

BEGINNING OF ADVENT

Lighting the First Candle of the Advent Wreath

MUSIC SUGGESTION: O Come, O Come, Emmanuel
(John Mason Neale) – playing in the background

SIGN OF THE CROSS.

Leader: Let us begin with our morning offering:

All: Loving God,
I offer to you this day
All my prayers, thoughts, words and actions.
Be with me throughout this day
And help me to show your compassion to all I meet.
Protect me from any unkind word or act
And help me to remember that nothing is going to happen
to me today that you and I together can't handle.
AMEN

Leader: Our prayer time this morning helps us to prepare for the beginning of Advent. The Christian year begins with the season of Advent: a four week boot camp to prepare us for Christmas. The Word 'ADVENT' means 'THE COMING' and the time to prepare for the birth of Jesus Christ. It is a happy season, a time of joy and hope, but it is also a time for us to reflect on belonging to the largest club in the world... Christianity.

Reflection questions:

1. What is the meaning of God's presence in my life?
2. How can I live my life as God wants me to live it?
3. How am I preparing for the coming of Jesus?

Lighting of the Advent Wreath:

Almighty God, we begin this season of Advent as an Advent people – ready to do your will. Let your blessings come upon us as we light this Wreath. May it turn our hearts to you in the days ahead. Grant us the peace and joy we long for, as we await the coming of your Son with patient hearts.

Now we will light the first candle of the Advent wreath. Before we do, we remember what the Advent wreath tells us.

Pupil 1: _____

As Christians, we use the Advent wreath to look forward to the birth of Jesus. The Advent wreath consists of a circle of evergreens. The evergreen tree does not change and this is a reminder of God's love which is everlasting. God is eternal – always loving us and always calling us to live in love.

Pupil 2: _____

There are four candles fixed in the Advent wreath. Three candles are purple and one candle is pink. The colour purple is a sign of repentance. The purple candle stands for our sorrow and how we can change and improve.

Pupil 3: _____

The pink candle stands for joy and happiness we feel in knowing that Jesus has shown God's love to us. Jesus was sent by his Father and he taught us that we could call God 'our Father'.

Leader:

Now we light the first purple candle of the Advent wreath.

(1 year 11 pupil to come forward light purple candle)

Leader: Jesus, light of the World,

You were sent to brighten our darkness.

When we lose confidence and when our fears are great, help us to remember that you are always with us.

In our times of difficulty and doubt,
remind us of how much God loves us.

We make this prayer through Christ, our Lord.

AMEN

We now listen to the following short reading from St. James.

Pupil 4: _____

'A reading from the letter of St. James'

Be patient, therefore, beloved, until the coming of the Lord. The farmer waits for the precious crop from the earth, being patient with it until it receives the early and the late rains.

You also must be patient.

Strengthen your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is at hand.

This is the Word of the Lord.

All: Thanks be to God

Chaplain to give small reflection and introduce the Advent Challenge... 2-3 Mins

Prayer of the Faithful

Pupil 5: _____

We await your coming and with joyful hearts we pray:
Come, Lord Jesus!

You come to bring us hope and courage:

May we be people of hope and courage in our world today.

You come as a reflection of God's love:

May our actions of justice and care reflect this same love.
We await your coming and with joyful hearts we pray:
Come, Lord Jesus!

Concluding prayer

All will be present on screen and music and visual displays will be shown if necessary.