

Welcome!

Come experience a Christmas like never before ...

Come experience a Christmas like you've always  
dreamed of ....

So come Christmas morning – you haven't missed  
Him – The Greatest Gift

The story goes that the world's first Advent wreath was created by a Protestant pastor in Germany, Johann Wichern, who was serving in an urban mission among poor children who kept waking every morning of December, asking eagerly if it was Christmas yet?

So Johann Wichern took an old wooden cartwheel, and drilled 24 holes around the wheel – a hole for each of the 24 days leading up to Christmas.

Each day of Advent, the children gathered round to watch the lighting of one of the shorter candles. And every Sunday of Advent, Mr. Wichern lit one of the wooden wreath's taller candles. And so the tradition of the 24-hole advent wreath began. We customized the original cartwheel into our our own customized tradition of a similar 24-hole wreath – with the addition of a wooden silhouette of Mary on a donkey.

Each day as a family, we light the next candle in the 24-hole wreath, move the Mary on a donkey figurine further around the circle & closer to Christmas – and read that day’s epic story of Christ’s Great Coming

( A family may choose to read the day’s devotion from the adult telling, *The Greatest Gift*, or from the family edition, *Unwrapping the Greatest Gift*.)

Think of this wreath as your interactive, larger-than-life daily Advent calendar, a way to hush the hurry of the season and receive the glorious gift of a simple and sacred Christmas by simply focusing on Christ.

What better gift for anyone to receive this Christmas – than lighting the candles & experiencing daily the miraculous wonder of The Greatest Gift.

## Instructions:

Lay out the wreath in a gathering place where it can be the centre of the season: the centrepiece for your table during December, a coffee table, a dining room side table.

Decide what is the best way for your family to uniquely use this wreath – there are many creative options.

1. Place a tall candle in the first hole. Each night of December, move the candle, and the accompanying figurine, one hole ahead, light the candle for 10-20 minutes, and quietly read that day's devotional in the candle light.
2. Alternatively, you may choose to add a candle every day of December, and each evening, light all of the candles, moving the figurine one hole ahead, and prayerfully reflecting on that day's devotional in a ring of candle light.

3. Or, you may choose, on the first day of December to completely assemble the wreath with all shorter candles placed in each of the holes, for each of the weekdays of Advent, and place taller candles (or differently coloured candles) in the holes of the Advent wreath that correspond to the Sundays of December.
4. Or you may discover another very personal way to use the Advent wreath, because really the wreath can be used in whatever way works for you in creating a tradition to anticipate the coming and keep company with Christ during the holy-days.



5. You may want to consider slipping appropriate greenery, leaves, holly, berries or any decor of your liking under the wreath.
  
6. At all times, please exercise due caution while the candles are lit. Never leave burning candles unattended, or let candles burn less than 2 inches tall.

Come Christmas Eve or Christmas morning, you may choose to place candles in all 24 of the holes of the wreath and light the whole host of candles— to celebrate how the Light of the World has absolutely shattered the darkness & we have the Greatest Gift of the love we've always wanted.

Come away from the whirl.

Come into the candle light.

Come into the quiet depths of His Love.

Come sit in a circle of flickering candles, and feel the  
illuminating awe of God's Word through daily  
unfolding of the greatest love story ever told.

Come – experience the one gift you want most this  
Christmas – more of Him...