



Celebrating Advent is a means to prepare peoples hearts to celebrate the birth of the Savior, Jesus Christ, God's Son.

The word advent means coming.

People of old, anticipated the coming of the Messiah. When He was a man, He rode into Jerusalem on a donkey, and they celebrated and shouted Hosannah. We too, can anticipate and celebrate His coming, not as a man, but as a tiny baby when He was born in a small town called Bethlehem.

Advent is celebrated the four Sundays prior to Christmas. It is a time to **Remember**, **Reflect**, and **Rejoice**. Christ came into the world humbly and simply. Preparing our hearts can be done in the same fashion - humbly and simply. This guide will help you Celebrate Advent Simply.



A Simple Advent Plan

What You Will Need:

- Any type of wreath if you want one: paper, pine cone, plastic from the Dollar Store or no wreath at all. What is important is the message not the materials. If you would like to make a paper wreath, you will find templates at the back of this document.
- Four 2 - 3 inch diameter candles that will stand steady or self-contained votives in glass containers.

What You Will Do

- Arrange the candles in a circle on or near the wreath. If you have no wreath, arrange the candles in a circle or a line. Leave this set up all month as a **reminder** of the coming Savior.
- Each Sunday or whatever weekday is convenient, read the scripture and the message to **reflect** on the coming Savior. If your children are readers, allow them to participate by reading the message.
- After the reading a parent will light one (or more) of the candles.
- Pray the prayer provided or your own prayer.
- Talk about the Family Discussion question.
- Allow a younger child to blow out the candle when you are finished with your devotional time and **rejoice** in the coming Savior.



DEVOTIONAL & SCRIPTURE READINGS

Week One- Hope

Scripture:

Luke 1:30-33 “Don’t be afraid, Mary,” the angel told her, “For you have found favor with God! You will conceive and give birth to a son, and you will name Him Jesus. He will be very great and will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give Him the throne of His ancestor David. And He will reign over Israel forever; His Kingdom will never end!”

Reading:

A young girl named Mary was visited by an angel and told she was going to have a child. This would be a special child, the Son of God, and He would be holy and perfect. God in His infinite love and grace was sending His Son into the world in a miraculous way to be the Savior of all mankind. Mary was confused and disturbed by the appearance of the angel and what the angel told her, but she loved and trusted God and so “Mary responded, “I am the Lord’s servant. May everything you have said about me come true.” (Luke 2:38a) Mary was willing to do whatever God asked her to do. She knew that God had promised a Savior would come. Never did she imagine that she would bring Him into the world. God’s promise and fulfillment of a Savior gives each person hope for now and the future.

Jesus is our hope.

- **Light the first Advent candle.**



Prayer: Mighty God, thank you for loving us so much that You would send us Your Son to be our Savior. Jesus is our hope for now and for the future. Prepare our hearts to receive and celebrate Him this Christmas season. We pray in Jesus’ name, amen.

Family Discussion:

- How can we as a family share the hope of Jesus with someone?

DEVOTIONAL & SCRIPTURE READINGS

Week Two- Joy

Scripture:

Luke 2:39-44 "A few days later Mary hurried to the hill country of Judea, to the town where Zechariah's lived. She entered the house and greeted Elizabeth. At the sound of Mary's greeting, Elizabeth's child leaped within her and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit. Elizabeth gave a glad cry and exclaimed to Mary, "God has blessed you above all women, and your child is blessed. Why am I so honored, the the mother of my Lord should visit me? When I heard your greeting, the baby in my womb jumped for joy. You are blessed because you believed that the Lord would do what He said."

Reading:

Zechariah, just like Mary, had a visit from an angel who told him that his wife, Elizabeth, was going to have a baby. The baby was to be named John. God had planned for John to prepare the people for the coming of the Lord. (Luke 1:17) When the child Elizabeth was carrying heard Mary's greeting, he leapt for joy inside of her. We can only assume he recognized that he was in the presence of the woman who would carry his Lord. The Lord he was destined to prepare the people for.

As we approach the time we celebrate the coming of the Savior, let us leap for joy at the thought. Let us be filled with the joy of the coming Lord.

Jesus is our joy.

- **Light the first and second Advent candles.**



Prayer: Mighty God, thank you for loving us so much that You would send us Your Son to be our Savior. As John leapt in the womb of Elizabeth, let us leap for joy as we celebrate the coming of the Savior, Jesus. Jesus is our joy for now and for the future. Prepare our hearts to receive and celebrate Him this Christmas season. We pray in His precious name, amen.

Family Discussion:

- How can we as a family share the joy of Jesus with each other and a friend?

DEVOTIONAL & SCRIPTURE READINGS

Week Three - Love

Scripture:

John 3:16 “For God loved the world so much that He gave His one and only Son, so that everyone who believes in Him will not perish but have eternal life.”

