

Lighting the Advent Wreath 2006



About Advent

Advent comes from the Latin word 'adventus' meaning 'Coming.' Advent begins the church year starting four Sundays before Christmas. The season of Advent has been set aside as a time of preparation since the 6th century. Advent is also a time for preparing for Christ's second coming, even as we remember and celebrate his first coming at Christmas. This is why the colour of the season of Lent is used, purple or blue, the colours also of Lent, of forgiveness and repentance.

Traditions vary from church to church, but usually one week, either week three or four in Advent, is set aside as more celebratory than others. Rose is the colour of this week rather than purple, which is why a rose candle is used. In our churches we will celebrate this week on the fourth Sunday of Advent, when we remember Jesus Son of God, born to Mary to whom is attributed that great song of joy, the Magnificat.

This year as we light each candle we remember one name given to Jesus which helps us to understand more about him. The names teach us that whilst the name Jesus was a very ordinary name at the time, in Jesus was also the name above all names—the name high over all.

Jesus the Name High Over all

This year as we will travel through the four Sundays of Advent, leading to Christmas Day, we will think of names or titles given to speak of Jesus and who he is. Each week we will consider a different name using a piece from scripture, a commentary and a prayer.

There are words spoken by the worship leader and words which the congregation can join in saying. As we do so we remind ourselves of Jesus, God born man, the name above all names.



Therefore God exalted him to the highest place
and gave him the name that is above every name,
that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow,
in heaven and on earth and under the earth,
and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord,
to the glory of God the Father.

Philippians Chapter 2

Jesus the name high over all

First Candle - Jesus the Son of David

the Old Testament Ancestors of Jesus

Leader Light and peace, in Jesus Christ our Lord
All Thanks be to God

Leader Today is the First Sunday of Advent, we remind ourselves of Jesus the Son of David.

Scripture Matthew 21:14

The blind and the lame came to him at the temple, and he healed them. But when the chief priests and the teachers of the law saw the wonderful things he did and the children shouting in the temple area, "Hosanna to the Son of David," they were indignant. "Do you hear what these children are saying?" they asked him. "Yes," replied Jesus, "have you never read, "'From the lips of children and infants you have ordained praise'?"

Commentary

The Old Testament spoke of the coming of the Messiah, of how a Saviour would be born, a king in the line of King David. He would rule the world wisely and bless all the nations. So the angel visited the shepherds and told them that in the Bethlehem, the City of David, a Savior had been born; Christ the Lord. God keeps his promises and Jesus the Son of David came, not just an earthly king, but the promised Saviour.

(A person lights the first candle for Jesus, Son of David)

As we light this candle we worship Jesus the fulfillment of God's promises.

Leader Jesus, Son of David,
All Jesus the name high over all.

Leader Let us pray

All God of Abraham and Sarah and all the patriarchs of old, you are our Father too. Your love is revealed to us in Jesus, born in Bethlehem, Son of David. Help us in preparing to celebrate his birth, to make our hearts ready to welcome you as our king. Help us today and every day to worship you and to live our lives subject to your just and gentle rule. We ask this prayer in the name of Jesus, the name above all names. Amen.

Second Candle - Jesus the Prince of Peace

The prophets who foretold the birth of Jesus

Leader Light and peace, in Jesus Christ our Lord

All Thanks be to God

Leader Today is the Second Sunday of Advent, we remind ourselves of our Saviour Jesus, the Prince of Peace.

Last Sunday we lit the first candle in our Advent Wreath, and celebrated the promises spoken in the Old Testament of one who would be born a king in the line of King David.

(A person now lights the first candle, Jesus Son of David)

Today, as we light the second candle of Advent, we remember Jesus the Prince of Peace. Isaiah the prophet spoke of one who would come, a king in the line of King David. "the Prince of Peace".

Scripture Isaiah 9:6

For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there will be no end. He will reign on David's throne and over his kingdom, establishing and upholding it with justice and righteousness from that time on and forever. The zeal of the LORD Almighty will accomplish this.

Commentary

When Jesus came he taught people the importance of being peace-makers. He said that those who make peace shall be called the children of God. When Christ comes to us he brings us peace and he will bring everlasting peace when he comes again in glory.

(A person now lights the second candle, Jesus the Prince of Peace)

As we light this candle we remind ourselves that only through Jesus is true peace found.

Leader Jesus is the Prince
All Jesus the name high over all

Leader Let us pray
**All Lord Jesus, Light of the World, the prophets said
you would bring peace and save your people from trouble.
Give peace in our hearts at Christmastide. We ask that as we
wait for you to come again, that you would remain present with
us. Help us today, and everyday to worship you, to hear your
word, and to do your will by sharing your peace with each
other. We ask this prayer in the name of Jesus, the name above
all names. Amen.**

Third Candle - Jesus the Lamb of God

John The Baptist

Leader Light and peace, in Jesus Christ our Lord
All Thanks be to God

Leader Today is the Third Sunday of Advent and we will light a
candle to remember Jesus the Lamb of God.

