

# Lay Lesson



**CHRISTIAN SEASONS**

# LITURGICAL CALENDAR

- The liturgical calendar represents the life of the church and moves in the rhythm of seven seasons, rather than twelve months. Each of the pages marks one of **the Christian seasons**: Advent , Christmas, The Season After Epiphany, Lent, Easter and The Season After Pentecost.

# CHRISTIAN SEASONS

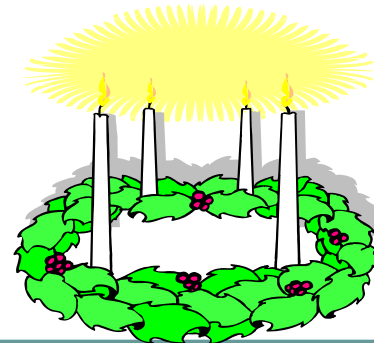
- Advent
- Christmas
- Epiphany
- Lent
- Easter
- Pentecost

# ADVENT

- ADVENT is a season of **hopeful anticipation** of God's breaking into our world and our time. It is the beginning of the Christian year.
- The **season starts four (4) Sundays** prior to Christmas Day, about the first of December.
- **Altar decorations** and **vestments** are usually the liturgical color of Blue or Purple.

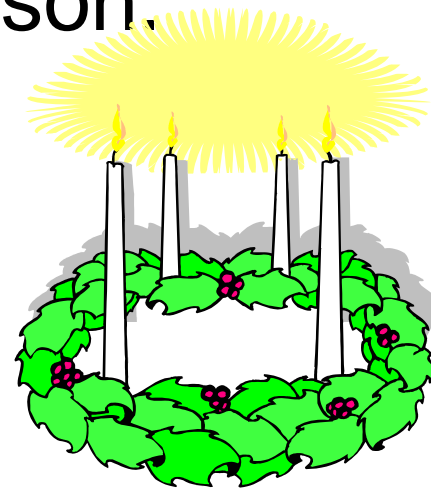
# ADVENT

- Many mark this time of waiting by the use of an Advent Wreath with four or five candles. The outer ring of the wreath has **four candles** and may have a **fifth candle in the center**. The outer candles are three purple with one pink and the center if present is white.



# ADVENT

- One of the purple candles is lit each of the first three Sundays with the pink lit the last Sunday. The white candle is lit on Christmas Day, which starts the beginning of the next season.



# 5 CANDLES AND THEIR SYMBOLISM

## **First Candle**

- Color: Purple  
Theme: **Hope**  
First Sunday in  
Advent



# 5 CANDLES and THEIR SYMBOLISM

- **Second Candle**
- Color: Purple  
Theme: **Love**  
Second Sunday in  
Advent





# 5 CANDLES AND THEIR SYMBOLISM

- **Third Candle**
- Color: Purple or pink  
Theme: **Joy**  
Third Sunday in  
Advent



# 5 CANDLES AND THEIR SYMBOLISM

- **Fourth Candle**
- Color: Purple  
Theme: **Peace**  
Fourth Sunday in Advent



# 5 CANDLES AND THEIR SYMBOLISM

- **Optional Center Candle**
- Color: White  
Theme: **Christmas**  
Christmas Day



# CHRISTMAS

- ***CHRISTMAS***

Christmas is the season when we proclaim the unique nature of Jesus Christ. He does not stand aloof from us, but he enters into our lives.

# CHRISTMAS

- The season of Christmas is short lasting only twelve (12) days. Starting on December 25th and ending on January 5th which is the Twelfth Night.

The *white* color symbolizes *purity, joy, and hope*.

# EPIPHANY

- **EPIPHANY**

The third season is *Epiphany*.

The day of Epiphany is January 6th.

- **The colors are *white* on the day of Epiphany and the **remainder** of the season is *green*.** The color green symbolizes *hope, life and growth*.

# EPIPHANY

- The Season of Epiphany is four to nine Sundays between January 4, which is Epiphany Sunday and continuing to the beginning of Lent which depends upon the date of Easter. The designation is Sundays after Epiphany. **On Epiphany Sunday the color is White or Gold.** The color is Green for the remainder of the season

# EPIPHANY

- The word Epiphany means "*showing forth*", "*revelation*" or "*manifestation*". This occurs on January 6th and commemorates Christ's first manifestation to the Gentiles as the promised Messiah, symbolized by the visit of the Wise Men.
- After the Epiphany, the Sunday Gospels focus on other revelations such as the Baptism of Jesus by John the Baptist and the marriage feast at Cana. This is the beginning of Jesus' public ministry.



# EPIPHANY

- The season of Epiphany celebrates Christ's divine power and glory revealed for all people. Christians see Christ as "*The Light of the World*".
- The Season of Epiphany is four to nine Sundays between January 4, which is Epiphany Sunday and continuing to the beginning of Lent which depends upon the date of Easter. The designation is Sundays after Epiphany. **On Epiphany Sunday the color is White or Gold.** The color is Green for the remainder of the season

# LENT

- The Lenten Season covers forty days and includes six Sundays before Easter designated as Sundays in Lent. The fifth Sunday may be called Passion Sunday and the sixth is called Palm Sunday. The color for Lent is Purple. The color for Passion and Palm Sunday is Purple or Red.

# LENT

- **Lent** is a period of forty days excluding Sundays which are considered feast days and starts the fortieth weekday before Easter.
- This, the **starting day of Lent is called Ash Wednesday** and takes its name from the ancient custom of burning to ashes the palms blessed on the Palm Sunday of the previous year. The ashes are then placed on the foreheads of the faithful in the form of a cross as a reminder of the mortality and an outward and visible sign of inward repentance.

