

Notes on an Advent Circle
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This circle time grew out of thoughts and pictures shared at the 1996 summer AWSNA conference on Festivals, and in speaking with Holly Koteen Soulé of Seattle. Her description of her Advent wreath with dolls from many nations got me thinking about houses and the Mexican tradition of journeying from house to house in search of a shelter for the Holy Family. This then led to the idea of going to different houses to share how light is experienced in different traditions. This circle has a house in which Hanukkah is celebrated, an African hut inspired by the excerpt from Laurens van der Post's *The Heart is the Hunter*, the tee pee of the Native Americans, and finally a rocky cave in which is found the Holy Family.

To accompany this journey, our Advent “calendar” became these four different “houses” put on a bulletin board as a scene. [An accompanying photo shows them to be surrounded by a lovely scene of draped cloths, little stars and wool trees.] Different doors opened to reveal what was inside and other drawn and cut out figures were also added to the scenes to fill out the picture. Our usual story time had the continuing story of two children journeying into the world to find how light shone in different peoples' houses. We either opened a door or window in one of the houses or unwrapped a figure to add to the scene, which had been wrapped up like a small gift. The figures included a family dancing the hora, a lion at the African hut, an eagle and buffalo at the tee pee, and a lamb at the rocky cave.

This remains a work in progress.

Nancy sent along an accompanying circle play where the children traveled from house to house with verse and song. She felt this was not yet ripe for putting in the Newsletter, but raised the question, “What about a collection of multi-cultural circle plays?” We turn this question over to you kindergarten teachers. We know some of you have developed Native American circles, and others have developed circles for Jewish festivals. Perhaps there is also a Buddhist circle that has been developed, as well as circles like Nancy’s that weave together different cultures. Would you be willing to share circles you have developed and which have worked with your children? We would be glad to consider a publication in the future if there is enough material for it.