



Advent Wreath
Devotional

THE ADVENT WREATH

One of the fondest Advent traditions for both congregations and families is the lighting of Advent candles. The tradition reaches back to pre-Christian northern Europeans. During the darkest days of winter, they lit as many as twenty-four candles on an evergreen-covered wheel or wreath. By lighting a candle a day, they marked time, anticipating the return of the sun's light and warmth. By the 1500s, both Lutherans and Catholics adapted the Advent Wreath as a devotional way to prepare for the coming of Christ, the Light of the World.

Today, the Advent Wreath is usually an evergreen wreath placed on a table or suspended from a ceiling or an arch. In the wreath are four candles (usually blue or purple, occasionally one is pink); each candle represents one week during Advent. A white candle is often placed or suspended in the center of the wreath.

The symbols of the Advent Wreath are interpreted in many ways. The circle of evergreens reminds Christians of the eternal and ever-renewing promises of Christ. The lighting of candles, spanning the season, acknowledges the deepening of our preparation and the increasing light that bursts forth at Christmas. (Written by Sidney D. Fowler as part of the ministry of the Worship and Education Ministry Team of Local Church Ministries in Cleveland, Ohio.)

Sunday, November 29

First Sunday of Advent – HOPE

Read: Luke 21: 25-26

Light one candle

Reflect: What do you hope for? Is there something you've had to wait a long time for?

Pray: Dear God, help us to notice the ways we can each become a light of hope in the midst of sadness and shadows.

Sunday, December 6

Second Sunday of Advent – PEACE

Read: Luke 3: 1-6

Light two candles

Reflect: What does peace mean to you? What can you do to bring about more peace in the world?

Pray: Dear God, show us your way of peace, and help us play our part and prepare the way.

Sunday, December 13

Third Sunday of Advent – JOY

Read: Luke 3: 7-18

Light three candles – including the pink one

Reflect: What does joy look like for you? How can you bring more joy into the world?

Pray: Dear God, help us be joyful and fruitful, sharing wildly what we have and loving our neighbors as ourselves.

Sunday, December 20

Fourth Sunday of Advent – LOVE

Read: Luke 1: 39-45

Light four candles

Reflect: What does love look like for you? How do you know that God loves you? Who could you call or visit to show them how much you love them?

Pray: Dear God, help us to hear and believe your voice, to live out of love, and to leap for joy.



CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICES

In our re-opening guidelines, we can host 100 people in the Sanctuary and another 50 in the Community Room. You are invited to complete a response card to let us know whether you are interested in worshipping, in person, on Christmas Eve. If you did not receive one in the packet, please call the office at 301-662-2762 to inform them which service you would like to attend.

If we can continue to meet in-person safely, our plan is to have the 5:30 p.m. Family Service and 7:30 p.m. service in-person and live streamed from the Sanctuary. The 10:30 p.m. service will be in-person and held in Trinity Chapel.