The color of the season of Lent is purple.

# LENT

- ***Ash Wednesday*** and the other weekdays of Lent are to be observed by "special acts of discipline and self denial" as stated in the prayer book.
- It is encouraged that each person undertake his or her own discipline or self-denial to prepare for his ministry during the forty days of fasting and wrestling with temptation.

# LENT

- Lent is a major fast taken by the Church to prepare for Easter. It begins on Ash Wednesday and ends on Holy Thursday, in Holy Week. There are forty days of Lent, counting from Ash Wednesday through the Easter Triduum, but not including Sundays. The last two weeks of Lent are known as "Passiontide", which begins on Passion Sunday; **the final week of Lent is known as "Holy Week,"** which begins on Palm Sunday.

# FINAL 3 DAYS OF LENT

- The final three days of Lent are known as the Easter Triduum
- The Easter Triduum consists of:
- Holy Thursday or Maundy Thursday
  - at the evening worship service or Mass of the Lord's Supper
  - some churches who celebrate this day as Maundy Thursday engage in footwashing. Color: White
- Good Friday
  - the celebration of His passion  
Color: Red
- Holy Saturday
  - commemoration of the day Christ lay in the Tomb

# HOLY WEEK

***Holy Week***, is the period of seven days before Easter and time when we commemorate the events and circumstances of our Lord's last days on earth.



HOLY WEEK

# HOLY WEEK

- The first day of Holy Week is ***Passion Sunday*** or ***Palm Sunday***. This is the day we commemorate Christ's entry into Jerusalem to proclaim his messiahship.
- The color is purple or red. Often, crosses in the church are veiled to symbolized the shadows of betrayal, trial, suffering, and death.





# HOLY WEEK

- ***Maundy Thursday*** is the day just prior to Good Friday. The word *Maundy* comes from the word "mandate" or "commandment". This is our Lord commanded the apostles to love one another as he had loved them, and at the "Last Supper" instructed them to partake of the Blessed Sacrament "in remembrance of me".

# HOLY WEEK

- ***Good Friday*** the day when Christ was crucified.
- Services are held in many churches at noon in remembrance of the noon hour crucifixion. This is the time when the faithful meditate upon the cross and the last hours and words of our Lord.

# HOLY WEEK

- ***Holy Week*** comes to an end on ***Easter Eve. The Vigil of Easter***, an ancient service, is celebrated between sunset Saturday and sunrise Easter Day.
- Sunrise Service....

# EASTER

## Alleluia!! Christ is risen!!

- The heart and soul to the Christian faith is found in the fact that Christ is risen. The fact that sin and death have been vanquished. God's power over our spiritual enemies is acknowledged and complete.
- Color: White or Gold, except on Pentecost, on which the color is **Red**

# EASTER

- **Easter is the single most important holy day of the Christian Church, for it celebrates the resurrection of Jesus Christ. To Christians, the resurrection backs up Jesus' claim that he had the authority to die for the sins of the world and the power to come back to life again. It also gives hope to Christians that they too will experience a resurrected life in heaven.**

# INTERESTING NOTE...

- The Western Church (Catholic and Protestant) continues to observe Easter based on the rules of long ago — that it falls on the first Sunday after the first full moon after March 21.
- *It can't come before March 22 or after April 25.*

# PENTECOST

- Pentecost (The birth of the Christian Church) begins with **Pentecost Sunday** and continues until the season of Advent. The color for Pentecost is **Red**.



PENTECOST SUNDAY

# PENTECOST

- **When:** 40 days after Easter
- **Observance:** Coming of the Holy Spirit
- **Biblical reference:** Acts 2





# PENTECOST

- However, Pentecost for Christians means something far different. Before Jesus was crucified, he told his disciples that the Holy Spirit would come after him (see John 14:16). *And 40 days after Jesus was resurrected (ten days after he ascended into heaven; see Luke 24:51), that promise was fulfilled when Peter and the early Church were in Jerusalem for Pentecost.*



# PENTECOST

- Ordinary Time ("Time After Pentecost")
- The second part of Ordinary Time begins after the Easter Season, on the Monday after Pentecost, and ends on the Saturday before the First Sunday of Advent.
- These twenty-four (24) Sundays are designated as Sundays after Pentecost and the color is Green

# ADDITIONAL NOTES...

- The **Communion Table, Altar Table** should be furnished with an appropriate cross 24 or 30 inches in height. The cross should be in the center and is taller than the candles which are on both sides of the cross representing the Divinity and Humanity of Jesus Christ.

# COMMUNION TABLE

- **On the Communion Table/Altar Table** along with the appropriate candles, the Flower Vases are on the outside of the candles. **Only “Live Flowers”** should be placed on the Communion Table and in the Chancel Area.

# COMMUNION TABLE

- Candles on the table **should be lit at the beginning of worship** either by Acolytes or Stewards.
- They should be **extinguished at the close of worship and prior to the Doxology, Benediction and the Recessional.**

# LITURGICAL CALENDAR

- Following the church year is more than simply marking time on a calendar or a note in the church bulletin.
- Every effort should be made to use the various aspects of the church year as an **opportunity to tell the story of God's** redemptive work in the world.

# Resources for Your Study

- See your AME hymn book lectionary for scriptures and songs to be used during the Christian Seasons of the Church
- Information for this presentation was taken from AMEC - Book of Worship, websites searches,