John 1:9a “So the Word (Jesus) became human and made His home among us. He was full of unfailing love and faithfulness.”

John 1:17 “For the law was given through Moses, but God’s unfailing love and faithfulness came through Jesus Christ.”

Reading:

Adam and Eve brought sin into the world. Sin is the wrong things we do. That sin caused people to be separated from God. God loved His creation too much to allow them to be separated from Him. God’s love plan to fix that was to send a Savior. Jesus, God’s Son, is the Savior. Romans 5:8 says, “But God showed His great love for us by sending Jesus to die for us while we were still sinners.” Jesus was sent to take the punishment for our sin by dying on the cross. Jesus loved us so much that He was willing to do that for us. Jesus is the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world. Because Jesus took the punishment for our sin, we can ask God to forgive us and He will. We will no longer be separated from God but will have a place with Him in heaven one day. The love of God and the love Jesus has for us is immeasurable and unfathomable it is so great. This season, let us also be filled with love that flows out of us and onto others. Let us show God’s love to all we meet so that they too will know and experience Jesus and His great love. Jesus is our love.

- **Light the first, second & third Advent candles.**



Prayer: Mighty God, thank you for loving us so much that You made a love plan to send us Your Son to be our Savior. As we experience your love, help us pass it on to others. Help them see that the love we share is from Jesus. Jesus is our love for now and for the future. Prepare our hearts to receive and celebrate Him this Christmas season. We pray in His wonderful name, amen.

Family Discussion:

- How can we as a family share the love of Jesus with each other and someone that is in need?

Parents: Because of today’s reading it is possible a family member will have more questions about salvation and forgiveness of sin. A plan of salvation is available at the back of this document to help in leading someone to accept Christ as their Savior.

DEVOTIONAL & SCRIPTURE READINGS

Week Four - Peace

Scripture:

Isaiah 9:6-7 “For a child is born to us, a Son is given to us. The government will rest on His shoulders. And He will be called: Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. His government and its peace will never end.”

Reading:

God gave us His only Son as the Savior. But He is so much more than our Savior. Jesus is our Counselor, He is one with the Everlasting Father, and Jesus is the Prince of Peace. Micah 5:5 foretold that Jesus would be the source of peace. When Jesus was born, he brought with Him the option to have peace in any and all circumstances. Peace is accessible through Him and in Him as we trust in Him and remain focused on who He is. Isaiah 26:3 says, “You (meaning God) will keep in perfect peace all who trust in You, all whose thoughts are fixed on You.” Life can get hectic especially around the holidays. It doesn’t have to be that way. We have a Savior that offers us peace, if we but trust in Him and keep our thoughts focused on Him. Think of it this way: Why do we celebrate Christmas? Jesus. Who loves you? Jesus. Who can you always depend on? Jesus. Who will never disappoint you? Jesus. Who will guide you? Jesus. Who understands you? Jesus. Who is with you always? Jesus. Who brings peace in the storms? Jesus. Yes, Jesus! Daily, moment by moment staying focused on the Who, Jesus, the I AM, the way, the truth, and the life, the light of the world, the very Son of God, the Prince of Peace, will bring you peace. Jesus is our peace.

- **Light the first, second, third & fourth Advent candles.**



Prayer: Mighty God, thank you for the peace that you bring to us through Jesus. As we walk through the Christmas season, let us keep our eyes and thoughts fixed on the Who of Christmas, Jesus. As we experience your peace, help us be an example to others. Help them see that the peace we have is from Jesus. Jesus is our peace for now and for the future. We praise you, Jesus, as the Prince of Peace. Prepare our hearts to receive and celebrate You this Christmas season. We pray in Your powerful name, amen.

Family Discussion:

- How can we as a family hold each other accountable to claim the peace that Jesus offers us? Think of a sign or a word you can give each other to keep the peace in your home.

