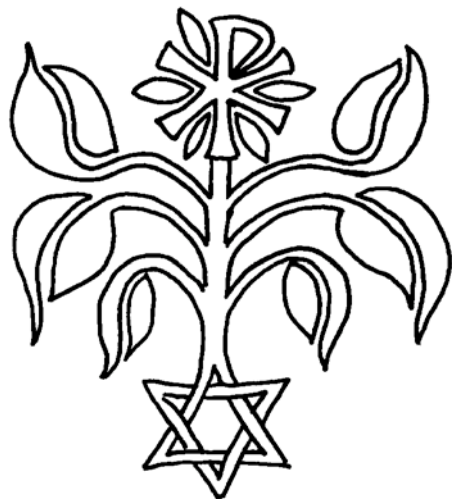


ADVENT

A Resource Book for Christian Households



The Root of Jesse

Jesse was the father of King David and Jesus is descended from David. This symbol represents the ancestry of Jesus as well as the hope expressed by the prophet Isaiah for the Messiah. (Isaiah 11:1-2)

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The Annunciation and the Visitation

Mary is told by an angel that she will bear the Christ Child. She then visits her relative Elizabeth, who is also pregnant, and they share their joy.

This symbol comes from a sixth century Egyptian piece of embroidery.

About the Advent Wreath

The Advent Wreath helps us mark the time as we wait for the birth of Jesus. Centuries ago, people would celebrate the winter solstice, the darkest time of the year, by hanging up their wagon wheels decorated with greens and lights. They hoped for the return of the sun and warmer, brighter days.

As Christians, we use the wreath to anticipate with great joy the coming of Christ, the Light of the World. We live in the warmth of God's love for us and we wait in hope for Christ to come again.

The wreath reminds us of eternity because it is a circle.

The candles remind us that Christ is the Light of the World. As the days become shorter and darker, we light more candles to combat the darkness.

The greens remind us that Christ brings new life to the world.

The colors purple is a royal color to remind us that Christ is our King, rose is the color of celebration to remind us to be joyful, green is the color of life.

Place your advent wreath on the dinner table or create some special prayer place in your home. When the family gathers for a meal, begin by reading the scripture selection, lighting the candle, and then praying the collect and saying grace. Take turns reading and lighting the candle each night. You could also light the wreath after dinner or before bedtime. You may wish to say the Magnificat together in place of the grace.

The Magnificat ***The Song of Mary Luke 1:46-55***

My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord,
my spirit rejoices in God my Savior; *
for he has looked with favor on his lowly servant
From this day all generations will call me blessed: *
the Almighty has done great things for me,
and holy is his Name.
He has mercy on those who fear him *
in every generation.
He has shown the strength of his arm, *
he has scattered the proud in their conceit.
He has cast down the mighty from their thrones, *
and has lifted up the lowly.
He has filled the hungry with good things, *
and the rich he has sent away empty.
He has come to the help of his servant Israel, *
for he has remembered his promise of mercy,
The promise he made to our fathers, *
to Abraham and his children for ever.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit: *
as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be for ever. Amen.

More devotions for Advent, Christmas and the Church year including a blessing of the crèche and a blessing of a Christmas Tree can be found in *The Anglican Family Prayer Book* by Anne E. Kitch, copyright © 2004 Anne E. Kitch (Harrisburg: Morehouse).

Fourth Sunday in Advent

Scripture: Matthew 1:18-21

Light all four candles.

Collect: 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.*

Continue with grace. Say the collect and light all four candles each night until Christmas Eve. Some people add a fifth white candle in the middle on Christmas Eve as the Christ Candle.

Other Scripture

Monday: Jeremiah 23:5-6

Tuesday: Psalm 71:1-8

Wednesday: Isaiah 9:2-4

Thursday: Psalm 24

Friday: Luke 1:68-79 (or Cantic 16, BCP* p. 92)

Saturday: Isaiah 12:2-6 (or Cantic 9, BCP* p. 86)

* The Book of Common Prayer

Special Note: In Advent, we wait not only for the coming of the baby Jesus, but also for the second coming of the Resurrected Christ. We look for that time when Jesus will come again and make the whole earth new.

Prayers for the lighting of the Advent Wreath

First Sunday in Advent

Scripture: Mark 13:33-37

Tonight light one purple candle.

Collect: 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.*

Continue with grace. Say the collect and light one purple candle each night this week.

Other Scripture

Monday: Isaiah 2:1-5

Tuesday: Luke 10:21-24

Wednesday: Isaiah 25:6-9

Thursday: Matthew 7:24-29

Friday: Psalm 27:1-6

Saturday: Psalm 147:1-12

Special Note: Did you know that Advent is the beginning of the Christian Year? So on the first Sunday in Advent we can all say "Happy New Year!"

Second Sunday in Advent

Scripture: Isaiah 11:6-9

Tonight light two purple candles.

Collect: 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.*

Continue with grace. Say the collect and light two purple candles each night this week.

Other Scripture

Monday: Isaiah 35:5-10
Tuesday: Matthew 18:12-14
Wednesday: Matthew 11:28-30
Thursday: Matthew 11:7-10
Friday: Psalm 1
Saturday: Psalm 80:1-3

Special Note: A Collect is a short prayer used to “collect” our thoughts. We use them each Sunday as we begin the liturgy and at other times as well.

Third Sunday in Advent

Scripture: Luke 1:46-55 (The Magnificat)

Tonight light two purple and one rose candle.

Collect: 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.*

Continue with grace. Say the collect and light the three candles each night this week.

Other Scripture

Monday: Psalm 25:1-8
Tuesday: Matthew 21:28-31a
Wednesday: Isaiah 45:5-8
Thursday: Psalm 30
Friday: Isaiah 56:1
Saturday: Psalm 72:1-8

Special Note: This Sunday is called Rose Sunday or sometimes Gaudete Sunday. “Gaudete” is a Latin word that means rejoice. On this Sunday we remember that we are preparing for great joy.