

# Advent Wreath Transformation Station

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## Introduction

The idea of transformation stations isn't a new one, but it's a wonderful one. It's much like stations of the cross. This Advent Wreath Transformation Station is meant to be a tool that incorporates, meditation, personal reflection, prayer, and crafts. In the end you will have a beautiful wreath that can be used as an advent wreath (if candles are added) or just a beautiful decoration to help you reflect on the season.

Each station (there are 8) begins with a Bible verse for meditation. The second page has a description of the theme for the station, personal questions to ponder, instructions for the wreath, and a topic for prayer. The stations do not have a particular order. Soft, instrumental music is recommended to help the participants stay "in the mood". This can be done individually or as a group. If you have more than 8 people in your group you may want to print the instructions twice. It is intended to be a quiet, solo activity; but lends itself to group discussion after the stations have been completed.

## Tools Needed

- Wire wreath starter
- Evergreen to wrap the wreath in (can be found in long strips, usually found for stairway decorations)
- Fake bird
- Fake Poinsettia Flower
- Decorative twigs
- Ribbon
- Fake Holly Berries
- White or translucent white glitter
- Hot glue and hot glue guns (needed for each station each station)
- Pinecones
- Decorative small ornaments

These can all be purchased at a store like Hobby Lobby or Michaels for around \$10-15 a wreath

After Jesus was born in Bethlehem in Judea, during the time of King Herod, Magi from the east came to Jerusalem and asked, “Where is the one who has been born king of the Jews? We saw his star when it rose and have come to worship him.”

-Matthew 2:1-2

## Anticipation

The birth of Jesus was highly anticipated. Scriptures foretold the coming of a messiah. The wise men studied the skies waiting for the star that would lead the way to the new born king. Mary and Joseph had to wait 9 months to meet him... God could have just given us Jesus without making us wait, but what fun would that have been? We celebrate this time of anticipation with the season of advent. We remember that the Lord is coming and look forward to the day of his birth.

We live in an instant gratification society. We have things like fast food and movies on demand that shape us into getting what we want when we want it. The danger is that we can get greedy. Waiting for something we want becomes a chore instead of wonderful anticipation. We don't look forward to things, instead we get annoyed when we can't have it now. There are so many wonderful things to look forward to in life. Slow down and let the anticipation build!

*\*What was the last thing you had to wait for?*

*\*How did you feel about waiting? Was it fun or was it a chore?*

*\*How can you remember to slow down and wait with excitement during the holidays?*

*\*How can you take this practice past the holidays into the rest of the year?*

**\*\*\* Just like you have to wait to see a flower bloom, sometimes we have to wait for the beautiful moments in our lives to bloom. Glue a poinsettia onto your wreath to remind you to wait with excited anticipation.**

**Pray and ask God to give you patience and excitement when you have to wait for what you want in life. \*\*\***

All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had said through the prophet:  
“The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and they will call him  
Immanuel” (which means “God with us”).

*-Matthew 1:22-23*

## Hope

The Jews put their hope in the messiah. They knew that he was coming to save them. They trusted that he would not let them down and that life with him would be far better than it was now. Mary knew that the child she carried would be the light at the end of the tunnel of suffering for her people and for the world.

Hope is a beautiful thing. In a world filled with pain and suffering, hope is the thing that keeps people going. However, it is easy to lose that hope when you take your eyes off of Jesus. Jesus' birth gave us hope. We were given tangible hope that God was now with us in a very real way. God became flesh so there would be no barrier between him and us. Put your hope in the Lord. He is always for you and will never let you go.

*\* Have you ever lost hope when things were hard for you?*

*\* Why do you think hope is so powerful?*

*\* How can you remember to have hope when things seem lost?*

\*\*\* In the dead of winter berries are often the only food for some animals. They are hope for the spring. Sometimes the only hope we have in the winter of our lives is the light of Jesus. Glue some holly berries on your wreath to help you remember to put your hope in the Lord.

Pray and ask God to give you hope when you need it most. If you need it now, ask for it. If not, ask him to help you remember to put your hope in him when the time comes. \*\*\*

While they were there, the time came for the baby to be born, and she gave birth to her firstborn, a son. She wrapped him in cloths and placed him in a manger, because there was no guest room available for them.

*-Matthew 2:6-7*

## Humility

It takes a pretty humble God to be willing to make his first appearance in the world as a human in a stable in the middle of nowhere. It takes an even more humble God to take the form of a vulnerable baby. God could have come into the world as a man, already strong and already knowledgeable. He could have been some handsome stranger who blew in and knocked the world's socks off. But he didn't. God could have also made sure that Mary and Joseph had the best inn in all of Bethlehem for Jesus to be born in, but he didn't. Jesus came for all people. What better way of getting that point across than entering the world as a baby in a stable?

