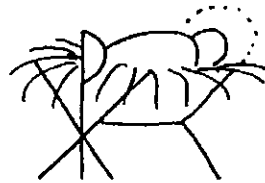


THE CHRIST CANDLE



Child: This is the last time this year we will light the Advent candles. *(Child and adult light the four candles.)*

Adult: For four weeks the candles have been burning as we thought about hope, peace, joy, and love. These are the gifts which Jesus brought to us at Christmastime. The waiting is over and Jesus is born.

Child: Each week another candle glowed, and our wreath shone more brightly. Today we light our white candle, the candle which represents Jesus. It is the centre of our wreath, just as Jesus is the centre of our lives. Happy Birthday, Jesus!!! *(Child and adult light the Christ candle together.)*

Congregational Prayer:

God, our hearts sing with joy and praise
because of Jesus.
At this happy season, we rejoice
that Jesus came among us.
By his birth and life
he has shown us that we are your people
and that we are greatly loved.
Help us to remember Christmas all year long
by giving to others the gifts of life:
hope, peace, joy, love,
kindness and understanding. Amen.

Hymn:



Candlelighting Liturgy to Accompany the Advent Wreath



The First Sunday of Advent

HOPE



Child: Today is the first Sunday in the season of Advent. Advent means “coming.” In this season we prepare for the coming of Christ. One of the ways we can celebrate Advent is by making an Advent wreath and lighting its candles to remind us of the gifts Christ brings to the world. It also helps us count the Sundays on our journey to Christmas.

Adult: The Advent wreath includes many symbols. The wreath is in the shape of a circle, without beginning or ending. This reminds us that there is no beginning and no ending to God. God’s love and care for us never ends. The evergreen branches are a sign of ever new life. The candles tell us of the light which came into the world with Jesus Christ. The traditional colours of the Advent candles, three violet and one rose, are penitential colours, reminding us that we need God’s help to be the people we are meant to be. The white candle which we light on Christmas Eve signifies the coming of Christ.

Child: Today we light the first candle, the candle of hope. *(Child and adult together light the first candle.)*

Adult: Like the ancient Hebrew people we cry out to God from a broken and hurting world. We, too, know how it feels to be like leaves blown about in the wind. We acknowledge that our lives are not what God meant them to be. And like the ancient Hebrews we welcome the words of hope from Isaiah that we are like clay and God is the potter. God created us and will recreate us, shaping us in love. Shalom will come if we put our trust in God.

Child: With the lighting of this candle, we celebrate the hope of Israel, and the hope that we have in Jesus Christ.

Congregation: We continue to hope in God’s promise that Christ will come again to fill our lives and the life of the world with love and joy and peace.

Prayer: O God, help us to be open to your shaping of our lives, that we may be channels of hope, love, peace, and joy to our hurting world.

Hymn:

The Second Sunday of Advent

PEACE



Child: Last Sunday, we lit the first candle in our Advent wreath, the candle of hope. Let us light it again, as a symbol of our desire for healing and wholeness for our world. Our hope is in God's way of Shalom. *(Child and adult light first candle.)*

Adult: John the Baptist called on the people of his day to get ready for the coming of the Messiah. They were to repent—turn around—change their focus. The peace—the Shalom we seek, grows out of a willingness to repent and change direction.

Child: We light this second candle to remind us that Jesus is the Prince of Peace. His life has shown us ways to share God's peace with others. *(Adult and child light the second candle.)*

Adult: Let us join together in a prayer for peace for ourselves and our world using the words of the International Peace Prayer.

Congregation: Lead me from death to life,
from falsehood to truth.
Lead me from despair to hope,
from fear to trust.
Lead me from hate to love,
from war to peace.
Let peace fill our hearts,
our world, our universe. Amen

Hymn:

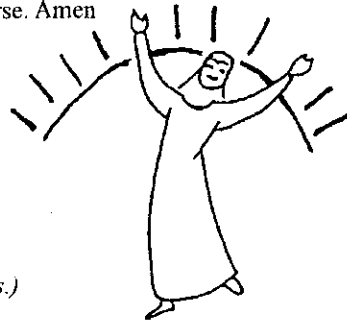
The Third Sunday of Advent

JOY

(Child and adult light again the first two candles.)

Child: We have lit again the two candles in our Advent wreath, to remind us of God's gifts of hope and peace. Today we will light the third candle, the pink one, representing joy.

Adult: The book of Isaiah describes the joy that will come with the dawning of Shalom. The broken hearted will be healed, the captives released, grief will turn to gladness, and justice will come to all the people.



Child: Jesus came to bring good news to the poor, sight to the blind, and release to the captives. We light this candle in joy and thanksgiving for the gift of Jesus who sets us free. *(Child and adult light the third candle.)*

Congregational Prayer: O God, help us to remember that true joy comes when the lowly are lifted up, when the hungry are filled with good things, and relationships are restored. May your love flow through us, out into the world, giving birth to great joy.

Hymn:

The Fourth Sunday of Advent

LOVE



Adult: Today we light the fourth candle in our Advent wreath, the candle reminding us of God's gift of love. Before we do that, let us remember the gifts of God symbolized by the other candles in the wreath: the light of hope, the light of peace, and the light of joy. *(Child and adult light again the first three candles.)*

Child: The fourth candle helps us to remember that God is Love. *(Child and adult light the fourth candle.)*

Adult: The Bible tells us that it is because God loved the world so much that Jesus came. The angel Gabriel announced the pending birth to Mary, saying "Peace be with you! The Lord is with you and has greatly blessed you!" Mary was deeply troubled. She had many questions. It was a big responsibility. God had chosen Mary to help gift the world with love. Mary responds: "I am the Lord's servant. Let me be with you as I have said."

Child: This fourth candle reminds us how much God loves us. Jesus was born into our world to show us how to love one another.

Congregational Prayer: God, thank you for loving us, and for sending us Jesus to teach us about your love. Help us to remember that your love will never come to an end. Strengthen us to love others as you love us. Amen.

Hymn: