in anticipation of Christmas, the celebration of Christ’s birth. Throughout the Advent season, Christians also acknowledge and anticipate the promised second coming of Jesus Christ.

What is an Advent Wreath?

Many churches and families use an advent wreath to aid in the celebration of Christmas. The origins of the Advent wreath are somewhat obscure. But it is thought that the first Advent wreath originated in Germany or France. The wreath, a circle, came to represent the eternal victory over death through Jesus Christ. The evergreens were a sign of the faithfulness of God to God’s people, even in death, and the lighted candles were a reminder of the light of Christ brought into the world. Traditionally, an Advent wreath includes five candles. There are four candles, one for each Sunday leading to Christmas and a fifth candle for Christmas day. There is no historical tradition regarding the meaning of the candles used in the Advent wreath other than their marking the four weeks of Advent. This season our church has chosen the common designation of Hope, The Way, Joy, Peace, and the Christ candle for our Advent celebration.

How to use this devotional guide

This guide has been created to use weekly to celebrate the Advent season. Choose a time during the week to gather as a family and follow the devotional plan for the designated week. Light each week’s candle on the Advent wreath as you read the scriptures, discuss the questions, and sing together. Please adjust the devotional plan to best fit your family’s needs. Some may wish to do it all in one night, while others may spread it out during the week.

How to make an Advent wreath

You can make your own Advent wreath or purchase one. Often candle sets are sold at craft stores or Christian bookstores. Purple candles are often used for the first, second, and fourth Sundays in Advent, and a pink or rose candle is used on the third Sunday in Advent to represent Joy. The central Christ candle is usually a white candle to represent Jesus’ birth bringing light into the world. There are several additional resources on the internet that further explain how to make an Advent wreath.



adapted from [The Advent Wreath: A Light in the Darkness](#); O’Neal, Debbie Trafton.

HOPE

the first week of Advent

- Light the first candle to represent the candle of HOPE. Jesus is coming! This candle represents the HOPE we have in Christ and His return.

Scripture Reading

Matthew 24:36-44

Christmas Story

Isaiah 9:2-7

Prayer

Thank you God for your love and faithfulness in your promise of a Savior. Help us to understand that receiving the Savior is as simple as asking God to forgive our sins and come into our lives as Savior and Lord.

Ask yourself...

- What does it mean to have HOPE?
- How do you think people reacted when Jesus came as a baby?
- How then should we think about Jesus ' second coming?

Sing Together

O Come Let Us Adore Him

Oh, come, all ye faithful,
Joyful and triumphant!
Oh, come ye, oh, come ye to
Bethlehem;
Come and behold him
Born the king of angels:
Oh, come, let us adore him,
Oh, come, let us adore him,
Oh, come, let us adore him,
Christ the Lord.

the WAY

the second week of Advent

- Light the first candle to represent the candle of HOPE.
- Light the second candle to represent the candle of the WAY.
This candle shows that Christ is the WAY. We are lost in sin and Christ is the Light sent into the world to show us the way out of darkness.

Scripture Reading

Matthew 3:1-12

Christmas Story Reading

Luke 1:26-38

Prayer

Thank you God for sending Christ as the WAY. Help us to remember that Jesus is the way, the truth and the life.

Ask yourself...

- What do you think "the WAY" leads to?

Sing Together

Away in a Manger

Away in a manger, No crib for His bed The little Lord Jesus Laid down His sweet head The stars in the bright sky Looked down where He lay The little Lord Jesus Asleep on the hay	The cattle are lowing The poor Baby wakes But little Lord Jesus No crying He makes I love Thee, Lord Jesus Look down from the sky And stay by my side, 'Til morning is nigh.	Be near me, Lord Jesus, I ask Thee to stay Close by me forever And love me I pray Bless all the dear children In Thy tender care And take us to heaven To live with Thee there
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JOY

the third week of Advent

- Light the first candle to represent the candle of HOPE.
- Light the second candle to represent the candle of the WAY.
- Light the third candle (pink) to represent the candle of JOY. This candle shows that the only lasting joy to be found in life on earth is through Christ. All other joy is fleeting and does not last.

Scripture Reading

Isaiah 12:2-6

Christmas Story Reading

Luke 2:1-7

Prayer

Thank you God that we can find true JOY in Jesus. Help us to seek JOY in the gift of Christ and not in the gifts under our tree.

Ask yourself...

- Why does Jesus' coming to earth make people joyful?
- Are you filled with JOY because of Jesus or because of something else?

Sing Together

Joy to the World

Joy to the World, the Lord is come!	Joy to the World, the Savior reigns!
Let earth receive her King;	Let men their songs employ;
Let every heart prepare	While fields and floods, rocks, hills
Him room,	and plains
And Heaven and nature sing,	Repeat the sounding joy,
And Heaven and nature sing,	Repeat the sounding joy,
And Heaven, and Heaven, and nature sing.	Repeat, repeat, the sounding joy.

PEACE

the fourth week of Advent

- Light the first candle to represent the candle of HOPE.
- Light the second candle to represent the candle of the WAY.
- Light the third candle to represent the candle of JOY.
- Light the fourth candle to represent the candle PEACE. This candle reminds that Jesus comes to bring Peace to both the world and to people's hearts. Without Christ there is no peace in this world.

Scripture Reading

Isaiah 9:6-7

Christmas Story Reading

Luke 2:8-20

Prayer

Thank you God for sending Jesus to bring PEACE to our world.
Thank you for the precious gift of Jesus to make PEACE with God possible.

Ask yourself...

- What is it like to have PEACE in your heart?

Sing Together The First Noel

The First Noel, the Angels did say
Was to certain poor shepherds in
fields as they lay

In fields where they lay keeping
their sheep

On a cold winter's night that was
so deep.

Noel, Noel, Noel, Noel
Born is the King of Israel!

Hark the Herald Angels Sing

Hark the herald angels sing
"Glory to the newborn King!
Peace on earth and mercy mild
God and sinners reconciled"

Joyful, all ye nations rise
Join the triumph of the skies
With the angelic host proclaim:
"Christ is born in Bethlehem"
Hark! The herald angels sing
"Glory to the newborn King!"

CHRIST

Christmas Eve

- Light the first candle to represent the candle of HOPE.
- Light the second candle to represent the candle of the WAY.
- Light the third candle to represent the candle of JOY.
- Light the fourth candle to represent the candle PEACE.
- Light the fifth candle to represent the CHRIST candle.
This candle represents CHRIST himself who is born to save people from their sins. It is a celebration of the fulfillment of prophecy as represented in Christ's birth and hope in the final fulfillment when Christ comes again and those who believe in Christ as their Savior will join him.

Christmas Reading

Luke 2:1-40

Prayer

Thank you God for sending Jesus Christ to forgive us of our sins.
Thank You that one day He will return to gather His children.

Ask yourself...

- How does CHRIST provide salvation?

Sing Together

Silent Night

Silent night, holy night	Silent night, holy night!	Silent night, holy night
All is calm, all is bright	Shepherds quake at the sight	Son of God, love's pure light
Round yon Virgin Mother	Glories stream from heaven	Radiant beams from Thy
and Child	afar	holy face
Holy Infant so tender and	Heavenly hosts sing	With the dawn of
mild	Alleluia!	redeeming grace
Sleep in heavenly peace	Christ, the Saviour is born	Jesus, Lord, at Thy birth
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