

Lighting the Advent Wreath
First Sunday in Advent, 2009

Today is the First Sunday in Advent. The word Advent means "coming," and we are anticipating the coming of Christ into the world.

The Advent Wreath is a circle of evergreens which symbolize the never-ending love of God. The four candles on the ring represent the four weeks until Christmas. Each week we light an additional candle. The white candle in the center is the Christ Candle and is lit on Christmas Eve or Christmas Day.

Today we light the first blue candle as a sign of our HOPE that Christ will come to us.

Let us pray: O God, thank you for the light of hope that keeps us going through days of darkness. Help us to wait with great anticipation. Amen.

Lighting the Advent Wreath
Second Sunday in Advent, 2009

Today is the second Sunday in Advent. Last week we lit the first candle as a sign of HOPE. Now we light the second blue candle to remind us of LOVE.

The Scriptures tell us that because God so loved the world, God sent Christ to be among us and to show us the way. In return, Christ calls us to serve our brothers and sisters in love.

Let us pray: O Lord, keep the light of LOVE burning in our hearts. And may we share you, the Light of the world, with all who still stumble in darkness. Amen.

Lighting the Advent Wreath
Third Sunday in Advent, 2009

Today is the third Sunday of Advent. We light three candles today. The first stands for HOPE. The second candle stands for God's LOVE that comes to us at Christmas. Now we light this rose-colored candle to remind us of the great JOY that comes with Christ's birth.

It's JOY the angels sang about, and JOY that made the wise men bring gifts to the baby born in a manger. Following their examples, we sing our joy and share gifts with one another.

Let us pray: Thank you God, for the beauty of this season and for the gift of joy in our lives. Amen.

Lighting the Advent Wreath
Fourth Sunday in Advent, 2009

Today is the fourth Sunday of Advent. In the past three weeks, we lit candles in anticipation of Christ's coming. The first candle represents HOPE. The second candle reminds us of LOVE. The third candle, a pink one, stands for JOY.

Now we light the fourth candle, the last remaining blue candle. It speaks to us of PEACE. When we experience God's great love, we have peace in our hearts and we can live peaceably. As followers of Jesus Christ, we help spread God's peace on earth.

Let us pray: Lord Jesus, you are the Prince of Peace, and our troubled world needs the peace you offer. Open our hearts to love and help us to think of the needs of all your children. Let peace begin with us so that we can spread your love throughout the world. Amen.

Lighting the Advent Wreath
Christmas Eve, 2009

The Advent Wreath reminds us of God's everlasting love. It is a circle of greens with no beginning and no end. Tonight we light again all four candles which we have lighted over the past four weeks. These candles remind us of hope, love, joy and peace.

But tonight we also light the white candle; the Christ Candle. Its radiant light reminds us of Christ, the Light of the World. Tonight we celebrate his birth and give praise to God for sending Christ to save us.

Let us pray: O God, we thank you for sending holy light to this dark world of ours. Help us to follow Christ in all things, and teach us to live within the glow of your love. Amen.