

Advent Ribbons

Taken from <http://flamecreativekids.blogspot.co.uk>



You will need

Thin purple ribbons, long enough to tie round wrists

What to do

Talk about purple being the colour that a lot of people use to decorate churches with in Advent. Talk about what hope means (dictionary definition – 1. a feeling of expectation and desire for a particular thing to happen 2. A feeling of trust). Discuss the idea that Advent is a time of hope and waiting not only for Jesus' birth but also for Jesus to come again- waiting for a better time when there will be no more death or sickness or crying. Give everyone a purple ribbon and ask them to tie it round the wrist of someone beside them, saying "May you have hope in Jesus this Advent".

Advent Crowns

Suitable for an All Age service

This prayer is designed to remind people of the kingship of Jesus, that the tiny baby in the manger is the Prince of Peace, with infinite power to change lives and set the dark on fire.

*For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, **Prince of Peace**. (Isaiah 9:5-7)*

Make advent crowns by cutting out a crown shape from gold card (easiest done by cutting it into squares (approx. 6cm X 6cm) and then cutting triangles out of the top to make the pointy bits) Use a hole punch to make a hole in one of the spikes, thread through some red ribbon to make a Christmas decoration. Give each member of the congregation a crown.

At some point during the service ask them to write a brief Christmas prayer, this could something personal or a prayer of intercession.

If your church has a Christmas tree ask people to come up during a song and hang their crown from one of the branches. Encourage people to read each other's prayers while the tree is up.

Touch and sniff nativity

www.vision4life.org.uk/index.php/prayer-year-a-sneak.../seasons-advent-christmas

You will need

Bible and printout of bible reading
Instructions
Fleece
Frankincense (essential oil)
Myrrh (essential oil)
Straw

Gather together some items that give people an idea of the visitors or gifts that were brought to Jesus. Try to get hold of a sheepskin rug or man-made version, some frankincense and myrrh, some straw for example. You may think of others. This is a sensory experience, to help give the story a new dimension.

- Read Luke 2:8-20 and Matthew 2: 1-12

- Before you are some items to help you think about these first visitors to such a special and yet very ordinary family.
- Touch and smell the items and allow yourself to be transported to a different situation.
- What effect would such a visit have on such a humble family?
- What effect does it have on you?

Nativity prayer

http://www.bristol.anglican.org/i/wp-content/uploads/2011/06/Creative_Prayer_ideas.pdf

Place a 3D nativity scene in view of everyone. Invite each person to pick up the pieces. Who are they? What part did they play in the story? Each piece is important and plays a special part in the Christmas story and can remind us of special things to pray for in our lives and other people lives: Encourage people to come up with ideas but here are some suggestions:

Jesus: God's son - Give thanks for the birth of Jesus, his life, his stories, teaching, miracles, his sacrifice etc.

Mary & Joseph: Parents - Give thanks to Jesus' for mums and dads who love and care for us

Angel: Messenger of God - A reminder of God's presence that is there throughout our lives, he has an amazing plan for our lives and promises to be with us always.

Wise Men: Wisdom and gifts: As we learn at school and at church, help us to use the gifts and skills God has given us to be kind and helpful to one another.

Shepherds: Protection: Pray for those who protect us including police, the government, soldiers etc. Pray for farmers who provide food for us and for those who care for us at other times; Grandparents, teachers, junior church leaders.

Donkey & Cow: Animals: Pray for pets, farmers, against cruelty to animals etc.

Stable: Pray for our homes, giving thanks for security, for providing our daily needs such as clean water, heating, food. Pray for the homeless, those who are poor and hungry.

Manger Prayer

<https://uk.pinterest.com/pin/265782815482976568/>

Invite everyone to write a prayer on a strip of yellow paper (to represent straw) and lay their prayer in the manger. You can choose for example prayers of thanks for God's gift in sending Jesus, or prayers of petition asking God to give understanding to those who don't know the true meaning of Christmas or are sad, lonely at this time of the year.

