

The Church Year: Advent

The First Church Season: Advent

Advent begins the church year. The word "Advent" means, "to come". Advent begins on the 4th Sunday before Christmas Day, which means it usually begins at the end of November and lasts until Christmas Day.

Where is Jesus during Advent?

During the season of Advent Jesus has not yet come into the world! Remember the word "Advent" means "to come" – Jesus is coming into the world, but is not here yet. Each of the four Sundays in Advent brings us closer to the Birth of Jesus.

Special Announcements!

The angel Gabriel visits Mary, Joseph, Elizabeth (Mary's cousin) and Zachariah (Elizabeth's husband) during Advent. Two special children will soon be born and both children will have very important jobs. Elizabeth will be the mother of **John the Baptist** – John's job is to announce that someone (Jesus) is coming into the world to do very great things. John "paves the way" for Jesus.

The angel Gabriel tells Mary that the Lord is with her. Gabriel tells her that she will have a baby and that she is to name the baby **Jesus**. Jesus is not just a typical person; Jesus will be the Son of God! Jesus comes into the world to do great things. This is why during Advent we wait for Jesus to come into the world! Jesus is the greatest gift ever.

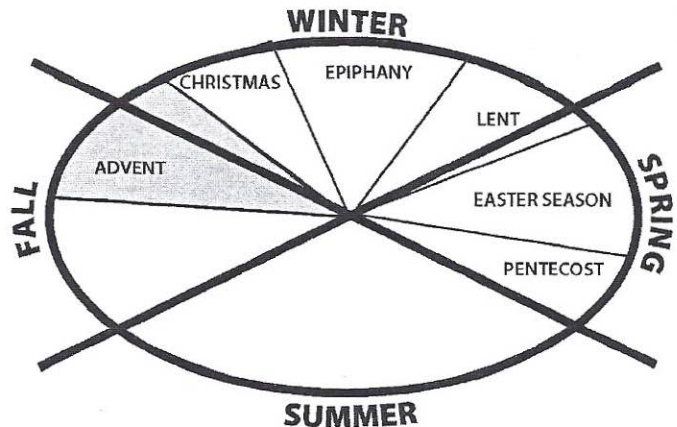
Advent Customs:

You will notice new things in the church during the season of Advent. The Advent wreath and banners are new. The Advent wreath is made out of evergreen branches which are symbolic of life, even in the coldness of winter. The candles on the wreath symbolize the light of Jesus coming into our world. Each Sunday a new candle is lit until all 4 candles are lit on the last Sunday of Advent. The Advent wreath is a German tradition. Our 4 new banners also remind us that Jesus brings Hope, Peace, Joy and Love.

Advent color in the Church:

Blue – meaning *hope*

Jesus brings hope to the world



Advent

1. How many Sundays before Christmas Eve does Advent begin?
2. Which two babies do we anticipate during the season of Advent?
3. What **new things** do you see in worship during the season of Advent (write as many as possible)?
4. What color do you see in the church during Advent, what does that color mean?
5. Circle the one picture that best represents Advent (*Just one picture is the correct one*)



Shepherds & sheep



Jesus is born



Wise Men give gifts



Angels announce that Jesus and John will be born soon.

Family-Time

How do you and your family prepare for Jesus' birth during the 4-week season of Advent?