Sometimes we forget to have humility. We can get stuck thinking we are better than other people. That we are more religious, smarter, more talented, better looking, more well behaved... the list goes on and on. Remember it isn't a contest and a little humility goes a long way!

*\* Have you ever thought you were better than someone else?*

*\* How did that make you act?*

*\* Has someone made you feel like you were less than them?*

*\* How can you remember that all of God's children are precious and nobody is better than anyone else?*

\*\*\* Jesus lay on a bed of straw in a stable when he was born. From the beginning he was on our level. Glue some twigs onto your wreath to remember Jesus' humble beginnings.

Pray and ask God to keep you humble. Success can give us a big head, ask God to keep you in check. \*\*\*



This is how the birth of Jesus the Messiah came about: His mother Mary was pledged to be married to Joseph, but before they came together, she was found to be pregnant through the Holy Spirit. Because Joseph her husband was faithful to the law, and yet did not want to expose her to public disgrace, he had in mind to divorce her quietly. But after he had considered this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, "Joseph son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary home as your wife, because what is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. She will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins."

When Joseph woke up, he did what the angel of the Lord had commanded him and took Mary home as his wife. But he did not consummate their marriage until she gave birth to a son. And he gave him the name Jesus.

-Matthew 1:18-21, 24

## Surprise

Mary didn't know she would be the mother of Jesus. Joseph didn't know he would raise the son of God. Imagine their surprise when they received their visit from the Angel Gabriel! And nobody expected the son of God to be born to a couple of nobodies. What an honor! God has a way of bestowing wonderful gifts upon us. When we least expect it he blesses us beyond belief.

Life is busy. Sometimes we are going so fast and working so hard that we miss the blessings that God has for us. Sometimes it feels like we need an angel to appear to us and wake us up just to point them out. Blessings from God are all around us, we just need to let ourselves be surprised.

*\*When was the last time you were truly surprised by something someone did for you? How did you feel?*

*\* Do you ever feel like you are blind to God's blessings?*

*\*How can we slow down our lives to see the surprises God has in store for us?*

**\*\*\* The blessings God surprises us with are like little gifts. Wrap some ribbon on your wreath or make a bow and attach it to remind you that God is always surprising us with blessings.**

**Pray and thank God for all the blessings in your life!\*\*\***

And there were shepherds living out in the fields nearby, keeping watch over their flocks at night. An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. **1**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. This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger.”

-Luke 2:8-12

## Fear

**While the birth of Jesus had a lot of good, warm feelings surrounding it, there was also fear. I'm sure Mary and Joseph were afraid when they were visited by the Angel Gabriel. The Shepherds were afraid when they too saw the Angel. King Herod was terrified by the news.**

**Fear is such a common feeling for us. It is easy to get enveloped by it. Even when we are faced with something good we can still be scared. But listen to the Angel Gabriel and remember, "do not be afraid".**

*\*When was the last time you were afraid? Why were you scared? Do you get scared when faced with good things?*

*\* What do you do when you are afraid? Do you draw nearer to God or do you pull away?*

*\*How can you do as the Angel suggests and not be afraid?*

**\*\*\* Fear is so strong. Remember that it is something EVERYONE feels. Even Jesus felt it in the end. Glue on a pinecone to remind yourself that even though fear is a prickly, hard feeling, beautiful things can come from facing it. Remember to be bold and brave, for the Lord your God is with you**

**Pray and ask God to give you courage when you are afraid. \*\*\***

*In those days Caesar Augustus issued a decree that a census should be taken of the entire Roman world. (This was the first census that took place while Quirinius was governor of Syria.) And everyone went to their own town to register.*

*So Joseph also went up from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to Bethlehem the town of David, because he belonged to the house and line of David. He went there to register with Mary, who was pledged to be married to him and was expecting a child. While they were there, the time came for the baby to be born, and she gave birth to her firstborn, a son. She wrapped him in cloths and placed him in a manger, because there was no guest room available for them.*

**-Luke 2:1-5**

## Wonder

So many things had to be in order for the birth of Jesus to happen the way it was predicted. The star had to align in the sky, the perfect parents had to be chosen, The census had to take Mary and Joseph to Bethlehem... and on and on. God's timing and intricate works are filled with wonder.

