

# Decorate Family Advent Candles

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Decorate a set of Advent candles for your family to use during this season of hope, peace, love, and joy.

**For**  
Young Family

**Season**  
Winter

## Needed

Family Advent Devotions worksheet (see last page); 4 taper candles at least 9" tall (see Step 3 for color suggestions); 4 taper candle holders; 1 white pillar candle; acrylic craft paints in a variety of colors; small paintbrushes; old newspapers; small evergreen wreath (artificial is safest); optional: tray to hold wreath and candles

## Prepare in Advance

- Choose the color of candles for your Advent wreath. Three common color schemes are explained in Step 3 below. You may want to use the same color your church uses in worship during Advent.
- Cover work area with old newspapers.

## Activity Plan

1. Say this prayer aloud to begin.

*God of new beginnings, be with us as we prepare to celebrate Jesus' birthday and grow in understanding your love for us. Bless our time together and help us to use the candles we make to inspire our Advent prayers. Amen.*

2. Explain that the season of Advent is a time of preparation for the celebration of Jesus' birth. It begins on the fourth Sunday before Christmas and ends on Christmas Day. Many Christians mark the season of Advent with four candles in an Advent wreath. Each Sunday, an additional candle is lighted until all four are burning, letting everyone know that Christmas is near.
3. Explain the meaning of the color of the candles you will be using in your wreath:
  - *Three purple candles and one pink candle:* These represent four themes of the Advent season: hope (purple); peace (purple); love (pink); joy (purple).
  - *Four blue candles:* Blue symbolizes hope—the hope that God gives us in the birth of Jesus.
  - *Four purple candles:* Purple symbolizes royalty and honors the coming of Jesus, our king.

4. Decorate the candles.
  - Use acrylic paints and small paintbrushes to paint Christian symbols (for some ideas, search for “Christian symbols for children” on the Internet) or seasonal designs on the candles.
  - Place the candles in their holders to dry.
  - Paint a decorative cross on the white pillar candle, which is the “Christ candle.” It will be lighted on Christmas Day.
5. After the paint is dry, place the wreath in the center of your dining table. (If you need to be able to move the wreath easily, place it on a tray.) Arrange the four taper candles in holders around the edge of the wreath. Depending on the size of the wreath, they may be inside or outside the wreath. Place the Christ candle in the center of the wreath.
6. On each of the Sundays in Advent, gather around your Advent wreath and use the Family Advent Devotions worksheet to guide a time of prayer. You may find that either mealtime or bedtime is a good time for Advent devotions.



# Family Advent Devotions

## On the First Sunday of Advent

- Traditionally, the theme of this Sunday is hope. Discuss: What are some things we hope for?
- Wonder together: How does God give us hope through the birth of Jesus?
- Light the first candle, then say this prayer:  
*God of hope, we give thanks for the birth of your Son, Jesus, and for the hope he brought for all people. Help us to hope for the things that you hope for and to do our best to make your world the way you want it to be. Amen.*
- Variation: Light this first candle each evening as you eat together or say bedtime prayers.

## On the Second Sunday of Advent

- Traditionally, the theme of this Sunday is peace. Discuss: What is peace?
- Invite family members to describe times they have been peacemakers.
- Wonder together: How does God give us peace through the birth of Jesus?
- Light the first and second candles, then say this prayer:  
*God of peace, we give thanks for the birth of your Son, Jesus, and for the peace he brought for all people. Help us to be peacemakers and to do our best to make your world the way you want it to be. Amen.*
- Variation: Light these two candles each evening as you eat together or say bedtime prayers.

## On the Third Sunday of Advent

- Traditionally, the theme of this Sunday is love. Discuss: What is love?
- Jesus said, "Love your neighbor." What do you think he means?
- Wonder together: How does God give us love through the birth of Jesus?
- Light the first, second, and third candles, then say this prayer:  
*God of love, we give thanks for the birth of your Son, Jesus, and for the love he brought for all people. Help us to show your love to others and to do our best to make your world the way you want it to be. Amen.*
- Variation: Light these three candles each evening as you eat together or say bedtime prayers.

## On the Fourth Sunday of Advent

- Traditionally, the theme of this Sunday is joy. Discuss: What is joy?
- Invite family members to describe times they have felt filled with joy.
- Wonder together: How does God give us joy through the birth of Jesus?
- Light the first, second, third, and fourth candles, then say this prayer:  
*God of joy, we give thanks for the birth of your Son, Jesus, and for the joy he brought for all people. Help us to share the joy of Christmas with others and to do our best to make your world the way you want it to be. Amen.*
- Variation: Light these four candles each evening as you eat together or say bedtime prayers.

## On Christmas Day

- Light all four Advent candles and the white Christ candle, then pray aloud:  
*God of hope, peace, love, and joy, we give thanks for your Son, Jesus, whose birth we celebrate today. Help us to share the hope, peace, love, and joy of Christmas with everyone we meet, and to do our best to make your world the way you want it to be. Amen.*
- Variation: Remove the four Advent candles from the wreath. Light the Christ Candle each evening during the twelve days of the Christmas as you eat together or say bedtime prayers. Keep the Christ candle to light on other church holidays, such as Easter and Pentecost.

