



THE ADVENT WREATH

Props: Holly and berry Advent wreath with 1 pink, 1 white and 3 purple or blue candles, coffee pot and cups, Bibles, song sheets or hymnals for audience

(Scene opens with woman setting table with Advent wreath, coffee pot and cups.)

Hostess: There! I think I'm ready for the Bible study group.

(Knocking sound in background; three women enter with Bibles.)

Hostess: Come on in, ladies. The coffee is waiting for you.

All: Good morning!

Guest 1: Oh, your house looks so festive and I love this Advent wreath!

Guest 2: You know, I like Advent wreaths too, but we've never had one.

Guest 3: We have one, but I've never known its significance.

Hostess: Well, I know Advent means "coming or arrival" and we know these four weeks before Christmas are the Advent Season. We often hear Jesus referred to as the "Light of the World" - that's surely the reason for the candles! Why don't we look up Bible verses that deal with the coming of Christ instead of doing the regular Bible study this morning?

Guest 1: Yes...and do you mind if we light these candles as we learn of the Light of our lives coming into the world?

(All sit down at table and open Bibles.)

Hostess: Of course not. I think that's a great idea!

Guest 2: (Reminiscing) I remember reciting a verse in the Christmas program when I was in about the fourth grade. I think it was in the book of Malachi. *(Turns to Malachi in her Bible)* Let's see...oh, yes, here it is, Chapter 3, Verse 1. *(Reads the verse)*

Guest 3: That reminds me of an Advent song, "Watchman, Tell Us of the Night." Could we sing that? I think singing adds so much to the spirit of the season.

(As audience sings Stanza 1 of “Watchman, Tell Us of the Night” TLH 71, hostess lights one purple or blue candle.)

Guest 1: Ladies, this is really helping me prepare my heart for the celebration of Jesus’ birth. It sort of relieves the pressures of this hectic season.

Hostess: (Searches in her Bible) Here in Isaiah 60 verses 1-3 tell of the coming of the light. *(Reads verses, then rereads verse 3 slower.)*

Guest 2: Isaiah 60, verse 19 says: *(Reads the verse)* Isaiah was speaking of an everlasting light, not light bulbs that burn out, or even candles, but a light that never goes out or off.

Guest 1: I think we should sing another carol; it adds so much to our getting ready for His coming. How about “Oh, Come, All Ye Faithful”?

(As audience sings Stanza 1 of “Oh, Come, All Ye Faithful” TLH 102; LW 41, hostess lights second purple or blue candle.)

Guest 3: You know...the shepherds were terrified when the glory of the Lord shone around them. *(Looks through Bible.)* That must be in Luke 2...yes, verses 8-11. *(Reads the verses)*

Guest 2: And here in John 3, we read verses 19-21. *(Reads the verses)* I think we should sing about that promised light. How about “While Shepherds Watched Their Flocks By Night”?

(Audience sings Stanza 1 of “While Shepherds Watched Their Flocks By Night” TLH 109; LW 70)

Guest 1: Just think...through all the ages since Jesus, the Light of the World, was born in Bethlehem, the singing of the angels on that eventful night has been carried on by Christians all over the world, bringing joy and love to all who listen. As we light the Joy Candle, let’s sing “Joy to the World.”

(As audience sings Stanza 1 of “Joy to the World” TLH 87; LW 53, hostess lights pink candle.)

Hostess: Somehow, there’s something very special about these Advent days, don’t you all feel it? It seems there are more smiling faces, and most people enjoy Christmas music. I never tire of singing familiar carols. Why don’t we sing “Hark! The Herald Angels Sing”?

(As audience sings Stanza 1 of “Hark! The Herald Angels Sing” TLH 94; LW 49, hostess lights the last purple or blue candle.)

Guest 3: Before lighting the Christ candle, pure and white for Jesus, the Light of the World, let's read John 8:12. *(Reads the verse)*

(All look at their watches and start to close their Bibles.)

Guest 2: Before we go home, let's sing one of my favorites, "Silent Night! Holy Night!"

(As audience sings Stanza 1 of "Silent Night! Holy Night! TLH 646; LW 68, hostess lights white candle.)

Hostess: Now, how do you feel about having an Advent wreath in your homes?

Guest 1: I think it's great! The purple or blue candles remind us of royalty of the coming King, the pink for joy and anticipation.

Guest 2: The red berries on the wreath remind us of the blood Jesus shed to wash away our sins and the thorny leaves put us in mind of the cruel crown Jesus had to wear. The unending circle brings to remembrance His promise of unending love.

Guest 3: Yes, and do you know what else? The green leaves assure us of everlasting life. I plan to use the wreath by lighting one candle each week during our family devotions and the white one as we celebrate Christmas Day.

Guest 2: I think an Advent wreath is a fine tradition to have in every home. I'm going to make one for our family and use it to bring added significance to the celebration of the birth of our Savior.

Hostess: I'm glad we could get together today for further study of the old, yet ever new, story of Christmas. Let's close with a prayer:

Dear Light of the World, keep our hearts fresh with the gifts You give us along with our faith. Be our light when we fail to live according to Your plan. Focus our eyes on You that we may always know where to go when sin darkens our lives. In Your Name, help us to bring light into the lives of our fellow men. Amen.