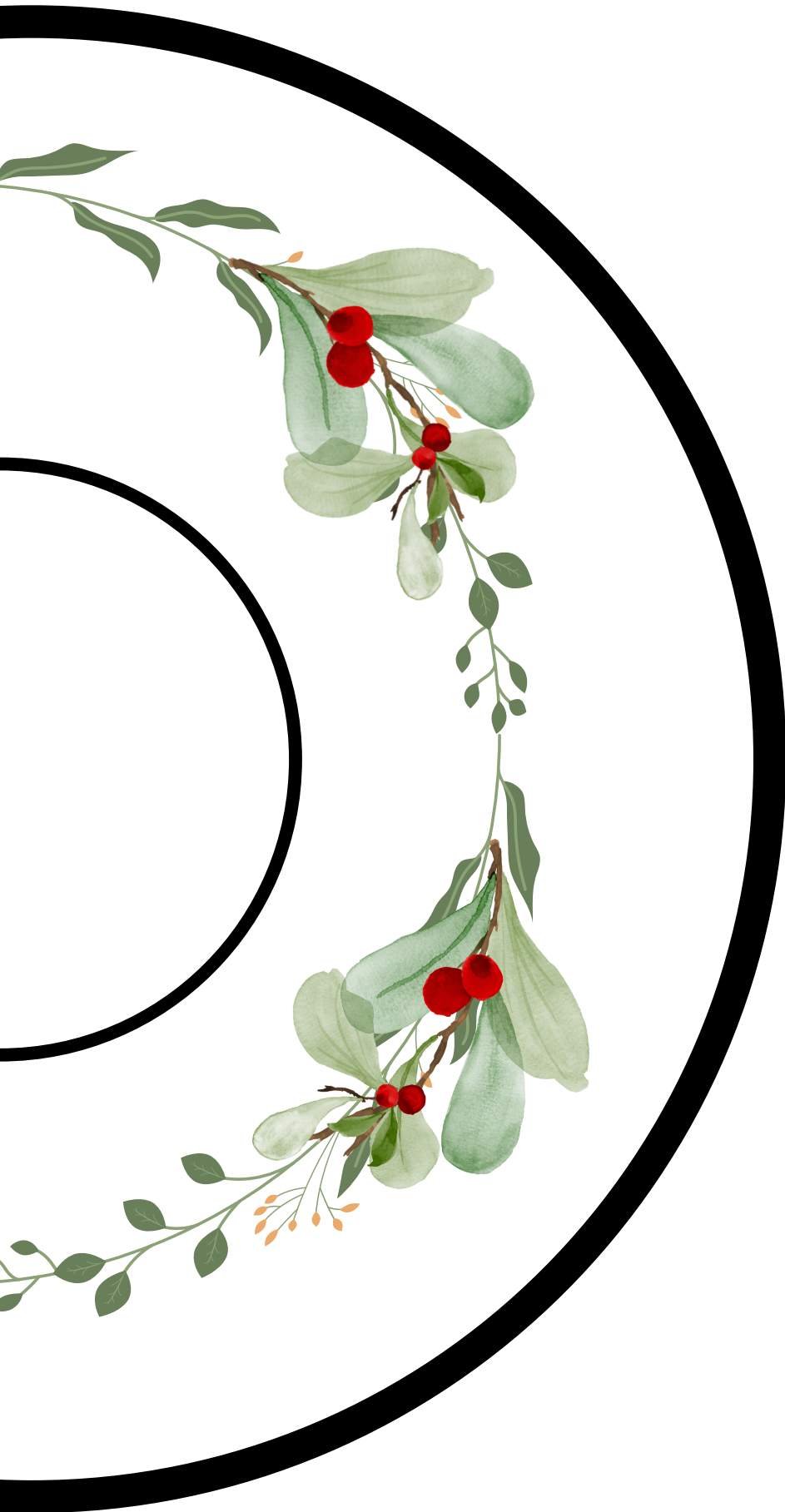
WREATH TEMPLATE A - Simple

INSTRUCTIONS:

- Cut Template A & B along the outside edge of the black lines.
- Trim the excess off **either** A or B on the straight edge of the wreath.
- Overlap the two straight edges to match the pattern.
- Tape the straight edges together.



