



Spark Christmas Family Festival

Art Station Sampler

Introduce the Project

Welcome everyone to the Art Station, ask a few questions, and introduce the project. **What holiday will we celebrate in a few weeks?** (*Christmas*) **What event do we celebrate at Christmas?** (*the birth of Jesus*) **What is the season before Christmas?** (*Advent*) **What do we do during the Advent season?** (Take time to hear responses from kids, youth, and adults, who may mention paraments, hymns, and candles.)

We use an Advent wreath in worship. Do you know why? (*to count the Sundays in the season, to count down to Christmas*) **Each week we light another candle until they are all lit. It is so exciting as we wait for the celebration of Jesus' birth. We prepare our hearts for Jesus to come into the world as a baby. To help us get ready for Christmas, let's make an Advent wreath to use in our homes.**



Two Advent wreath projects are provided below. Choose the option that best fits your church's tradition and craft budget. Make a sample before the event so you're familiar with the process and can show a final product.

This station helps participants prepare their hearts for Jesus.

Story Connection

This activity connects to the story of "Mary Visits Elizabeth" from Luke 1:39-45 (pages 202-207 in the *Spark Story Bible*).

Do the Activity!

Choose from two Advent projects. The Fabric Advent Wreath option is a simpler, lower-cost project that is easier for young children to work on independently. The Greenery Advent Wreath requires more planning and supplies, but families and adults may enjoy working on it together.

Option 1: Fabric Advent Wreaths

1. Invite each participant to pick up supplies: a white banner secured to a dowel, four precut felt rectangles, green and yellow felt pieces, scissors, and fabric glue.
2. Show everyone how to arrange the pieces on the banner as you walk them through the steps. **Take some pieces of green felt and arrange them in a circle on your banner. They will form the wreath. If you want to shape the pieces into leaves, use your scissors to cut them the way you'd like. Then place the rectangles so they look like candles sticking up from the wreath. Cut your yellow pieces into four flame shapes. You can then use the craft glue to attach all the pieces—except the yellow flames for the candles!**
3. As participants create their wreaths, walk around to see who needs help, encouragement, or direction. Invite adults to assist small children with the cutting and gluing.
4. Optional: Use glitter fabric paints to add designs to the banner, wreath, candles, and flame shapes.
5. After everyone finishes their banners, have participants tie a piece of yarn to the ends of the dowel for hanging.
6. If your church uses purple and pink candles, their meanings can vary depending on a church's tradition, but the third Sunday is typically when the pink candle is used to symbolize joy. Adjust this sample script as needed. **Each candle has a meaning. The first candle we light on the first Sunday of Advent is the candle of hope. Place—don't glue yet!—a flame on the first candle. The second candle is the candle of peace. Place a flame on the second candle. The third candle is the candle of joy. Place a flame on the third candle—that's the pink one. The fourth candle is the candle of love. Place a flame on the fourth candle.**
7. Give each participant a small plastic storage bag where they can store their candle flames. **Now you know how your Advent wreath works. Take it home and glue a flame on one of the candles each week in Advent.**

Option 2: Greenery Advent Wreaths

1. Invite each participant to pick up supplies: a circular wreath form, greenery, floral wire, scissors, and ribbon.
2. Show everyone how to attach the greenery to the form with floral wire. **Start with a pine branch base, laying all branches in the same direction around the wreath mold. Secure these with the floral wire. Fill in the gaps with little branches and use the wire to attach any large branches that are sticking out.**
3. Encourage younger participants to choose the branches and older participants to attach each section with wire.
4. As everyone works on their wreaths, walk around to see who needs help, encouragement, or direction.

Supplies

Felt sheets (white, 8 in. x 11 in., 1 per participant)
Precut felt pieces (1 in. x 4 in.; either 4 blue per participant or 1 pink and 3 purple per participant, depending on your church's Advent candle tradition)
Paper cutter
Additional felt pieces (green and yellow)
Wooden dowels (10 in., 1 per participant)
Yarn
Scissors
Craft glue
Plastic storage bags (1 per participant)
Glitter fabric paints (optional)

Supplies

Circular forms, such as straw wreath molds (1 per participant or household)
Greenery
Ribbons, bows, beads, and other decor in Advent or Christmas colors
Battery-operated tea lights (4 per wreath)
Floral wire
Wire clippers
Hot glue
Scissors

5. Once they have attached all the greenery, they can attach ribbons and other decorations for extra color.
6. Ask kids to help you distribute four battery-operated tea lights for each wreath. Kids can help nestle each candle into the branches. **Take your wreaths home and light one of the candles each week in Advent.**

Send with a Prayer

When the chime sounds to signal the end of the station time, close with a prayer.

Whenever I say "shine in our hearts," place your hands on your heart. Let us pray.

Dear Jesus,

We are excited about the fact that Christmas is coming. Shine in our hearts.

Be with us this Advent season. Shine in our hearts.

You fill us with God's love and joy so that we can have hope. Shine in our hearts.

As the light on our Advent wreaths grows brighter, remind us that you want to shine in our hearts.

Amen.



People may not want to carry their wreath to other stations. Give them the option of leaving the wreath in this room. Make sure everyone's wreath is clearly labeled and remind everyone to pick them up after the event.