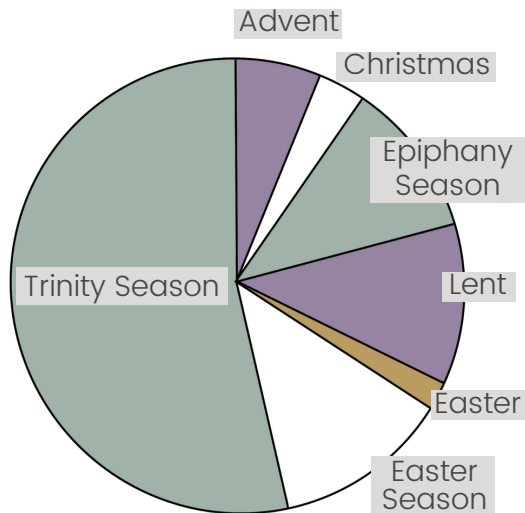


The Liturgical Calendar

This is the Church's calendar of festivities! Its history is so deep and rich, but it doesn't have to be complicated. Here's the short of it:

There are two halves:

1. the festival season (Advent through Easter)
2. the Trinity season (from the end of Easter until Advent starts again)



Want to learn more about the Church's calendar and her heritage of rich traditions? Visit our website: AlltheHousehold.com



St. Nicholas Speculaas



St. Lucia Lussekatter



Christmas Pudding



Advent

and the Church's use of candles in Advent devotion

Cover Image:
"The Nativity", Lorenzo Lotto, ca. 1480-1556

Advent

While the rest of the world is decking the halls the day after Thanksgiving, Christians traditionally enter the season of Advent with quiet and reverent expectation.

Advent means "coming" and is the time we anticipate the coming Messiah with special focus.

As the secular year draws to a close, our liturgical year begins here with the hope of the Incarnation and of Jesus' final coming. We travel again through the Advent story and beseech Christ to remember His people and to preserve us until the final day.

If you can, try to experience the joy and anticipation that comes from reserving the Christmas merriment for its historic and proper season. One tool to do this is the Advent wreath and candles.

The Advent Candles

Nov. 27th

The first Sunday in Advent is the liturgical New Year and is called "Ad te levavi," which comes from the first line of the Psalm sung on this day, meaning, "To you, O Lord, I lift up [my soul]" Ps 25:1.

Dec. 4th

Light the second deep purple candle on Populus Zion. On this Sunday we hear that the Kingdom of God is near and the admonition to stay awake at all times in prayer.

Dec. 11th

Rejoice! In the middle of this penitential season, Gaudete has the theme of joy and gives the Christian respite and renewed hope as Christmas and Christ's coming approach.

Dec. 18th

Rorate coeli means "drop down, ye heavens" as we pray in this day's psalm. This is the Sunday on which we light the last deep purple candle and finish preparing for Christmas.

Advent Wreath

The Advent wreath is a visual aid and accompaniment to Advent devotions that anticipate Jesus' coming. The origins of the tradition are not certain, but its longstanding history is. The Lutheran Church has had some form of the Advent wreath for centuries.

The wreath is circular and an image of both eternity and the cyclical nature of the seasons. It is usually decorated with evergreen foliage to symbolize life everlasting.

The Candles

The candles sit around the wreath and are gradually lit, one each Sunday, to symbolize Christ, the coming light of the world.

Three of the candles are purple, and one is a cheery pink color for Gaudete Sunday. One white candle stands in the center and is lit on Christmas Day.