Celebrating the Winter Holidays with the UU Advent Wreath



Seasonal celebrations help to create meaningful experiences at the holidays. This year, I invite you to explore the significance of the winter holidays with the UU Advent Wreath. We'll be celebrating with this ritual at church, and you can incorporate it into your family celebrations at home as well.

Each Sunday morning and on Christmas Eve, we will light the Advent candles together at church and reflect on the themes of hope, peace, joy, and love. If you want to light the candles at home too, here's what you'll need:

- Advent wreath, available at Michael's, local stores or online
- candles—three purple, one pink, one white
- greens for decoration (optional)
- Advent candle lighting words (below)

UU Advent Wreath Candle Lighting Words

Introduction
Read aloud on week one or as a reminder each week: From its most ancient origins, Advent has been a time of expectation and preparation. For Unitarian Universalists, Advent asks, **What are we waiting for and preparing for in our own lives and in the life of our world?** The Advent Wreath has five candles to help us reflect on that question. Three are purple to represent hope, peace, and love. One is pink to remind people of the joy of Christmas. The fifth is white to represent the light.

Week One: HOPE, Purple Candle
Read aloud: On this first Sunday of Advent, we light a candle for hope.
Reflect on this question: **What unborn hopes do you carry with you in your heart?** *(Take a few minutes to reflect quietly. Then journal your responses or share with others.)*
Read aloud: May the light of this candle help us bring more hope into the world.

Week Two: PEACE, Purple Candle
Read aloud: On this second Sunday of Advent, we light two candles, the first for hope. The second is a candle for peace.
Reflect on this question: **What seeds of peace are growing in your soul?** *(Take a few minutes to reflect quietly. Then journal your responses or share with others.)*
Read aloud: May the light of this candle help us bring more peace into the world.

Week Three: JOY, Pink Candle
Read aloud: On this third Sunday of Advent, we light three candles. The first for hope and the second for peace are purple. The third candle is for joy. It is pink.
Reflect on this question: **What joys are energizing your journey?** *(Take a few minutes to reflect quietly. Then journal your responses or share with others.)*
Read aloud: May the light of this candle help us bring more joy into the world.

Week Four: LOVE, Purple Candle
Read aloud: On this fourth and final Sunday of Advent, we light the four candles of hope, peace, joy, and love.
Reflect on this question: **What love is growing within you this season?** *(Take a few minutes to reflect quietly. Then journal your responses or share with others.)*
Read aloud: May the light of this candle help us bring more love into the world.

Christmas Eve: LIGHT, White candle
Read aloud: Tonight, we light the first four candles of the Advent wreath for hope, peace, joy, and love. We also light a fifth candle, which is white and placed at the center of the Advent wreath. This candle reminds us of the light that Jesus brought to the world through his life and teachings. May the light of these Advent candles inspire us to bring more hope, more peace, more joy, more love, and more light to the world.