

KIDS IN THE DIVINE SERVICE

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What is Advent?

Advent marks the beginning of the Church Year. Advent is made up of the four Sundays that come right before Christmas. In other words, the deeper into Advent you go, the closer you get to Christmas Day. For Christians, the First Sunday in Advent is kind of like the “New Year’s Day” of the Church Year calendar.

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Why do we celebrate Advent?

The word Advent means “coming.” During Advent, we prepare for the coming of the One who was born that first Christmas in a stable. We prepare for the One who saved us from sin, death and the power of the devil: our Lord Jesus Christ! What a wonderful and exciting time of preparation!

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Parents:

At home, in order to help your children better prepare for the birth of Jesus, try using an Advent devotional booklet provided by the church for family devotions.

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What is the Advent wreath?

The Advent wreath is the circle of candles (and/or evergreen branches) that you see in the sanctuary during the season of Advent.

Some Advent wreaths hang from the ceiling of the sanctuary while others are placed on a floor stand. Either way, the Advent wreath is one of the many beautiful things you'll see around the church during Advent.

How do we use the advent wreath?

It used to be that the Advent wreath was used in the home to help count the four weeks of Advent. Now you can find them in homes as well as in the church sanctuary. Each Sunday in Advent, a new candle on the wreath is lit. For example, during the first week in Advent, only one candle is lit. During the second week in Advent, two candles are lit. We do this to remember and prepare for the coming of our Savior, Jesus Christ, the Light of the World!



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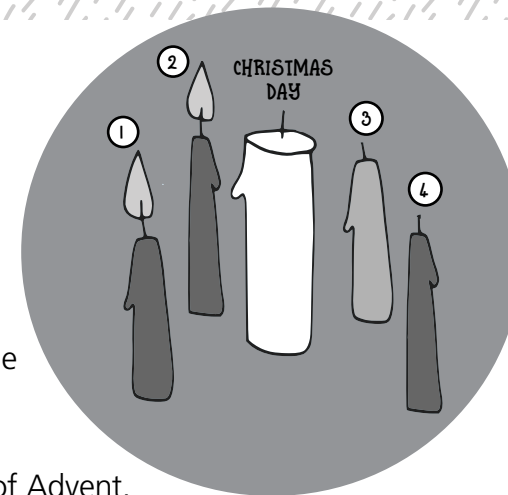
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Parents: Before or after the Divine Service, allow your children to walk up to get a better look at the Advent wreath. Remind them to be reverent in God's holy places. During this Advent season, try utilizing an Advent wreath at home with family devotions. If you are unsure how to get started, ask your pastor for help.

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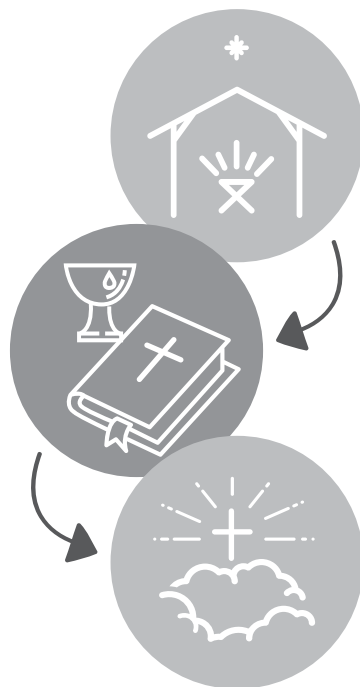
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The Advent of Christ

As you may remember, the word Advent means “coming.” During the season of Advent, we prepare for the coming of Jesus at Christmas. But that is not the only coming of Jesus that we hear about in the Advent story.

What is the rest of the Advent story?

The Advent of Christ has three parts. God’s Word tells us that Jesus not only came to earth as a man at Christmas, but that He comes to be with His church through His Word and Sacraments. Finally, God’s Word reminds us that He will return in judgement on the Last Day. If you think about it, there sure are a lot of great things to remember and look forward to during the season of Advent!



Parents:

When Holy Communion is offered, allow your children to attend the altar with you. Remind them that Jesus is truly present here in the Sacrament, and that we will see Him face to face on the Last Day!

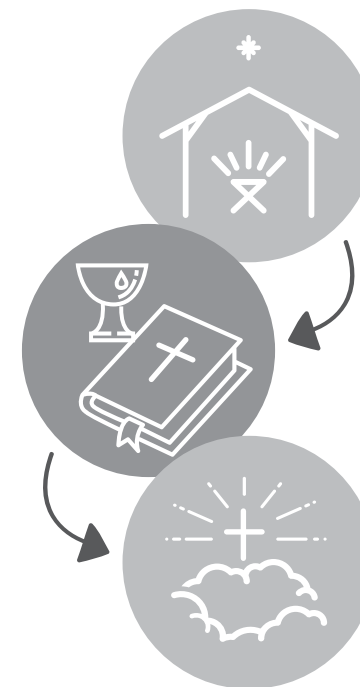
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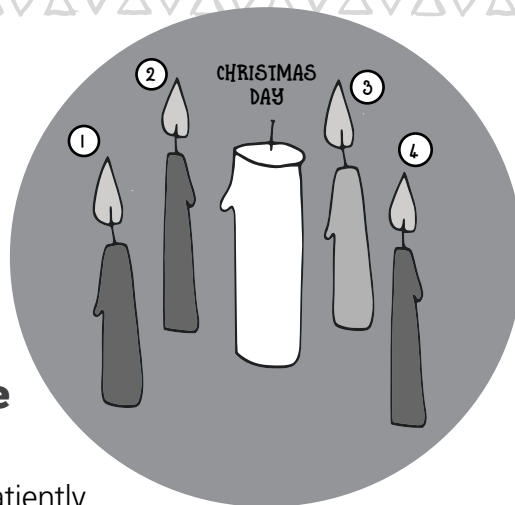
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What does it mean when four candles have been lit on the Advent wreath?

You've been preparing and patiently waiting for that wonderful day of celebration. When four of the candles on the Advent wreath have been lit, it means that Christmas is almost here! That's right! The day on which we remember the birth of our Savior is right around the corner!

What does this mean to me?

Today is the Fourth Sunday in Advent. Today is the last Sunday of preparation for the birth of Jesus. Next week the Church will celebrate Christmas Day, one of the most important days of the whole year. As you can see, Advent has prepared us for the coming of Jesus, our wonderful Savior from sin!



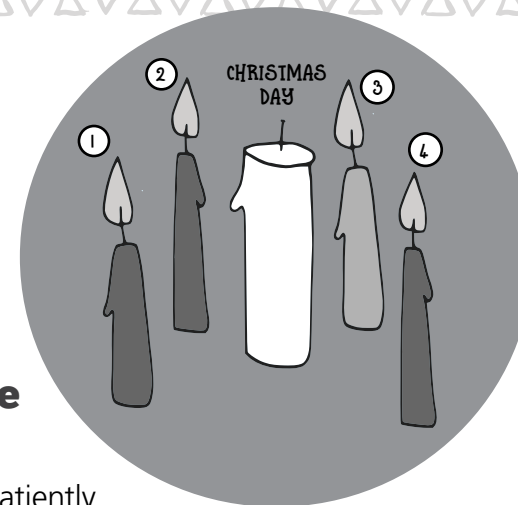
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Remind your children of the important part that Advent plays in the lives of all Christians. This is the time in the Church Year that prepares us for the coming of our Savior. Be sure to bring your children to both Christmas Eve and Christmas Day services.

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