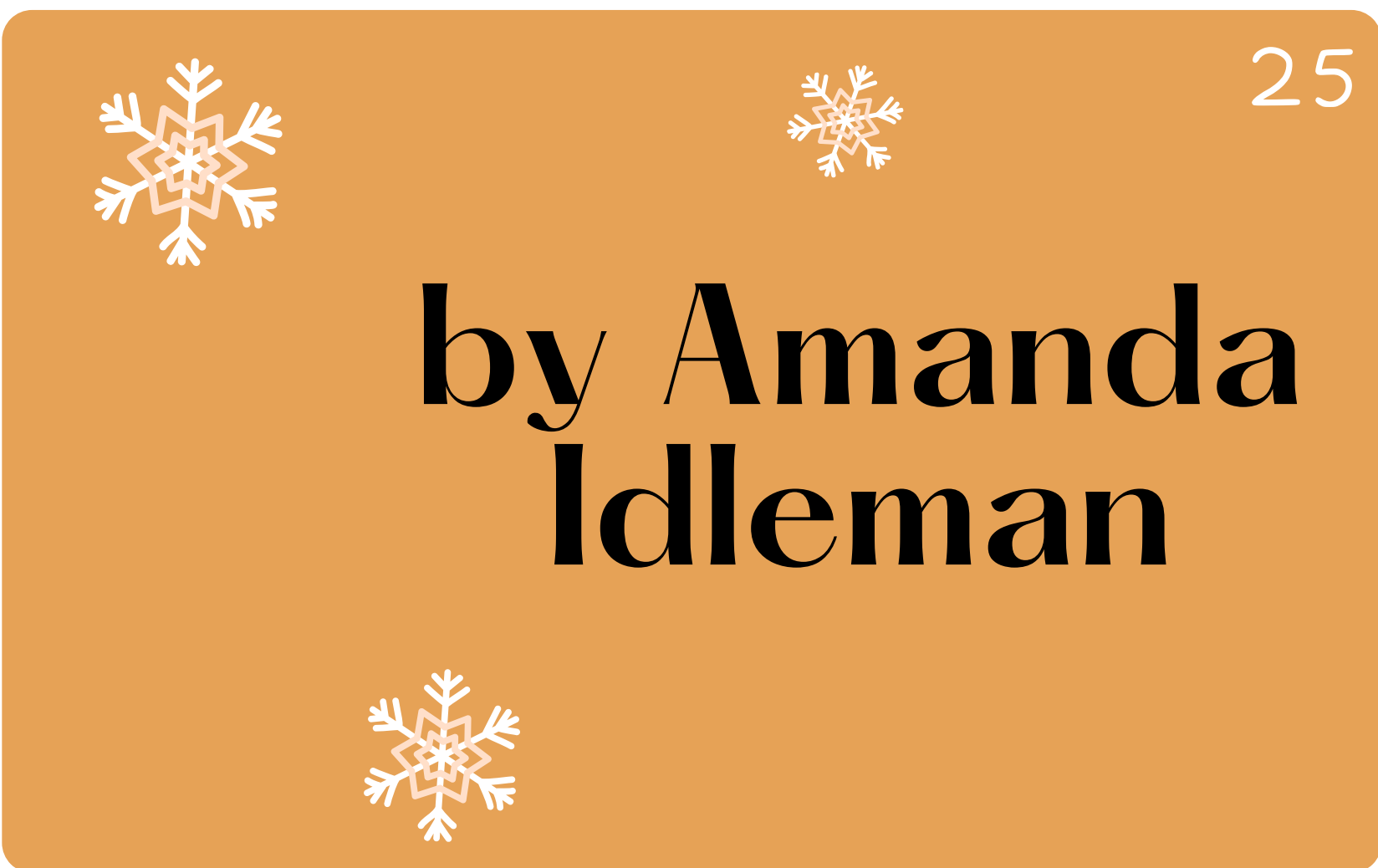




4 DIY ADVENT CALENDARS TO MAKE THIS CHRISTMAS





advent

Advent is a chance to intentionally take our focus off of the hustle of the season. Even when things feel chaotic, we can find peace in Jesus. Advent is a way to focus our thoughts on the gift God has given us in his son Jesus who stepped down from Heaven and took the form of a man so that we might believe.

Each week of Advent has a theme; in the first week, we light a purple candle for hope (or promise); in week two, we light a purple candle for preparation (or waiting or prophecy); in week three, we light a pink or purple candle for joy (or peace), and week four we light a purple or pink candle is for love (or adoration). Traditionally, you would light a candle each Sunday during a church service to mark the event.

Reading, praying, and lighting candles to reflect with your family from home is perfectly appropriate. Here are some fun DIY advent calendar ideas to get you started on your journey this holiday season!




Kitchen Table Wreath


One way to easily bring home the advent practice of weekly candle lighting and reflection is to add an advent wreath with candles to your table centerpiece. If you love the idea of a wreath but aren't crafty, Amazon has some great pre-made options.

