



### Why the Liturgical Calendar?

Christ has redeemed all things, including time. Through the use of the liturgical calendar we are invited into the story of incarnation and resurrection and can practice together the transformative power of the gospel. Seasons of celebration (like Christmas) are preceded by intentional opportunities for reflection, repentance, and remembering. Entering into the Church Year yields our hearts and minds to live out the redemption story all year long.

### What is Advent?

Advent is the first season celebrated in the Church year. It begins four Sundays before Christmas Day. Advent means "coming" or "arrival." In the Advent season we posture our hearts to wait expectantly by the power of the indwelling Spirit. We remember our longing with hope for the day of Christ's second coming when he makes all things new. Advent is a season of preparation and reflection as we anticipate the celebratory arrival of Emmanuel ("God with us") at Christmas. Advent is a time to slow down, to resist the frenetic pace of our culture and its corresponding story of materialism. We have all we need in Christ, and yet, we long for final glory at Christ's return when all of our weeping is turned to perpetual joy.

### Setting the table for redemptive waiting

**Colors of the season:** Purple/violet, royal blue

(symbolizing prayer, penitence, and sacrifice as well as the coming of the kingdom)

**Flowers + Décor:** Evergreen, red poinsettia; consider decorating with a bare Christmas tree until Christmas Day in anticipation for the celebration of the first Advent

### Practices: Advent Wreath

Representing each week of Advent the wreath itself symbolizes God's eternity.

Its circular shape reminds us of our God who has no beginning and no end as well as our own sure hope of eternal life. As we prepare for Jesus' coming, we remember each of the four weeks proceeding Christmas the virtues of hope, love, joy, and peace.

#### Week 1: HOPE (Purple/Violet)

We posture our hearts toward hopeful expectation and anticipation as well as the hope of our forgiveness in Christ.

#### Week 2: LOVE (Purple/Violet)

We remember the love of Christ for us and moving toward others with that same love empowered by the Holy Spirit

#### Week 3. JOY (Pink)

We celebrate the joy that we hold even in suffering because of the first Advent.

#### Week 4: PEACE (Purple/Violet)

We call our souls to peace in our prayer and penitence knowing that our savior has come to rescue and redeem and is surely returning a conquering King.

#### Christmas Eve: Christ Candle (White)

You may also include a fifth candle to be lit on Christmas Eve.

This candle is known as the Christ candle in celebration of the life of Jesus.

It is white to represent the purity of our savior and his sinlessness.



# Leaven + Liturgies

Advent

## INTRODUCTION TO THE SEASON

*Read the "Introduction to Advent" included in this Seats + Seasons Guide aloud.*

## "A LITURGY FOR THE GROANING OF ALL CREATION"

*Read Romans 8:18-28.*

*Participate together in the corresponding liturgy.*

*Allow a few moments of silence for reflection.*

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

**Question 1:** *The scriptures tell us that all of creation is groaning for the revealing of the children of God (v.19). On that day creation will be set free from it's bondage to corruption (v.21).*

*What do you think that future glory will be like?*

**Question 2:** *The Spirit helps us in our weakness and intercedes on our behalf as we wait with patience (v.25). What does it look like for you to wait on the Lord?*

**Question 3:** *Is it hard to believe that God is working all things together for your good (v.28)?*

## COLLABORATION + CULTIVATION

*You are invited to share your art with this community and share in the art of others. Whether you are bringing a completed work, or a work in-progress, this community exists to spur you on as you pursue the creative vision God has placed on your heart. This is a safe and sacred space for you to begin or continue the courageous journey of becoming all God has called you to be as a co-creator with Christ. We are a community of varied skill-sets and gifting and are committed to genuine, gentle, and generous collaboration.*