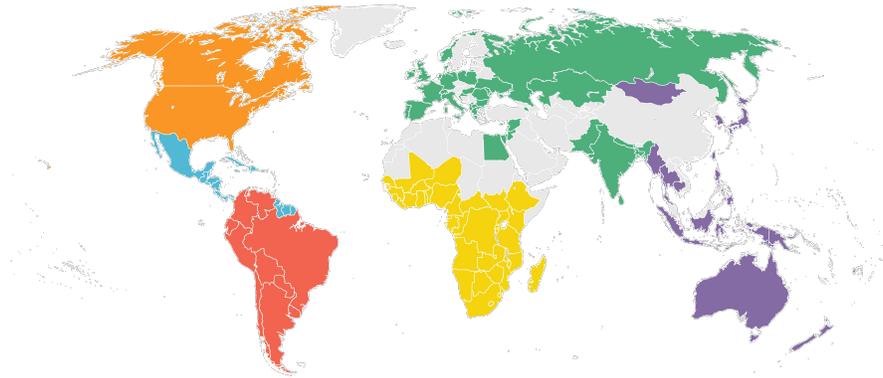


NMI Central

NAZARENE MISSIONS INTERNATIONAL

27 November 2024

ADVENT & CHRISTMAS AROUND THE WORLD



WEEK 1

HOPE

Over the coming weeks of the season leading up to Christmas, traditionally known as Advent, NMI Central will introduce our readers to some of the unique traditions that are kept across the global Church of the Nazarene. Typically, in the Western Church tradition, Advent is celebrated during the four Sundays leading up to Christmas Eve and Christmas Day, and speaks words of hope, love, joy, and peace. In the Eastern Church tradition, the month of December is a preparation for the celebration of Christmas that occurs after the New Year, on the 6th of January, known as Epiphany. During each of the next five weeks, NMI Central will also include a Kids Kaleidoscope focused on the words that mark each week.

Advent began with anticipation and preparation over many generations. It was focused on hope, expressed through prayer for the coming Messiah. The hope of the people of God was that the long wait would soon be over. The world, so long in darkness, was ripe for destruction or redemption. Thankfully, God chose to redeem!

Whether you light an Advent candle wreath, or you choose to place a star on top of the church, your home, or tree, hope is often represented by a light that breaks through the darkness. To learn more about how people prepare for the Christmas season around the world check out the Advent Kids Kaleidoscope, a special NMI Central supplement created to help children, youth, and adults learn more about our Nazarene family around the world.

Advent Kid's Kaleidoscope

Week #1 – HOPE

How do you prepare for Christmas where you live?

Welcome to Advent Kids Kaleidoscope Week #1 about hope! Do you know what Advent means? It means arrival, and over the next 4 weeks, we are going to prepare for and remember when Jesus arrived on earth as a baby. We are preparing for Christmas! How do you prepare for Christmas where you live? Do you put up decorations? Most people around the world prepare for Christmas with decorations. Those decorations can be lights, candles, stars, and maybe even setting off fireworks. Lights remind us that Jesus is the light of the world, and we are called to be like him and be light to those around us.

Another common decoration for Christmas is trees. For those of you who live in the Northern Hemisphere, Christmas might mean you have a big green pine tree that you decorate, like the one pictured above on the right-hand side. The weather is cool or cold and you might get snow. For those of you in the Southern Hemisphere, Christmas might mean you decorate a palm tree, have a plastic green tree or just a branch of a tree. The weather is warm, or hot and sunny, and maybe your family spends time at the beach.

Imagine that you grew up in a place that celebrated Christmas during the warmer weather and your Christmas tree was always a branch you cut down and decorated with ornaments; but then, God called you to be a missionary, and to go to a place where Christmas is celebrated during much colder weather... it might even snow, now you celebrate Jesus's birth wrapped up in blankets and trying to keep warm.

The way to prepare and decorate for Christmas can be very different depending on where you live, but we are all filled with hope and excitement as we prepare to celebrate the birth of our Lord and Savior, Jesus!

How can you share that hope and excitement and be a light shining for Jesus to those around you?

Below, you will find some Christmas decorations found around the world. See if you can connect them with their correct country. You can find the answers and more information about these photos on the next page.

| | | |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|  | South Africa |  |
|  | Germany |  |
|  | Philippines |  |
|  | United States |  |
| | Brazil | |
| | Jamaica | |

ADVENT KALEIDOSCOPE

The Kaleidoscope for the Advent Season is very different, in fact it isn't a kaleidoscope, it is an Advent wreath. There are many places around the world that have the tradition of lighting a candle on the Advent wreath as an important way to prepare for Christmas. In other places, this is not a familiar activity.

The Advent wreath is believed to have been created in Germany in the 1800's by a pastor to help children in his mission school count the days until Christmas. In some places the wreath is made with things found in nature, and there are four candles on the wreath, and one larger candle in the center, which is the Christ candle. One candle is lit each week leading up to Christmas, and each candle has a special meaning, which you will learn about in the weekly Advent NMI Central and Kids Kaleidoscope.

Below you will see a drawing of a wreath made out of items found in nature. Color this wreath, but also feel free to go outside and gather items from nature where you live and glue them onto your Advent wreath. The next page will give you instructions for the candles.



But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people. Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord."
Luke 2:10-11 NIV

Enjoy this wonderful season of Advent, Christmastide, and Epiphany. Though we may celebrate in different ways, we are united in this: Christ is the center of Christmas. Turn your focus to Him, and as the angels sang, "Rejoice!"

Did You Know?

Christmastide is the period from Christmas Eve to Epiphany.



Click [here](#) to download the rest of Kids Kaleidoscope for Week #1 of Advent as we learn about different Christmas decorations around the world that remind us of the hope of Christmas.

PRAYER



- Pray for the many around the world who have this year found hope difficult to hold on to, in the terror of wars in Russia and Ukraine, and in the Middle East.
- Pray that hope may be restored as churches and districts send aid to those in need following the catastrophic storms that have hit the Southeastern United States.

PRAISE



- Praise God for the global Nazarene family that has responded to various crises throughout 2024 and have been generous in their giving to help those most impacted.
- Praise God for His faithfulness to those who have felt the greatest losses in their lives, and to those who have endeavored to help restore hope in hard-hit areas.

[Could You Serve?](#)

Is God calling you to participate in His mission?
For more information, click [here](#).

NMI Central is available in a curated PDF archive.
To read previous editions, click [here](#).



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