The colors of the candles lit each week vary depending on what tradition you follow. Some keep the candles all the same color (traditionally purple) and then light a fifth white candle at the end of the Advent season.

There is no wrong way to light these candles; just as long as you are taking the time to pause and meditate on the meaning of the season, you are doing it right! You could make a wreath for your table if you are more crafty! Just use candles you already have at home. A fun idea to get the kids involved is by using their handprints as the decorative base for your centerpiece.



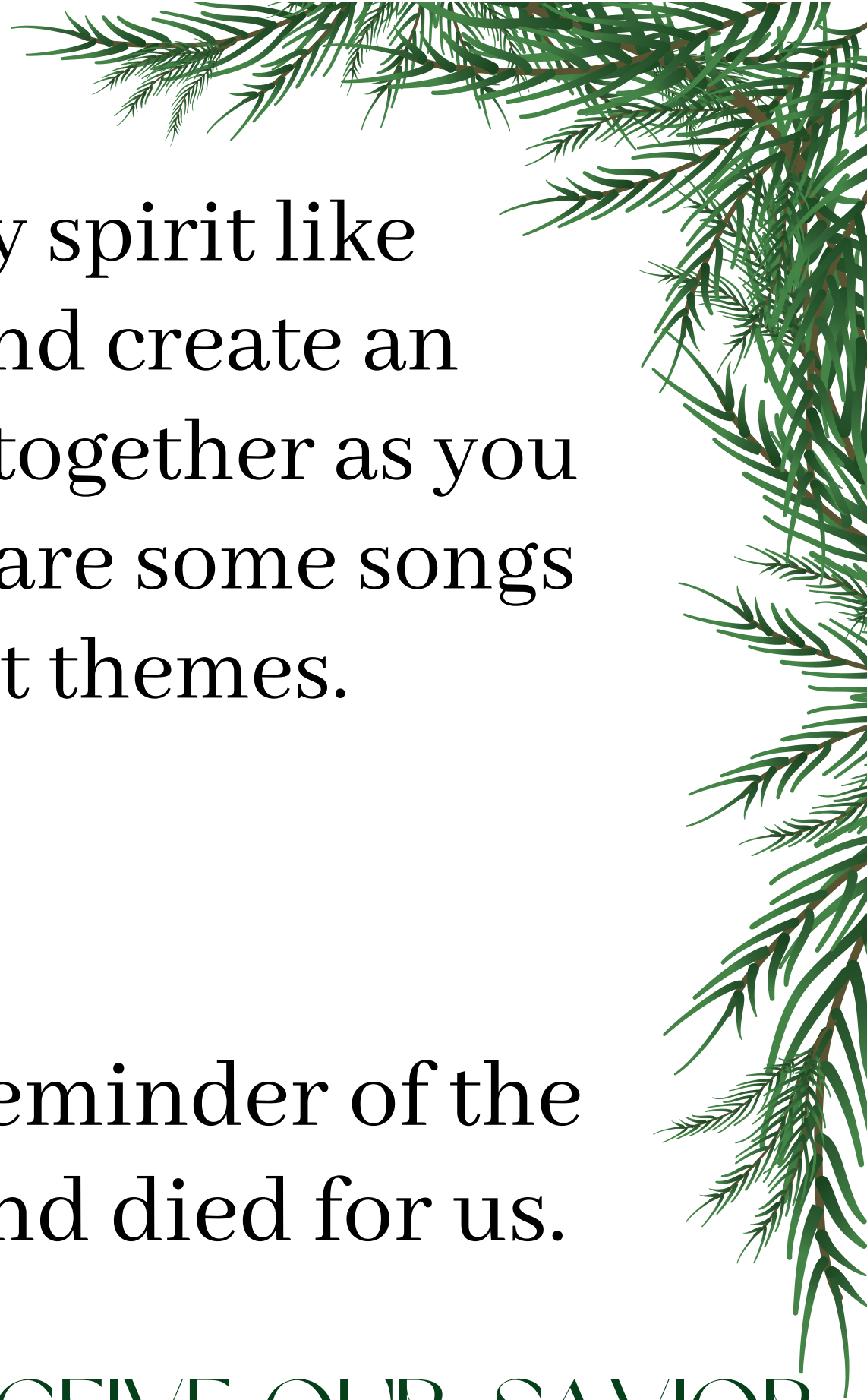
Craftivity Designs has a huge list of modern advent centerpieces that you can easily create for your home if you are looking for a more refined piece to add to your table.





CREATE AN ADVENT PLAYLIST





Nothing fills your home with the holiday spirit like Christmas music! Why not edit that list and create an "Advent playlist" that your family can enjoy together as you count down the days until Christmas? Here are some songs that celebrate and remind us of Advent themes.

WEEK 1 - HOPE

North Point's *Emmanual* is a beautiful reminder of the hope that we have because Jesus came and died for us.