WREATH TEMPLATE B - Simple



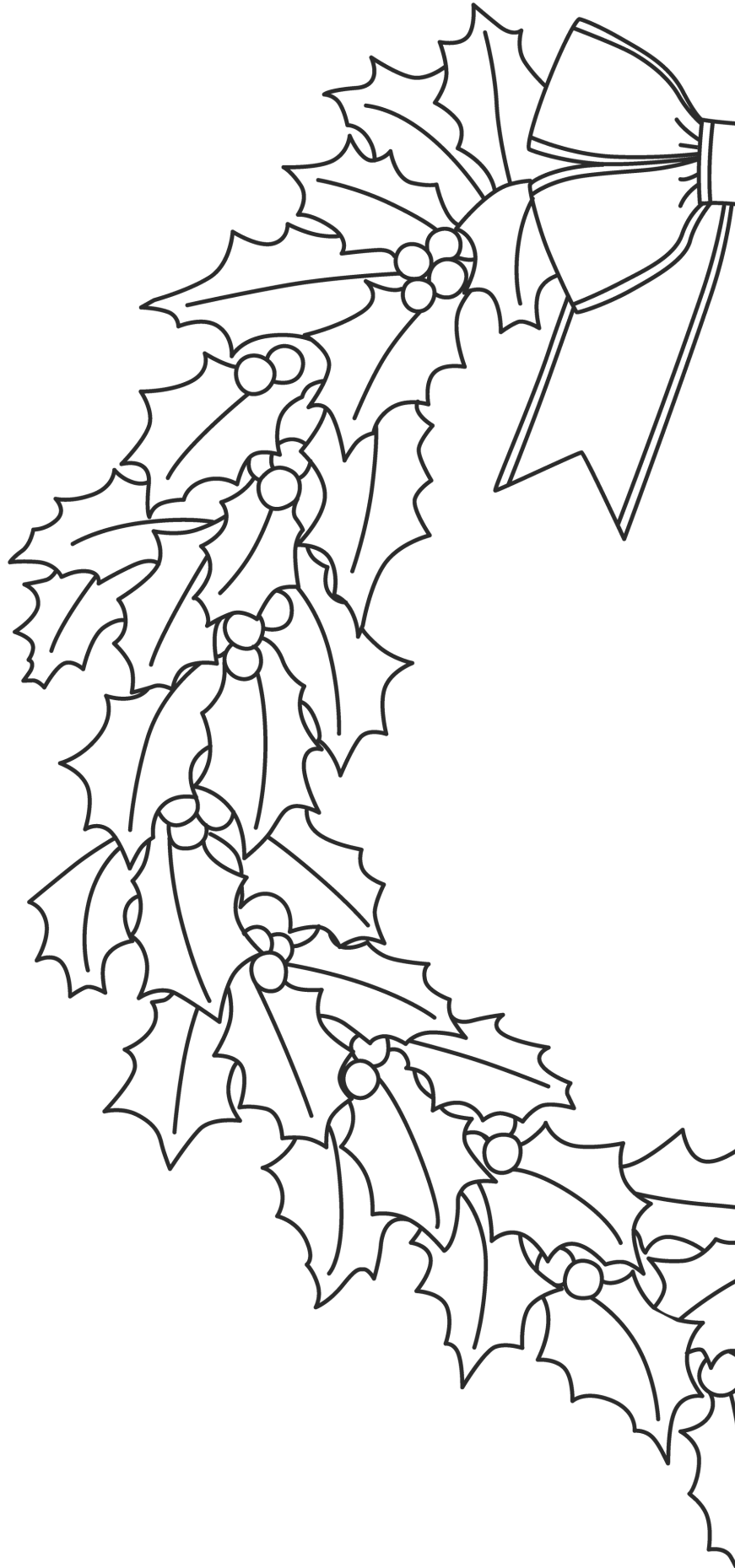
WREATH TEMPLATE C - Coloring Page



INSTRUCTIONS:

- Cut Templates C & D along the outside edge of the wreath.
- Trim the excess off **either** C or D on the straight edge of the wreath.
- Overlap the two straight edges to match the pattern.
- Tape the straight edges together.

WREATH TEMPLATE D - Coloring Page



Road to Salvation

If you have never met Jesus, the Savior, but would like to do so now, I invite you to take a walk on the Road to Salvation. Scripture communicates God's plan for human salvation. The Road to Salvation is a collection of verses from the New Living Translation of the New Testament book of Romans that concisely explain God's marvelous plan.

Understand that being a good person and your good works are not what saves you. It is by the mercy of God and putting your faith in Jesus, God's Son.

-Titus 3:5a: "But when the kindness and love of God our Savior appeared, He saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of His mercy."

Read each verse and contemplate its meaning, truth, and implication:

-Romans 3:10: "As the Scriptures say: "No one is righteous, not even one."

-Romans 3:23: "For everyone has sinned; we all fall short of God's glorious standard."

- Admit that, like everyone, you have sinned, made poor choices, and done wrong things. There is a consequence for that.

-Romans 6:23a: "For the wages of sin is death..."

- That is eternal separation from God, but there is hope for sinners. God's love for all people is expressed through Jesus Christ.

-Romans 5:8: "But God showed His great love for us by sending Christ to die for us while we were still sinners."

- Jesus took your consequence by His death on the cross. He died in your place because everyone needs a Savior. Jesus Christ is the Savior.

-Romans 10:13: "For everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved."

You can call on the name of the Lord and pray this prayer now:

- God, I know that I am a sinner. Please forgive my sin. I believe that you sent your Son, Jesus Christ, to take the punishment for my sin. I declare that Jesus is my Lord and profess my faith for salvation through the death and resurrection of Jesus. Thank You for Your grace, forgiveness, peace, mercy, and gift of eternal life. Amen!

Through faith in Jesus, sinners can enjoy peace with God and no longer be separated from God by sin. All believers are gifted eternal life with God.

-Romans 6:23b: "...but the free gift of God is eternal life through Christ Jesus our Lord."