Last Sunday we lit two candles to remind us of Jesus the Son of
David, and Jesus the Prince of Peace



(A person now lights the two candles)

Today as we light the third candle, we remember Jesus who John the Baptist called 'The Lamb of God.'

Scripture John Chapter 1:29

The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him and said, "Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world! This is the one I meant when I said, 'A man who comes after me has surpassed me because he was before

me.' I myself did not know him, but the reason I came baptizing with water was that he might be revealed to Israel."

Commentary

In their old age God gave to Zechariah and Elizabeth a son called John. When John called Jesus 'The Lamb of God,' he brought to mind the greatest act of salvation in the history of the Jewish people, the release of the people from captivity in Egypt. This was celebrated every year in Passover. Jesus was led like a lamb to the slaughter, he is our Passover lamb, sacrificed for us, once for all. We have been redeemed by the precious blood of Jesus. When John called Jesus the Lamb of God, he saw him as a Saviour who would take away the sin of the world. As we light this candle we remind ourselves that Jesus is God's final sacrifice for the sins of the world.

(A person now lights the third candle for Jesus the Lamb of God.)

Leader Jesus is the Lamb of God
All Jesus the name high over all

Leader Let us pray, using the words of the Agnus Dei
All Lamb of God, who takest away the sins of the world, have mercy upon us.
Lamb of God, who takest away the sins of the world, have mercy upon us.
Lamb of God, who takest away the sins of the world, grant us peace. Amen.

Fourth Candle - Jesus The Son of God

Mary the Mother of Jesus
(Pink Candle)

Leader Light and peace, in Jesus Christ our Lord
All **Thanks be to God**

Leader Today is the Fourth Sunday of Advent and we will light
a candle to remember Jesus, Son of God .

Last Sunday we lit three candles to remind ourselves of Jesus the
Son of David, Jesus the Prince of Peace and Jesus the Lamb of
God.

(A person lights the three candles)

Today, as we light the fourth candle of Advent, we remember Jesus
the Son of God.

Scripture Luke Chapter 1:30

But the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, you have found
favour with God. You will be with child and give birth to a son, and
you are to give him the name Jesus. He will be great and will be
called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the
throne of his father David, and he will reign over the house of Jacob
forever; his kingdom will never end." "How will this be," Mary asked
the angel, "since I am a virgin?" The angel answered, "The Holy
Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will
overshadow you. So the holy one to be born will be called the Son
of God.

Commentary

The title Son of God expresses the unique and special relationship
which Jesus has with God the Father. So Jesus called God 'Abba,'
Father, and even at the age of 12 he regarded the Temple as his
'Father's House.' Son of God is a title used in key places in the
Gospels. At baptism the voice of God was heard to call Jesus,
God's Son. At the transfiguration the voice of God acknowledged
Jesus and the way of suffering he had chosen. It is because Jesus

is the Son of God that when we look at the life and teachings of Jesus we gain the very best picture of what God is really like.

Leader Jesus is the Lamb of God
All **Jesus the name high over all**

Leader Let us pray

Lord Jesus, we call you Son of God, and we acknowledge that you and the Father are one. Therefore we trust your promises of forgiveness of sins, and life everlasting. Thank you for helping us to know that you love us with an everlasting love and show compassion for all of your creation.

The Fifth and Last Candle - Jesus is Emmanuel 'God with us'

Jesus is born on Christmas Day
(White Candle)

Leader Light and peace, in Jesus Christ our Lord
All **Thanks be to God**

Last Sunday we lit four candles to remind ourselves of who Jesus is

(Each candle is lit as the reader speaks)

The First Candle - Jesus is The Son of David

The Second Candle - Jesus is Prince of Peace

The Third Candle - Jesus is Lamb of God

The Fourth Candle - Jesus is Son of God

Today is the fifth Sunday of Advent and we will light a candle to remember Jesus as Immanuel, God with us.

Scripture Matthew Chapter 1:18

This is how the birth of Jesus Christ came about: His mother Mary was pledged to be married to Joseph, but before they came together, she was found to be with child through the Holy Spirit. Because Joseph her husband was a righteous man and did not want to expose her to public disgrace, he had in mind to divorce her quietly. But after he had considered this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, "Joseph son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary home as your wife, because what is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. She will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins." All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had said through the prophet: "The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel" --which means, "God with us."

Commentary

God had come close to people throughout history, through prophets and priests. Now Matthew quotes the words of the prophet Isaiah to tell us that Jesus was no mere prophet, in Jesus God had actually come to dwell with the people. Jesus was not a messenger sent from God, now God had come in person. The Gospel of Matthew begins by reminding us God come to us in this unique and special way as Jesus Immanuel. The Gospel of Matthew closes by reminding us that Jesus is still among us today and he will continue to be 'until the end of the age.'

Leader Jesus is Immanuel 'God with us'
All **Jesus the name high over all**

Leader Let us pray
Thank you Lord Jesus that you are to us an ever present friend. You were of one being with the father, and yet you left the throne of heaven to live among us as a servant king. You suffered death and poured out your love as you died on the cross. You brought peace to us and you set before us an example of humility , obedience and love. So may we be drawn to serve you and bring glory to your name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. Amen.

