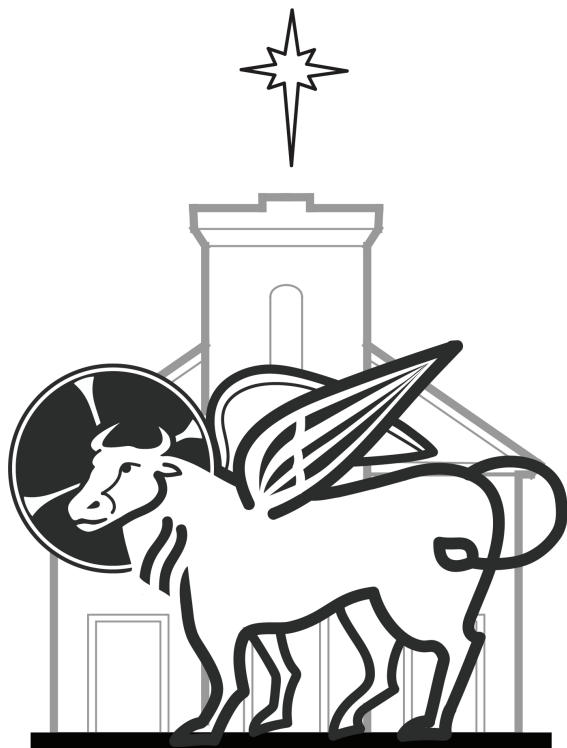


Preparing the Way



Prayers for Advent at Home:
Using your advent wreath

The light shined in the darkness,
and the darkness did not overcome it.

- John 1:5

Advent is a time of preparation as we await the coming of Christ. During Advent our work, whether it is in quiet longing, or active anticipation, is aimed towards the hope of God's presence among us. We hope for God in the glorious coming of God's Kingdom, in the calm stillness of shorter days, and as we look toward Christmas, in the light of the wonderful mystery of Jesus - the Word made flesh.

One way that Christians have marked Advent in churches and in their homes is by the use of the Advent wreath. The circle of the wreath reminds us of God who has no beginning or end. The green of the wreath speaks of the hope of renewal, and of our forgiveness in Christ. The four candles, one for each week of Advent symbolize the light of God coming into the world through the birth of Jesus. Some wreaths even include a white candle in the middle, called the Christ candle during the 12 days of Christmas.

To make your Advent wreath you will need:

Four candles: colors for the candles vary by household or Christian tradition. The most common colors are blue, to represent Mary, or purple to represent penitence in preparation for welcoming Christ. Sometimes, the candle for the third week is a rose colored candle. This represents the joy and anticipation of Mary as we draw closer to Christmas.

A wreath: or other round object to serve as the base. If a plate or tray is used instead of a wreath, the color green can be added with ribbons, or sprigs of greenery.

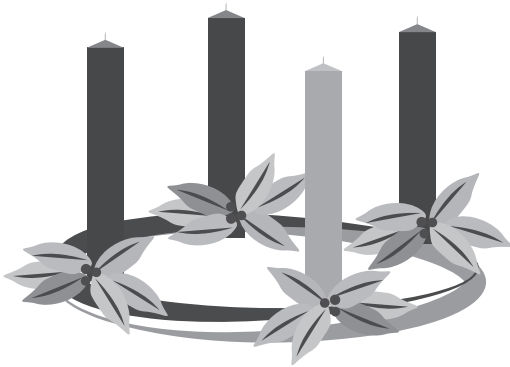
A voice cries out:
“In the wilderness prepare the way of the Lord,
make straight in the desert a highway for our God.”
- *Isaiah 40:3*

The Blessing of the Advent wreath:

Leader: The Lord be with you.
All: And also with you.
Leader: Let us pray.

O Lord Jesus Christ, who is the true light that enlightens the world: Bless this wreath and its candles which we light in preparation for your coming and so enkindle our hearts with the fire of your love, that we may receive you with joy and gladness, and evermore stand fast in the faith.

All: Amen. Come Lord Jesus.





HOPE

The First Sunday of Advent

V: Our help is in the Name of the Lord.

R: Who made heaven and earth.

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.

Psalm 25:1

To you, O LORD, I lift up my soul;
my God, I put my trust in you

Lesson - Romans 15: 12-13

The root of Jesse shall come,
the one who rises to rule the Gentiles;
in him the Gentiles shall hope.

May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace
in believing, so that you may abound in hope by
the power of the Holy Spirit.

