

Wreath and Rewind

By Lee Yates



Experience the tradition of lighting an Advent Wreath, then put a new spin on it as you rewind the wreath as you reflect on what comes next.

For
Teen Family

Season
Winter

Needed

Bible, three purple candles, one pink candle, one white candle, evergreen garland, lighter, candle snuffer

Prepare in Advance

- Set up wreath by making a small circle of garland
- Place the colored candles around the circle
- Place the white candle in the center

Activity Plan

1. In the weeks leading up to Christmas, set a special time to light your Advent wreath as a family. Use the following liturgy to guide your weekly lighting ritual. Let everyone take turns reading different parts. After the prayer, light the color of candle listed for that week.

Week 1 - purple

Read: Isaiah 60:2-3

Confess: We begin this journey by lighting a candle. Light has always symbolized God's presence and we will look for and anticipate God's presence in the days ahead.

Pray: God of light, shine in the darkness. Shine so bright our eyes squint and our hearts are warmed.

Week 2 - purple

Read: Luke 3:4-6

Confess: While Advent brings us traditions and gatherings that are often filled with joy and warmth. Unfortunately, life is not always filled with joy and warmth. Jesus coming reminds us that God can guide us through the rough times.

Pray: God of light, guide our path. Lead us in times of struggle. Lead us in times of confusion. Give us the courage to continue our journey even in hard times.

Week 3 - purple

Read: Isaiah 9:6-7

Confess: We have many different names for God. Jesus played many different roles in people's lives. Maybe what we experience this Christmas will give us a new name for God.



Pray: God of light, open our eyes to the new ways you will move in our lives. Open our ears to new ways of knowing you.

Week 4 - pink

Read: Luke 1:26-38

Confess: One of the boldest responses to God's call in Scripture comes from a young girl. May we have the courage and faith of this young girl. May we be as blessed.

Pray: God of light, show us how much strength we have. Show us the potential you have put within each of us. Show us your light within our hearts.

Christmas Day - white

Read: Luke 2:1-7

Confess: May hope, peace, love and joy be more than a prayer. May they be our calling and our way of life. May they be the gifts we share this day as a family. May they be the gifts our family shares with the world.

Pray: God of light, we give thanks for the gift of Jesus. We know that the light came into the world and darkness cannot overcome it. May that light be alive in us.

2. In the weeks following Christmas, use your family wreath time to put out the lights of your wreath. Use the following liturgy to guide your weekly lighting ritual. The "rewind" of the wreath is more interactive with some discussion as part of the liturgy. There is also a ritual of putting out the candles. Take your time with this practice. After the Prayer, extinguish the color of candle listed for that week.

Week 1 - pink

Read: Luke 2:8-20

Reflect/discuss: How did trips, visits or visitors shape your Christmas experience?

Pray: Lord, we give thanks for visitors who brought your presence into our lives this Christmas. As we extinguish this light, may we be mindful of the smoke that spreads out and goes beyond our vision. May it remind us that Jesus was in one time and in one place, but now is in all times and in all places.

Week 2 - purple

Read: Matthew 2:1-12

Reflect/discuss: How did the gifts you received or gave shape your Christmas experience?

Pray: Lord, we give thanks for gifts given and shared. We give thanks for gifts of hope, peace, joy and love. May we be mindful of the true gifts we received this Christmas and strive to share our gifts with others. As we extinguish this candle, may the spreading smoke remind us that we can spread your gifts beyond this time and this place, making your love known in all times and all places.

Week 3 - purple

Read: Luke 2:22-35

Reflect/discuss: What shortcomings does Christmas reveal about us and how do we respond to these issues in our lives?

Pray: Lord, we give thanks for the ability to reflect and confess. Help us be honest with ourselves and those we love as we grow in faith and grow closer to you. As we extinguish this light, may the



spreading smoke remind us how limitless we are when face our fears, mistakes and struggles and trust you.

Week 4 - purple

Read: Luke 2:41-52

Reflect/discuss: How does church impact your life as you move further away from Christmas?

Pray: Lord, we give thanks for the faith communities where people gather to ask questions, share confessions, worship, and share a common life of faith. As we extinguish this light, may we remember the way your Word has been shared and multiplied by faith communities around the world.

Week 5 - white

Read: John 1:1-5

Reflect/discuss: How have you seen the Word become flesh or Jesus light shine in darkness?

Pray: Lord, as we extinguish this last candle, may we remember that you are in all times and all places. May we take seriously the call to let your light burn within us and share that light with all who dwell in darkness.