WEEK 2 - PREPARE OUR HEARTS TO RECEIVE OUR SAVIOR

Elevation Worship's *Here Come Heaven* helps remind us that the build-up of Advent is because we are to awaken our hearts again to the reality that Jesus came down from Heaven to save us!

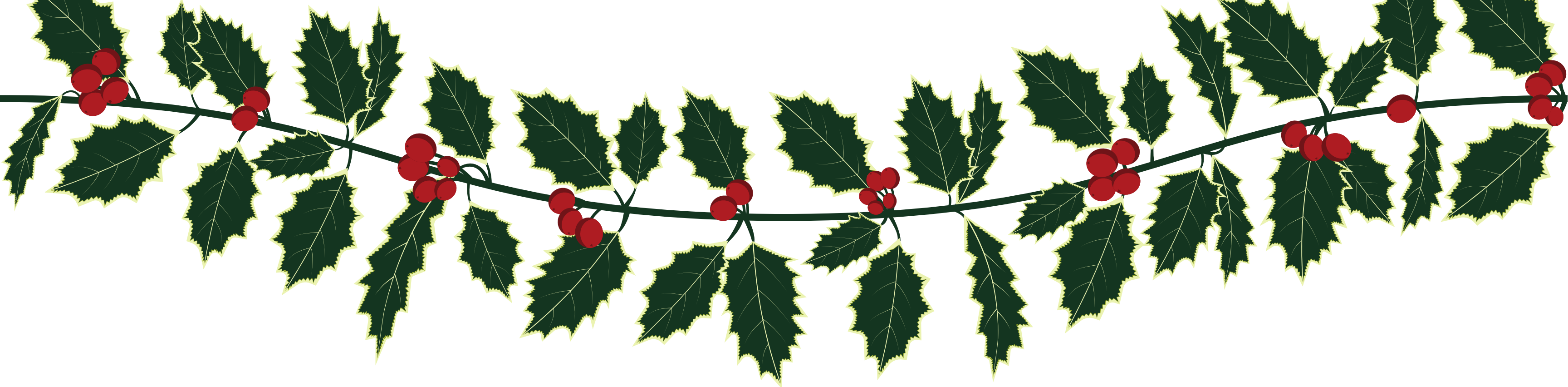


WEEK 3 - JOY

Phil Wickham's *Joy to the World* is a great reminder that we can be joyful this Christmas because we are celebrating the gift of Jesus!

WEEK 4 - THE LOVE OF GOD

Hillsong Worship has a lovely version of *O Come All Ye Faithful*, which calls us to come and adore our King!



ADVENT PRAYER CALENDARS

Bring more of Jesus into the holiday season by having intentional prayer time as a family.

1. CHRISTMAS CARD HOLDER

Create a holder for each of the Christmas Cards you receive. As you count down the days until Christmas, select one family card to pray over. You could even send that family a little note or message letting them know you spent time praying for them as a family.



2. MAKE A PRAYER GARLAND

A paper chain prayer garland is another way to organize your daily prayer time and countdown the days of Advent. Construct a red and green garland out of construction paper slips and write a name on each ring. Each night break off one ring and pray over that friend, family member, or ministry.

3. POPSICLE STICK JAR

Write names on popsicle sticks and put them in a jar on the table to pull and pray over. Praying for those you love who likely had a more stressful year than they anticipated is a great way to show love for your community this holiday season.



Make "Family Fun" Cards

Make "family fun cards" for each day of Advent. You can hang them on your mantle with string and clothespins, make a book of them to flip through for each day of Advent, or laminate them to post in your house!





Each of these cards has a special way of celebrating the season as a family on it. The great thing is you get to be the creator of the fun that your kids can look forward to over the entire Advent season. It is a great way to spend intentional time together and celebrate the countdown to Christmas!

IDEAS:



Enjoy Hot Chocolate While Reading Your
Advent Devotional



Great Wolf Lodge Trip for Christmas Break

Make a Gingerbread House

Wrap Christmas Gifts Together

Donate Gently Used Toys



Go Ice Skating

Read the Christmas Story



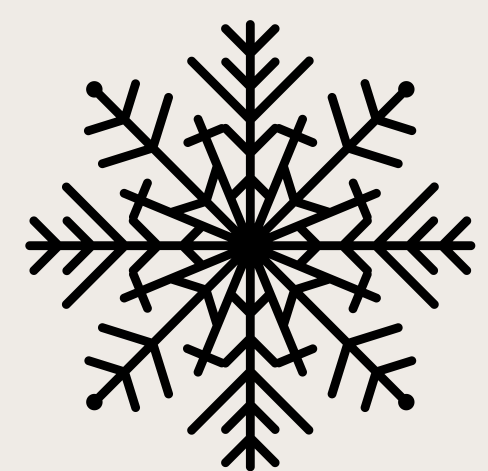
Leave a Treat for Your Mail Carrier

Family Game Night

Help Decorate the Tree

Go for a Winter Walk

Cut Out Paper Snowflakes



Random Act of Kindness



Name One Thing You're Thankful For