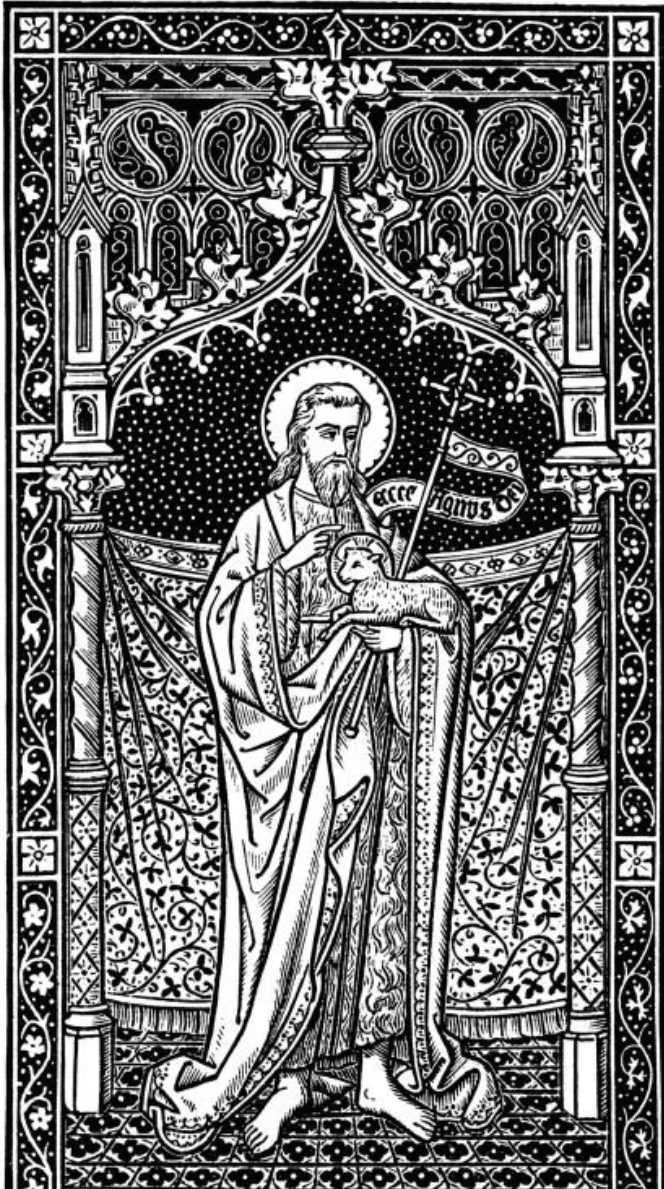
Prayer

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 earthly 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 all of Creation, we may rise to the life in heaven; through him who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.

One blue candle is lit.

V: Let us Bless the Lord.

R: Thanks be to God.



FAITH

The Second Sunday of Advent

V: Our help is in the Name of the Lord.

R: Who made heaven and earth.

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.

Lesson - Luke 3: 3-6

John the Baptist went into all the region around the Jordan, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins, as it is written in the book of the words of the prophet Isaiah,

“The voice of one crying out in the wilderness:

‘Prepare the way of the Lord,

make his paths straight.

Every valley shall be filled,

and every mountain and hill shall be made low,

and the crooked shall be made straight,

and the rough ways made smooth;

and all flesh shall see the salvation of God.’”

Prayer

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 repent of 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.

Two blue candles are lit.

V: Let us Bless the Lord.

R: Thanks be to God.



JOY

The Third Sunday of Advent

V: Our help is in the Name of the Lord.

R: Who made heaven and earth.

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.

Psalm 34: 7

The LORD is near to the brokenhearted *
and will save those whose spirits are crushed.

Lesson - Philippians 4: 4-6

Rejoice in the Lord always. Again I say: Rejoice! Let your gentleness be known to all. The Lord is near. Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

Prayer

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 earthly 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 all of Creation, we may rise to the life in heaven; through him who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.

Two blue candles, and one pink candle are lit.

V: Let us Bless the Lord.

R: Thanks be to God.



PEACE

The Fourth Sunday of Advent

V: Our help is in the Name of the Lord.

R: Who made heaven and earth.

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.

Psalm 46: 10

"Be still, then, and know that I am God; *

I will be exalted among the nations;

I will be exalted in the earth."

Lesson - John 3: 16 - 17

For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life.

Indeed, God did not send the Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him.

Prayer

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.

All of the candles are lit.

V: Let us Bless the Lord.

R: Thanks be to God.



LIGHT

Christmas Eve

V: Our help is in the Name of the Lord.

R: Who made heaven and earth.

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.

Responsory

O great mystery,
and wonderful sacrament,
that animals should see the newborn Lord,
lying in a manger!
Blessed is the virgin whose womb
was worthy to bear
the Lord, Jesus Christ.
Alleluia!

Lesson - John 1: 14

And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen
his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth.

Prayer

O God, you have caused this holy night to shine with the brightness
of the true Light: Grant that we, who have known the mystery of
that Light on earth, may also enjoy him perfectly in heaven; where
with you and the Holy Spirit he lives and reigns, one God, in glory
everlasting. Amen.

A white candle is added to the center of the wreath. All of the candles are lit.

V: Let us Bless the Lord.

R: Thanks be to God.



CHURCH OF
ST. LUKE
IN THE FIELDS