

The Advent Wreath

Churches display an Advent crown or Advent wreath during Advent.

There are four candles standing in the circle. In the centre there is a fifth candle.

The Advent wreath is a circle of evergreen branches.

During advent, in some churches there are no flowers



What do the candles in an Advent Wreath represent?

The Advent Wreath, or Advent Crown, can be found in churches throughout the Advent and Christmas season.

There are several different ways of understanding the meaning of the four coloured candles.

The candles can represent the Patriarchs, Prophets, John the Baptist and the Virgin Mary.

They can also represent Hope, Love, Joy and Peace, and there are other variations too.

3rd Sunday of Advent

14th December 2025

GATHERING HYMN: 'Christ is the World's Light' (88)

COLLECT:

God for whom we watch and wait,
you sent John the Baptist to prepare the way of your Son:
give us courage to speak the truth,
to hunger for justice,
and to suffer for the cause of right,
with Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen

FIRST READING

Thirsty deserts will be glad; barren lands will celebrate
and blossom with flowers.
Deserts will bloom everywhere and sing joyful songs.
They will be as majestic as Mount Lebanon,
as glorious as Mount Carmel or Sharon Valley.
Everyone will see the wonderful splendour of the Lord our God.
Here is a message for all who are weak, trembling, and worried:
"Cheer up! Don't be afraid.
Your God is coming to punish your enemies.
God will take revenge on them and rescue you."
The blind will see, and the ears of the deaf will be healed.
Those who were lame will leap around like deer;
tongues once silent will shout for joy.
Water will rush through the desert.
Scorching sand will turn into a lake,
and thirsty ground will flow with fountains.
Grass will grow in deserts, where packs of wild dogs
once made their home.
A good road will be there, and it will be named
"God's Sacred Highway."
It will be for God's people;



Isaiah 35: 1-10

no one unfit to worship God will walk on that road.
And no fools can travel on that highway.
No lions or other wild animals will come near that road;
only those the Lord has saved will travel there.
The people the Lord has rescued
will come back singing as they enter Zion.
Happiness will be a crown everyone will always wear.
They will celebrate and shout
because all sorrows and worries will be gone far away.

For the word of the Lord

Thanks be to God

SECOND READING

James 5.7–10

My friends, be patient until the Lord returns.

Think of farmers who wait patiently for the autumn and spring rains to make their valuable crops grow.

Be patient like those farmers and don't give up. The Lord will soon be here!

Don't grumble about each other or you will be judged, and the judge is right outside the door.

My friends, follow the example of the prophets who spoke for the Lord. They were patient, even when they had to suffer

For the word of the Lord

Thanks be to God

GRADUAL HYMN— 'For the Fruits of His Creation' (169)

We sing verse 3 after the Gospel Reading

GOSPEL

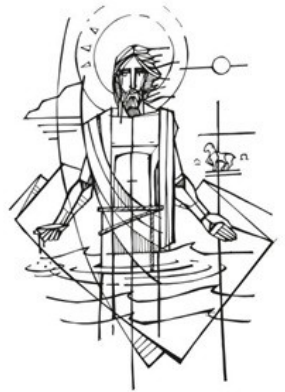
Matthew 11: 2-11

John was in prison when he heard what Christ was doing. So John sent some of his followers to ask Jesus, "Are you the one we should be looking for? Or must we wait for someone else?"

Jesus answered, "Go and tell John what you have heard and seen. The blind are now able to see, and the lame can walk. People with leprosy are being healed, and the deaf can hear. The dead are raised to life, and the poor are hearing the good news. God will bless everyone who doesn't reject me because of what I do."

As John's followers were going away, Jesus spoke to the crowds about John:

What sort of person did you go out into the desert to see? Was he like tall grass blown about by the wind? What kind of man did you go out to see? Was he someone dressed in fine clothes? People who dress like that live in the king's palace. What did you really go out to see? Was he a prophet? He certainly was. I tell you that he was more than a prophet. In the Scriptures God says about him, "I am sending my messenger ahead to get things ready for you." I tell you no one ever born on this earth is greater than John the Baptist. But whoever is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than John.



OFFERTORY HYMN: 'Beauty for Brokenness' (54)

COMMUNION HYMNS:

'I Am the Bread of Life' - (284)

'I Am Like a Candle Flame' (393)

'Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence' (375)

POST COMMUNION

We give you thanks, O Lord, for these heavenly gifts;
kindle in us the fire of your Spirit
that when your Christ comes again
we may shine as lights before his face;
who is alive and reigns now and for ever.

FINAL HYMN: 'Hills of the North Rejoice' (270)