



At the start of every December, many people around the world celebrate Advent.



### 1 What Does It Mean?

The word Advent comes from the Latin word for coming, which is 'adventus'. In the Christian faith, it is usually used to describe the period of preparation and reflection leading up to Christmas Day. It usually starts on the Sunday closest to 30<sup>th</sup> November and lasts around four weeks.

### 3 How Do Christians Celebrate Advent?

In some churches, customary Christmas songs called carols are sung, such as 'Once in Royal David's City'. They are then followed by special Advent sermons. In many churches in the UK, the walls, pews and altar will be covered with ceremonial purple decorations and the church leaders will wear purple robes. However, some Christian churches use blue instead because it can represent hope.



### 2 History

There are written mentions of **fasting** and specific **sermons** for various Christian churches from mid-November to December that date back to the fourth century AD.

### 4 Advent Wreaths

Various cultures and countries use Advent wreaths or crowns to mark the four Sundays leading up to Christmas. Traditionally, it is made up of a ring of evergreen branches and four candles. Some churches have blue candles while others have red or white. In Catholic churches, purple and pink are the most common colours. Most Christians believe that each of the four candles represents people or emotions associated with the Christmas story. Some Advent wreaths have an extra white candle in the middle to represent Jesus.



## Advent Calendars

5

Lots of people around the world use Advent calendars to count down the days until Christmas. The first calendars were simple and involved marking the days leading up to Christmas with a line of chalk or by lighting a candle. Soon, Advent calendars were made out of cardboard or wood and were sold throughout Germany and America. The first chocolate Advent calendar was produced in 1958.



## Did You Know...?

Advent calendars date back to the 19<sup>th</sup> century and originally came from Germany.

**Observed in many different ways around the world, Advent is considered by many to be a special time of the year.**

## Glossary

**fasting:**

Traditionally, to give up something such as food or drink for a period of time.

**sermons:**

Talks or speeches on a religious or moral subject.



# Questions

1. When was the first chocolate Advent calendar made? Tick one.

- 1958
- 1959
- 1948
- 1949

2. Where did Advent calendars originally come from? Tick one.

- France
- America
- Germany
- England

3. How many candles do most Advent wreaths have? Tick one.

- one
- two
- three
- four

4. What language does the word 'adventus' come from? Tick one.

- Latin
- English
- German
- French

5. Look at the section called **History**.

Find and copy one word that means the same as 'many different'.

---

6. What colour can often represent hope?

---

7. Summarise what you have learnt about Advent in 25 words or fewer.

---

---

---