

The Lord's Prayer may be said

**Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins
as we forgive those who sin against us.
Lead us not into temptation
but deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power,
and the glory are yours
now and for ever.
Amen.**

*and friends and family who are far away may be
remembered and prayed for...*

Voice 1: The Lord bless us and keep us.

All present: The Lord make his face to shine upon us and
be gracious to us. *Amen.*

*This leaflet has been prepared for use in the parish of Frome St John the Baptist
© 2005 in this format. The leaflet draws on material © 1999 Frank Logue*

Celebrating Advent at Home



Advent

Advent begins the church year, starting four Sundays before Christmas.

This leaflet has been designed to help families and individuals recapture something of the season of Advent as a time for preparing for Christmas.

We hope that some of the ideas may help you enjoy the season and its fuller meaning.

Saying a Prayer

Using the short response and prayer on the back of this leaflet can help link any of these suggested activities more closely to the Advent countdown of days towards Christmas.

The Advent Wreath

The circle of the wreath and the evergreens that make it up both signify God's endless mercy and undying love.



Three purple candles and one rose-coloured (pink) candle are evenly spaced around the wreath. There is one larger white candle in the centre of the wreath. The wreath can be as simple as four candle holders with greenery laid around them to form a circle.

Some traditions attach meanings to using different greens, each signifying another aspect of the season. These include:

Ivy—to remind us of the human spirit clinging to God's strength.

Cedar—to remind us of eternal life available to all through Christ.

Holly—to remind us of Jesus' crown of thorns.

Bay—to remind us of victory over sin and death.

Advent Prayers *for individual or family use :*

Voice 1: Light and peace, in Jesus Christ our Lord.

All present: Thanks be to God.

Voice 1: Let us pray.

Use the appropriate prayer for each week:

In the first week of Advent

Almighty God,
Help us to be careful and
thoughtful every day,
So that as Jesus was born in
gentleness
We may come to share the
fullness of His risen life;
Amen.

In the second week of Advent

Merciful God,
You sent your messengers
To show the ways of justice and of
your peace:
Help us to know the right way to
live
That we may come to walk with
you in Jesus' name.
Amen.

In the third week of Advent

Stir us up Lord,
And whenever we are lazy or
uncaring,
Remind us to be generous in
sharing your love and gifts with
others;
In Jesus' name.
Amen.

In the fourth week of Advent

Help us God,
Each and every day,
To think of those we love
And the needs of others
Showing our love for you
By caring for them.
Amen.



*The advent candle or wreath candles
may now be lit, calendar door opened or
Jesse tree symbol attached.*

Person	Symbol	Scripture Passage
Adam	Male Figure	Genesis 2:7
Eve	Female Figure	Genesis 2:21-23
Noah	Rainbow	Genesis 9:11-17
Abraham	Tree	Genesis 18:1
Sarah	Tent	Genesis 18:9-14
Isaac	Ram	Genesis 22:13-14
Rebekah	Camel	Genesis 24:63-67
Jacob	Ladder	Genesis 28:10-17
Rachel	Shepherd's Crook	Genesis 29:9-12
Joseph	Colourful Coat	Genesis 37:3
Moses	Burning Bush	Exodus 3:1-6
Miriam	Music Notes	Exodus 15:20-21
Deborah	Palm Tree	Judges 4:4-5
Samuel	Lamp	1 Samuel 3:1-3
Ruth	Straw	Ruth 2:1-9
Jesse	Branch	Isaiah 11:1
David	Harp	1 Samuel 16:17-18
Solomon	Stone Columns	1 Kings 5:2-5
Hezekiah	Tablets of the Law	2 Kings 18:1-6
Josiah	Book	2 Kings 23:1-3
Isaiah	Throne	Isaiah 6:1
Elizabeth	Dove	Luke 1:39-45
John the Baptist	River	Matthew 3:1-6
Mary	Angel	Luke 1:26-35
Jesus	Manger or Crib	Luke 2:1-7

Each week, an additional candle is lit. As the light of the wreath grows brighter, we are reminded that the Light of the World will soon arrive in glory. The central white candle is to be larger (often thicker) than the four in the wreath. This signifies the Light of Christ and is first lit on Christmas Eve and relit on Christmas Day.

An Advent Candle

A candle numbered with the days of December in the countdown may be lit each day - perhaps at the family meal table at a time when all are able to eat together.

CAUTION! - All use of candles MUST be under adult supervision and they should never be left burning unattended. Any greenery must not be close enough to be at risk of being set on fire by burning candles.

An Advent Calendar

One popular way to mark the days in Advent is to use an Advent calendar. These calendars usually have a door to open each night to reveal a picture or an object. In a family, if there are sweets or chocolates hidden behind the doors of a shared calendar, it is a good idea to establish rules for turns and sharing at the beginning of the season! The days of Advent vary each year, so bought Advent calendars usually have 24 doors, one for each day in December leading up to Christmas.

A Nativity Scene

A nativity scene (sometimes called a crèche), is yet another way to highlight the season of Advent. Instead of putting out the whole set at once, try building the scene slowly. Begin with the manger the first week. Add a few animals the second week. Then add Mary and Joseph on the third week. On Christmas Eve add the baby Jesus and any additional figures.

The wise men and camels don't arrive until Epiphany (January 6) - some people slowly move these figures around the room approaching the crib scene through the weeks of Advent.



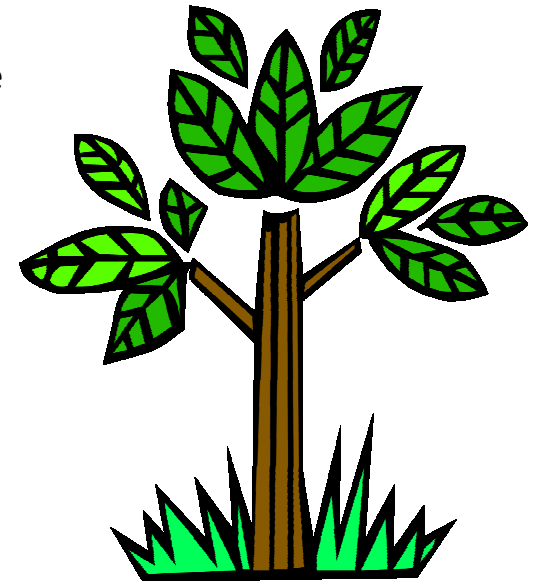
A Jesse Tree

The 11th chapter of Isaiah describes the ideal king in the line of Israel's great king, David. The first verse of that chapter says,

*A shoot shall come out from the stump of Jesse,
and a branch shall grow out of his roots.*

Jesse was King David's father. The image of a branch growing out of the roots of Jesse points to a new king in

David's line. Christmas is the celebration of the birth of Jesus, who is a descendent of Jesse. One tradition is to decorate a tree branch with symbols that remember other important people from the Old Testament. The symbols on the "Jesse Tree" remind us of the story of thousands of years of men and women of faith.



A Jesse Tree can be made by drawing a picture of a tree on a large sheet of card (preferably A2 or A3). Then create the symbols on smaller pieces of card that you can attach with sticky tape.

Alternatively, if you have space, a real branch can be safely positioned and the smaller decorations attached with thread or string.

Symbols for the Jesse Tree draw from images in the Old Testament. Possible symbols and their scripture references are listed on the next page: