

# The Meaning of Advent

## The Symbolism of the Candles and Sabbath Celebrations

Many churches and families use an advent wreath to aid in the celebration of Christmas. An advent wreath includes five candles. There are four candles, one for each Sunday leading to Christmas and a fifth candle for Christmas day. The four Sunday candles are usually tapers. There are variations in the colouring of the candles, often there are three purple and one pink candle. Occasionally, all of the candles are purple. The central candle is usually a large white pillar candle.

The purple represents repentance. The pink symbolizes joy. The central candle is called the Christ candle and is not lit until Christmas day. When you light the candle it is customary to read a few verses of scripture that relate to meaning of the candle. Often the person who lights the candle recites a short statement of belief and faith as the candle is lit and then everyone unites in prayer.

### The First Candle (The Candle of Prophecy/Hope)

The first candle is sometimes called the candle of prophecy because it symbolizes the promises the prophets delivered as messages from God; promises that foretold Christ's birth. Others consider the candle to be a symbol of the hope we have in Christ and so it is called the Hope candle.

### The Second Candle (The Candle of the Way or Hope)

The second candle shows that Christ is the Way. Christians are lost in sin and Christ is the Light sent into the world to show them the way out of darkness.

### The Third Candle (The Candle of Joy)

The third candle indicates that the only lasting Joy to be found in life on earth is through Christ. All other joy is fleeting and does not last

### The Fourth Candle (The Candle of Peace)

The fourth candle reminds that Jesus comes to bring Peace to both the world and to people's hearts. Without Christ there is no peace in this world.

### The Fifth Candle (The Christ Candle or Christmas Candle)

The fifth candle represents Christ himself who is born to save people from their sins. It is a celebration of the fulfilment of prophecy as represented in Christ's birth and hope in the final fulfilment when Christ comes again and Christians join him.

## Candle Symbolism

- The candles are traditionally lit in the following order: purple, purple, pink, purple, white. The first is called the "Candle of Hope." It symbolizes faith in God keeping his promises to humanity. The second is called the "Candle of Preparation," reminding Christians "[get ready](#)" to receive God. The third candle is the "Candle of Joy." It recalls the angels joyfully singing about the birth of Christ. The fourth candle, the "Candle of Love," reminds Christians that God loves them enough to send his only Son to Earth. The "Christ Candle," the white candle in the center, stands for Jesus Christ himself.