

THE ADVENT WREATH

Advent is the churchy name for the season of preparation before Christmas. It is a time for reflection and prayer, and it is a season of anticipation as we await the chance to once again proclaim the Christmas story of hope breaking into the world.

The Advent wreath is a prominent symbol of the Advent season. It is traditionally made up of **evergreen branches or boughs** placed in a circle topped with **three purple or blue candles and a pink candle with a white candle in the center**.



On the first Sunday of Advent, the first outer candle is **lit**. Every Sunday another candle is lit until the four outer candles are burning brightly. On Christmas the center candle is lit.

Purple (or blue) symbolizes the quiet darkness of the season and our waiting, hoping, longing expectation for the arrival of Christmas.

Pink reminds us of the joy of the story that is unfolding and invites us to experience joy of the story as well.

White represents the light that shines in the world as we see in the story of Jesus's birth and the life he will lead.

You are invited to **create** an Advent wreath for use in your own home. Find a time each day either individually or with friends and family, maybe during a meal or at the beginning or end of the day, to light the candles and to pause for a moment. Each candle invites reflection on a theme of hope, peace, love, joy, or Christmas. There is a **calendar** available which you can use as a guide for candle lighting time as well.

There are supplies to help you create a wreath. Candles are provided (as is sand). You can make your wreath as fancy or as simple as you'd like. One simple way is to pour sand into a bowl and place the candles in the sand. You can find and add greenery if you'd like. There are fancier ways of making wreaths if you are so inclined, or Pinterest has a number of ideas that may spark your creativity.