**Season of Advent**

Advent is as much about waiting and preparing as it is about listening – listening for God speaking to us in the ordinary and every-day events. It was through people hearing and acting on God’s word spoken to them that it was possible for Jesus to come among us. Mary and Joseph said “yes” to the Word they heard. Jesus was born because of their “yes”

**Advent Wreath**

The circle of the wreath, which has no beginning or end, symbolizes the eternity of God. The four candles represent the four weeks of Advent. Three candles are purple and one candle is pink. The purple candles represent prayer and penance. The pink candle represents *Gaudete Sunday* – the Sunday of rejoicing, as we get closer to Christmas. The central white candle signifies Christ, the Light of the world.

**Needed:**

*A child to carry the purple cloth*

*A child to carry the Advent wreath*

*A child to carry the empty crib.*

*Two children as readers*

**Prayer**

**All:** In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

**Reader 1:** Advent begins this week. Advent is the special time when we wait in joyful hope for the birth of Jesus at Christmas. It is the time when we get ready for Jesus’ coming.

**Reader 2:** Advent is the first season in the Church year. N……………..and N………………

will change the cloth on our prayer space to remind us of this new season in the church year. We remove the green cloth and replace it with the purple/violet cloth. This is the colour of waiting and getting ready. We’re waiting and preparing for the birth of a very special baby, Jesus.

*(Invite the children to place the purple/violet cloth in the prayer space.*

*Then invite the child with the advent wreath to place it on top of the cloth.)*

**Teacher:** The Advent wreath will help us to count down the weeks until Christmas. Loving God, bless this wreath. May we who use it make a place for Jesus in our hearts and in our homes. May we make a place for Jesus in our classroom. *(Sprinkle some holy water on the wreath)*

**Teacher:** Today, as we light the first candle on the Advent wreath – a purple one – we start to prepare our hearts for the birth of Jesus at Christmas.

 Let’s say together: “Prepare the way of the Lord.”

**All:** Prepare the way of the Lord.

*(Invite the child with the empty crib to place it in the prayer space)*

**Teacher:** The empty crib reminds us that it is not Christmas just yet. Jesus, the light of the world, we wait in joyful hope to remember your birth at Christmas. Prepare the way of the Lord.

**All:** Prepare the way of the Lord.

**Teacher:** Now, let’s close our eyes for a moment and using our inside voices, let’s tell God about how we will prepare for Jesu’ birth at Christmas. *(pause)*

Prepare the way of the Lord.

**All:** Prepare the way of the Lord.

**All:** In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.