

# Children of the Light

## Advent Wreath-Making Workshop

Written by  
Tracey E. Herzer



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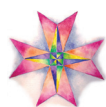
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# Advent Wreath Workshop

## Proposed Schedule

- 8:00 Parish Hall Set up
- Copies of handouts (See "**Learning About Advent Wreaths**")
  - Copies of liturgy (See "**Blessing of Advent Wreaths**")
  - Tables & chairs set up for making wreaths
  - Table for drinks and snacks
  - Table for selling wreath forms and candles
  - Supplies (See "**Supplies for Wreath Making Workshop**")
  - Coffee & Wassail set up (See "**Recipes for Wassail**")
  - Pastries & cookies set up
- 8:30 Last-Minute Set up
- Tables covered with disposable plastic tablecloths (purple or green)
  - Turn on music player with Advent music
  - Set up table for selling wreath forms and candles
    - Signs with prices (See **Signs**)
    - Cash box for change
    - Boxes of forms and candles under the table – easy reach
    - Pen & paper
    - Volunteer #1: \_\_\_\_\_
    - Volunteer #2: \_\_\_\_\_
- 9:00 Welcome & Announcements
- Give basic instructions
  - Show a completed sample wreath if you've done one
  - Tell people where to find additional supplies
- 9:10 Wreath Making – let the chaos begin! ☺
- 9:30 Announce 10 minute time limit
- Begin cleaning up trash
  - Walk around to each table with trash bags
  - Distribute liturgy (See "**Blessing of Advent Wreaths**")
  - Distribute handouts (See "**Learning About Advent Wreaths**")
- 9:45 Blessing of Advent Wreath Liturgy (See "**Blessing of Advent Wreaths**")
- 10:00 Dismiss
- People can continue finishing wreaths, if needed, until service time
  - Make sure tables are wiped off
  - Throw trash away

# Children of the Light

## Readings for Lighting the Advent Wreath

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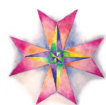
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# Advent Readings

In our church we always lit an Advent wreath before services, but usually an acolyte had done it and there was no reading or prayers to accompany the lighting. So, several years ago I wrote these brief meditations and prayers to be read at the beginning of the service each week in Advent while the wreath candles were lit.

I recruited readers from many different types of families. At the beginning of the service, the designated family for that week would come forward and one member (or an acolyte) would light the appropriate candle(s) while another member read the script.

The half-page meditation and prayer was run off on light purple paper and inserted in the worship aid. This worked great for us because people who had trouble hearing could still read all the words were being said. Also, we found that families really liked having the separate page insert so they could take it home and use it during the week with their own Advent wreaths.

In the pages following, you will find two different versions of the same basic reading:

- **The Original Version** – uses descriptive language to help create a holy space for prayer and meditation. A reader introduces the lighting and the people respond by singing a short line from a familiar Christmas hymn. Our choir was quick to lead, but everyone joined in and hearing the whole church sing just a single line *a cappella* (without instruments) was haunting and lovely. It was used at both our 8:00 early service and our 10:30 late service and mostly read by adults or families with older children or teens.
- **The Simplified Version** – was designed for families with young children and used at our 9:00 family service. Each week a reader (usually an elementary-school aged child) read the bottom part of the insert, although the top part of the page was included in the bulletin for context. Some people were initially skeptical about child readers, but it was amazing. Of course, the children had to be coached to read their parts slowly and loudly (but then again, so did some of the adults!) and in the end, the congregation was really touched by children leading our worship in this way.

These prayers may also be used in other parish settings, such as intergenerational faith formation gathering. I hope you find this information helpful. Please feel free to adapt these prayers as needed for your particular congregation -- editable files are provided.

Wishing you an Advent that is Less Hectic & More Holy,

In God's Peace,  
Tracey E. Herzer

# Volunteer Families

## **Advent I – November 28, 2010**

Reader: \_\_\_\_\_

## **Advent II – December 5, 2010**

Reader: \_\_\_\_\_

## **Advent III – December 12, 2010**

Reader: \_\_\_\_\_

## **Advent IV – December 19, 2010**

Reader: \_\_\_\_\_

## **Christmas Eve – December 24, 2010**

Reader: \_\_\_\_\_

## **Christmas Day – December 25, 2010 (or Christmas I – December 26)**

Reader: \_\_\_\_\_

**The following pages are appropriate  
to use with child readers.**

**A second set of similar readings after this set  
can be used for adult readers.**



## THE PROPHET'S CANDLE OF HOPE

### The First Week of Advent

Today we begin our four-week Advent journey to Christmas. As life gets busier, louder and more insistent, each week we will stop here and together seek a quiet, holy spot where we can rest and wait and watch for the coming of God's Kingdom.

We light the first candle in our Advent wreath: the Prophet's Candle of Hope. The Old Testament prophets urge us to pay attention and prepare for the coming of a Messiah who not only brings light to a cold and darkened world, but whose gentle glow can warm even the furthest reaches of our personal darkness.

***READER:*** *Today we light the Prophet's Candle of Hope as we wait and watch and hope for the coming of the Christ Child.*

*Dear God, thank you for sending Jesus to be the Light of the World. Help us remember we are your Children of Light and that you travel with us as we begin this and every journey. Amen.*

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can be used for adults readers.**

SAMPLE - DO NOT REPRODUCE

## THE PROPHET'S CANDLE OF HOPE

### First Sunday of Advent

**Leader:** Today begins a four-week journey to Christmas and we begin our Advent work of watching, waiting and preparing. Each week, as the frenzied pace toward Christmas grows busier, louder and more insistent, we will gather in this holy spot where our hearts can find rest. We will light the candles of Advent and take a few quiet moments to contemplate and meditate and hope.

**People:** ***O Come, O Come Emmanuel and ransom captive Israel...***  
(sung a cappella)

**Leader:** This first Sunday of Advent we light the Prophet's Candle of Hope. The Old Testament prophets urge us to prepare for the coming Messiah – a Messiah who not only brings light to a cold and darkened world, but whose warmth and light can stretch into even the deepest crevice of our personal darkness. We wait in hope and expectation.

**People:** ***O Come, O Come Emmanuel and ransom captive Israel...***  
(sung a cappella)

**Leader:** As we light the Prophet's Candle of Hope, we hear the echo of the prophet Isaiah: "The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who lived in a land of deep darkness—on them light has shined." (Isaiah 9:2) The time of salvation is at hand and the Messiah is on his way!

**All:** ***God of Hope, thank you for sending your son, Jesus Christ, to help us know we are Children of Light and no longer a people who walk in darkness. Give us strength to follow the example of the prophets of old who were ready and expectant. Be known to us during these Advent days that we may feel a keen awareness of the light of your love. Amen.***

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