



Advent and ways to pass the time until Christmas

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The countdown to Christmas day, or Advent, is arguably one of the best parts of Christmas. Many of us have fond childhood memories of marking a great big X over a day on the calendar, lighting the candles on an Advent wreath, and participating in any number of Christmas activities.

ADVENT Week One Sunday, November 28th to Saturday, December 4th

On the first week of Advent, we light the first purple candle of the Advent wreath. “Only four weeks left!” I would exclaim and then realize how long four weeks could be in child time. I remember daydreaming about what in the world I could do to pass the time between pageant rehearsals.

[Christmas pageant made easy](#) | [Gertrud Mueller Nelson talks about Advent](#)

ADVENT Week Two Sunday, December 5th to Saturday, December 11th

On the second Sunday of Advent, the second candle of the Advent wreath (also purple) is lit. The previous week had passed so slowly that I could scarcely believe we were only lighting the second Advent candle. But things were starting to get exciting! Christmas cards began flooding in for the family and some even came to me personally! I watched my mother hang the cards we’d received like garland around doorways as I made cards of my own to send or to give to classmates. While I recognized and knew the origins of the images on most of the cards, there were a few I needed mom and dad to explain.

[Christmas card crafts](#) | [Advent: easy, fun, and spiritual ways to celebrate](#)

ADVENT Week Three Sunday, December 12th to Saturday, December 18th

The third candle (pink) is lit on the third Sunday of Advent. By week three, I didn’t want to be patient anymore. The old saying “The best things come to those who wait,” sounded to me like something adults just said to get kids to sit still. I had not yet grasped that the anticipation could be sweet too, and that planning and preparing made Christmas Day even sweeter.

[What the O Antiphons teach us about faith](#) | [Yule logs, honeybees and church bells beneath the sea](#)

ADVENT Week Four Sunday, December 19th to Christmas Day, Saturday, December 25th

The lighting of the final candle on the Advent wreath marks the final Sunday of Advent. The final week of Advent found me wild with anticipation. It seemed that each day felt like that first week and the more I prepared the more slowly time passed. But I prepared nonetheless. One of my favorite traditions as a kid was the drive around the neighborhood on the way home from church on Christmas Eve to see all the lights (and to look for Rudolph’s nose in the sky).

[Holiday Bambino Bread](#) | [Nana’s Fruitcake](#) | [New England Holiday Pudding](#) | [Three Kings Cake](#)