

# ADVENT

## What is Advent?

Advent is a term from the Latin word 'Adventus' which means arrival. During advent, we prepare for the arrival of Jesus Christ. It begins on the Sunday nearest to November 30<sup>th</sup> and lasts up until midnight on Christmas Eve.

During this time Christians across the world prepare for the arrival of the Lord through the birth of Jesus. It is a time to remember and celebrate light within darkness.

Christians will often use an Advent wreath to countdown the weeks of advent until Christmas.

These comprise of a circle of evergreen leaves and 4 or five candles. The leaves and the shape of the wreath represent the eternity of God, and the hope of renewal and eternal life. The candles are lit, one per week and represent something different each week. The first candle represents Hope or in some cases the Patriarchs (e.g. Abraham) of Christianity. The second is the candle of Peace or Prophets. The third is a symbol of Joy or sometimes John the Baptist and the fourth is for Love or the Virgin Mary. Some advent wreaths then have a final white candle in the middle which is lit to celebrate the arrival of Jesus Christ.

<http://formtimeideas.com/>



## Relates to us

Find out what is going on in the [world](#) or watch [BBC newsround](#)

*Lord, we place these people and situations before you and ask you to help. In the name of the Father, and of the Son and the Holy Spirit, Amen.*

### What does this time mean for us?

Advent is a time for us to prepare for the arrival of God through Jesus, but also a time for us to think of what we would like to achieve.

One of the candles represents hope – what do you hope for? What do you think we should hope for worldwide?

Another candle represents peace – can we achieve peace in the world? What could you do to help?

Love is also represented on the wreath – Christmas is a time to be with loved ones. Who will you spend Christmas with? How can you help those who will be lonely this Christmas, or those that cannot afford to provide as much as they'd like at Christmas.

Finally, think about how you can spread joy this year. Did you contribute to the Operation Christmas Child shoeboxes? They will bring joy to children all around the world this Christmas!

# Biblical link

## Luke 1.

During Elizabeth's sixth month of pregnancy, God sent the angel Gabriel to a virgin girl who lived in Nazareth, a town in Galilee. She was engaged to marry a man named Joseph from the family of David. Her name was Mary. The angel came to her and said, "Greetings! The Lord is with you; you are very special to him."

But Mary was very confused about what the angel said. She wondered, "What does this mean?" The angel said to her, "Don't be afraid, Mary, because God is very pleased with you. Listen! You will become pregnant and have a baby boy. You will name him Jesus. He will be great. People will call him the Son of the Most High God, and the Lord God will make him king like his ancestor David. He will rule over the people of Jacob forever; his kingdom will never end."

## Key Questions and activities....

*What do the four candles represent?*

*What other ways can we count down during advent?*

*What does the nativity tell us about Jesus?*

*What do you hope for during advent?*

Thought for the day

Daily bible reading



**This week, Sacred Time reminds us of the British values of mutual respect and tolerance for those of other faiths or of no faith.**

**Whilst as Christians, we countdown with anticipation to the arrival of Christ, there are many in Britain who do not. Some still celebrate Christmas and others don't celebrate Christmas at all. This doesn't mean that those people cannot share in the values we think about during advent – peace, hope, joy and love.**

**During advent this year, there are also major events for other faiths. December 12<sup>th</sup> is the Prophet Muhammad's (pbuh) birthday and Jewish people will celebrate Hanukkah on 24<sup>th</sup> December.**



# Prayer

God of hope, who brought love into this world,  
be the love that dwells between us.  
God of hope, who brought peace into this world,  
be the peace that dwells between us.  
God of hope, who brought joy into this world,  
be the joy that dwells between us.  
God of hope, the rock we stand upon,  
be the centre, the focus of our lives  
always, and particularly this Advent time.

Amen