



Advent

Video and PDF resource



Theme:

This video has been created to be used around Advent (which starts this year on 29 November and goes on until 24 December). It explains what Advent means – ‘coming’ or ‘arrival’ – and asks the children to think about who or what is coming. This person is not named in the video but is referred to as ‘the special person sent by God’.

Included in the video are an Advent calendar and an Advent crown, which both help us journey through Advent with a sense of anticipation and preparation for the ‘coming’. The video shows the lighting of the four candles of the Advent crown (one per week of Advent), quoting traditional names for the candles and explaining the links to the Bible story.

The video concludes with a challenge about how the children will celebrate Advent and think about the special person sent by God.

NB: There are several different ways of naming the candles in an Advent crown, and the ones we have chosen for the video may not be the ones you usually use. Before showing the video, check that it will work in your context.

Age range:

5 to 11s

Context:

You can use this resource with groups of children in a wide range of contexts, including school, clubs and church-based groups. It is suitable for children with little or no knowledge of the Christian faith.

You will need:

- the *Advent* video, available from <https://youtu.be/QxbTW5GsEku>
- a means of playing the video to your group
- an Advent crown (instructions for making an Advent crown are included on page 3 of this resource)
- Bibles – digital or physical

Play the video:

Play the *Advent* video to your group.

Light the first candle on your Advent crown, saying the words as suggested on the video: ‘We light the first candle of Advent for hope.’

Tell the children that this candle is sometimes called ‘the prophets’ candle’ to remind us of the prophets in the Bible. Prophets were people who told everyone a long time before it happened that someone really special would be sent by God to bring hope for the world.

If you are able to meet with your group on a weekly basis through Advent, you could light a new candle each





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week and take some time to explore what it represents. However, if you are meeting to explore the idea of Advent with your group in a single session, proceed to light the rest of the candles as follows.

‘We light the second candle for peace.’ This candle is also known as ‘the angel’s candle’, as the angels sang in the sky when the special person sent by God came to earth. They sang about ‘peace on earth’, and in the Bible this special person is sometimes called the Prince of Peace.

‘We light the third candle for joy.’ This candle is also known as ‘the shepherds’ candle’ as the shepherds were told by the angels that the news they sang about would bring ‘great joy to all the people’.

‘We light the fourth candle for love.’ This candle is also known as ‘the Bethlehem candle’, as God’s special person arrived on earth in Bethlehem. He came to bring God’s love and to show us what love is really like. He came to help us to love God and love each other.

Questions to help your group explore the video theme:

Invite the children to discuss the following questions in small groups. If your group is quite small, you could do this bit together:

- What are the four candles called, and why?
- Which of the four candle names do you like best, and why?
- How do you think the special person was able to bring hope, peace, joy and love to earth?
- Who do you think the special person was?

If you are meeting as a group virtually, and you decide to break off into smaller groups in virtual rooms, please do remember to follow your safeguarding policy and provide enough leaders to do so safely.

Questions to help your group explore the Bible verses mentioned in the video:

Each candle in the Advent crown is connected to a particular passage in the Bible. Some children may want to find the passage in a Bible for themselves, whereas others may prefer to listen to the passages as a leader reads them out.

In either case, make sure there are Bibles available for your group to look at.

Give the children time to reflect on the verse and ask any questions they may have.

The prophets’ candle – Isaiah 9:6

‘A child has been born for us. We have been given a son who will be our ruler.’

This verse is an example of the prophets telling the world that a special person was coming soon.

The angels’ candle – Luke 2:14

‘Praise God in heaven! Peace on earth to everyone who pleases God.’

This verse records what the angels sang about the special person.





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The shepherds' candle – Luke 2:10

'Don't be afraid! I have good news for you, which will make everyone happy.'

This verse records what the angels said to the shepherds.

The Bethlehem candle – Matthew 2:1

'When Jesus was born in the village of Bethlehem in Judea, Herod was king.'

This verse reveals the special person to be Jesus!

Conclude by reading 1 John 4:9 to your group, then use the following questions to facilitate discussion:

- Why do you think God sent prophets ahead of sending Jesus?
- When Jesus came to earth as a baby, do you think people realised who he was?
- Do you know what Jesus did when he grew up?
- Why do you think God sent Jesus at all?

If appropriate, share your own reflections on the meaning of Advent and the story of Christmas.

For hints and tips on using the Bible with the 95, please visit the Scripture Union website and search for 'Bible Exploration Principles'.

How to make an Advent crown using air-dry clay

You will need:

- 1 kg pack of air-dry clay
- four candles
- a side plate (small)
- a protractor
- a small knife
- acrylic gold paint

- 1 Roll out about three quarters of the clay and make a long sausage. Form this into a ring using the plate as a template.
- 2 Use the protractor to mark the four candle positions at equally spaced points around the ring. Push the candles into the clay at these marks, making sure the candles are firmly held and upright.
- 3 Roll out some of the remaining clay flat to about 5 mm thick. Cut out four 60 mm stars (measured from one point to the opposite point) and place them onto the clay ring, fixing them in between the candles.
- 4 Allow time for the clay to dry, (at least 24 hours, depending on temperature and humidity in the room), then paint the ring gold.



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