

Christmas Eve or Christmas Day

Christ's Candle

(Light all four candles plus the white candle in the center)

This last candle often symbolizes light and purity and is known as Christ's candle.

Say: The word "Advent" comes from the Latin word *Ven* which means "to come." We have been lighting the advent candles for more than 4 weeks now, and each time we do, light is added and things are a little bit brighter. Today we light all the candles, including the middle candle that represents Christ and signifying our Messiah and savior has come!

In Luke's Gospel, Zechariah, a priest, and the father of John the Baptist, compares Jesus to a rising sun from heaven, when he declares Christ will "shine on those living in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the path of peace" (Luke 1:77-79). Multiple times in the Gospel of John, Jesus would refer to himself as "the light of the world" (John 8:12; 9:5; 12:46). Jesus would also declare that the "light has come into the world" (John 3:19). Clearly, he isn't talking about the arrival of a new sun or special star. Jesus is speaking of himself, bringing light to the dark and troubled world. No one would argue that our world isn't dark and broken. Most agree too that only in the light that things are made right. We wouldn't want a brain surgeon to do his work in the darkness, not able to see what he was doing. We wouldn't want someone to assemble our car blindfolded or hear the pilot come on the intercom and tell us he will be flying the plane blindfolded. In the light, we are able to see what is right and what is wrong and make the necessary adjustments. The purpose of all light is to reveal and illuminate. Christ came as light to reveal something to us. He came to show us our sins and shortcomings. Yet he didn't come to simply expose all the sins of the world, but he came to also save it also (John 3:17-19).

Together as a family, read about the birth of Jesus in Matthew 1:18-23.

Say: "The fact that we are able to read this declaration that our Savior has been born is the best news ever told! We no longer have to live in darkness."

Next, we will read some of Jesus' final words to his disciples, where he declares he will come again! *Jesus said, "I go to prepare a place for you?"³ And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, that where I am you may be also.⁴ And you know the way to where I am going."*

Today we celebrate the greatest gift of all, when God gave us his Son Jesus! But we also look forward to when Jesus comes again. But this time he won't come as a baby but a victorious king!

Pray together as a family and thank God for the ultimate gift of his Son.