Often in life we think we have the right timing. We think we know what's best for us and when it should all happen. But more often than not it doesn't follow our plans but works out so well that we marvel over how it just couldn't have gone any other way. God puts the right things in our path at the right time to fill us with wonder.

*\* Have you ever marveled over how something seemed to just work out even when the odds were stacked against it?*

*\*When was the last time you were filled with wonder? When was the last time you were filled with wonder in God? Were they the same?*

*\*How can you be filled with wonder and see it as something God has a hand in?*

*\*\*\* Have you ever gone outside at just the right time to see beautiful, fresh falling snow and been filled with wonder? Use the hot glue and glitter to make snow and remember that God plays a part in all of that fills us with wonder and makes us marvel.*

*Pray and ask God to fill you with wonder. Thank him for his perfect timing. \*\*\**

*Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God and saying,*

*“Glory to God in the highest heaven,  
and on earth peace to those on whom his favor rests.”*

*When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, “Let’s go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has told us about.”*

*So they hurried off and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby, who was lying in the manger. When they had seen him, they spread the word concerning what had been told them about this child, and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds said to them. But Mary treasured up all these things and pondered them in her heart. The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things they had heard and seen, which were just as they had been told.*

*-Luke 2:13-20*



## Joy

*Imagine being a shepherd out guarding your flock at night. You're tired and cold. And then an Angel appears to you and tells you that this night, not too far away, the messiah you have been waiting for has been born and YOU get to be one of the first ones to see him! Not someone rich or important, but you! You are to be one of the first people to meet Jesus.*

*Sometimes the smallest things can bring us the biggest joy. We live in a world where bigger is better. We ask for the expensive gifts and fret over what to get each other. We wonder is it good enough? Did we spend enough? But sometimes we overlook the small things, the things that aren't things at all. Remember that you can bring someone joy without even knowing it. Don't overlook kind words and warm gestures.*

*\*When was the last time someone did something little for you and you were filled with joy?*

*\*Have you ever given someone something you thought was small and they were beyond happy when they received it?*

*\*How can you make giving (and receiving) about the joy behind the intention this holiday season?*

*\*\*\*This time of year isn't about who can give the best gifts and how much money you spent. Instead we should focus on joy and sharing that joy with the ones we love. Glue on*

*some ornaments to remind you that it's not about what's under the tree, it's what's in your heart.*

*Pray and ask God to help you keep joy in your heart this holiday season and all year. Ask him to help you remember that Christmas morning is not about what is under the tree. \*\*\**

In the sixth month of Elizabeth's pregnancy, God sent the angel Gabriel to Nazareth, a town in Galilee, to a virgin pledged to be married to a man named Joseph, a descendant of David. The virgin's name was Mary. The angel went to her and said, "Greetings, you who are highly favored! The Lord is with you."

Mary was greatly troubled at his words and wondered what kind of greeting this might be. But the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary; you have found favor with God. You will conceive and give birth to a son, and you are to call him Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his father David, and he will reign over Jacob's descendants forever; his kingdom will never end."

"How will this be," Mary asked the angel, "since I am a virgin?"

The angel answered, "The Holy Spirit will come on you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So the holy one to be born will be called the Son of God. Even Elizabeth your relative is going to have a child in her old age, and she who was said to be unable to conceive is in her sixth month. For no word from God will ever fail."

"I am the Lord's servant," Mary answered. "May your word to me be fulfilled." Then the angel left her.

**-Luke 1:26-38**

## Submission

What if Mary had said no? What if she thought "Nobody will believe me, I'm not doing that!" Our Christmas story would look pretty different. What if Joseph thought his dream was just something he ate and didn't believe Mary? What if the wise men didn't listen to their dream from God and went and told King Herod where Jesus was?

Sometimes God calls us to do difficult things. Sometimes we are scared. Sometimes we know that even though the outcome is worth it, the road there will be very hard. God has amazing ideas for each and every one of our lives, but we have the choice to say yes or no. Sometimes we just have to trust God and submit knowing that his will for us is probably better for us in the long run. Remember that when you say "yes" God will never leave your side.

*\* Have you ever felt like God was calling you to do something you didn't want to do?*

*\*Have you ever not trusted that God would have your back if you said yes to a difficult task?*

*\* How can you trust God when you feel like you're being called to something difficult in the future?*

**\*\*\* Think about birds in the winter time. Something tells them that it is in their best interest to fly south and they trust it. They submit to that calling inside of them. Glue on your bird to remind you to submit to God's calling inside of you when you feel it.**

**Pray and ask God to help you feel his will for you. Ask him to help you say yes to difficult situations.\*\*\***