

Lighting the Advent Wreath

A much-loved preparation for Christmas is the Advent wreath. The wreath and winter candle-lighting in the midst of growing darkness strengthen some of the Advent images found in the Bible. The unbroken circle of greens is clearly an image of everlasting life, a victory wreath, the crown of Christ, or the wheel of time itself. Christians use the wreath as a sign that Christ reaches into our time to lead us to the light of everlasting life. Whether you have an actual evergreen wreath with four candles, or simply an arrangement of four candles on a table, the following will give you a lovely way of marking the growing light in the darkness until the coming of the Light of the World at Christmas, Jesus.

Advent 1 - We praise you, O God, for this evergreen crown that marks our days of preparation for Christ's advent.

As we light the first candle on this wreath,
rouse us from sleep, that we may be ready to greet our Lord
when he comes with all the saints and angels.

Enlighten us with your grace, and prepare our hearts to welcome him with joy.

Grant this through Christ our Lord,

whose coming is certain and whose day draws near. **Amen.** *Light the first candle.*

Advent 2 - We praise you, O God, for this circle of light that marks our days of preparation for Christ's advent.

As we light the candles on this wreath, kindle within us the fire of your Spirit,
that we may be light shining in the darkness.

Enlighten us with your grace, that we may welcome others as you have welcomed us.

Grant this through Christ our Lord,

whose coming is certain and whose day draws near. **Amen.** *Light two candles.*

Advent 3 - We praise you, O God, for this victory wreath that marks our days of preparation for Christ's advent.

As we light the candles on this wreath, strengthen our hearts
as we await the Lord's coming in glory.

Enlighten us with your grace, that we may serve our neighbors in need.

Grant this through Christ our Lord,

whose coming is certain and whose day draws near. **Amen.** *Light three candles.*

Advent 4 - We praise you, O God, for this wheel of time that marks our days of preparation for Christ's advent.

As we light the candles on this wreath, open our eyes to see your presence
in the lowly ones of this earth.

Enlighten us with your grace, that we may sing of your advent among us
in the Word made flesh. Grant this through Christ our Lord,

whose coming is certain and whose day draws near. **Amen.** *Light all four candles.*

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