

Advent Wreath Prayers

Week One: Hope

Reader 1: The first week of Advent we remember the gift of hope we have in Christ. The prophets of Israel all spoke of the coming of Christ, of how a savior would be born, a king in the line of David. They spoke of how he would rule the world wisely and bless all nations.

Reader 2: As followers of Christ, we wait with hope for his return. As we light this candle, we remember that it was from the manger at Bethlehem that he came and gave light to the world. As we light this candle, we are reminded to be alert and to watch for the light of Christ even in the most unlikely places and people.

(Reader lights the first purple candle on the Advent Wreath.)

Reader 3: Let us pray - Loving God, we thank you for the hope you give us. Help us prepare our hearts for the Lord's coming by being open seeing to the light of Christ in others. We ask this in the name of the one born in Bethlehem, Jesus our Lord. All: Amen.

Week Two: Peace

Reader 1: The second week of Advent we remember the gift of Peace we have in Christ. Peace is a gift that we must be prepared for and must work for. God gives us the gift of peace when we turn to him working together in faith.

Reader 2: Through John the Baptist and all the other prophets, God asks us to prepare the way of the Lord, whom the prophet Isaiah calls "the Prince of Peace." As we light this candle today we look with hope for the day that Christ's peace will reign in our hearts, in our homes, in our communities, and in our world. As we light this candle, we are reminded to work for that peace of Christ to come and take root in us.

(Reader lights the first two purple candles on the Advent Wreath.)

Reader 3: Let us pray - Loving God, we thank you for the gift of peace you give us through Jesus. Help us prepare our hearts for the Lord's coming by working for Christ's peace to take root in our family. We ask this in the name of the one born in Bethlehem, Jesus our Lord. All: Amen.

Week Three: Love

Reader 1: The third week of Advent we remember the gift of Joy we have in Christ. We remember the joy that Mary felt when the angel Gabriel told her that a special child would be born to her - a child who would save and deliver all people. Joy is the gift we all receive from the unconditional love Christ has for us.

Reader 2: God wants us all to have joy. The angel who announced to the shepherds that Jesus had been born told them: "Do not be afraid. I am bringing you good news of great joy for all people - for to you is born this day, in the City of David, a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord." As we light this candle, we remember that Christ came to bring true and everlasting joy to all people. As we light this candle, we are reminded that Christ came to save all people.

(Reader lights the first two purple candles and the pink candle on the Advent Wreath.)

Reader 3: Let us pray - Loving God, we thank you for the joy you bring us. Help us prepare our hearts for the Lord's coming by helping us see that Christ came for every person we meet wherever we go. We ask this in the name of the one born in Bethlehem, Jesus our Lord. All: Amen.

Week Four: Joy

Reader 1: The fourth week of Advent we remember the gift of Love we have in Christ. The light of the candles is meant to remind us of the love that God has for us. Jesus shows us God's perfect love. He is God's love in human form. The Bible says that "God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that whoever believes in him should not perish, but have eternal life."

Reader 2: Love is patient, love is kind and envies no one. Love is never boastful or conceited, rude or selfish. Love is not quick to take offense, it keeps no records of wrongs, it does not gloat over other people's troubles, but rejoices in the right, the good, and the true. There is nothing that love cannot face, there is no limit to its faith, to its hope, to its endurance. Love never ends. As we light this candle, we remember that we are called to love like Christ loves us. As we light this candle, we are reminded that we are called to show that love in the way we treat others.

(Reader lights all the candles on the Advent Wreath.)

Reader 3: Let us pray - Loving God, we thank you for your gift of love - shown to us perfectly in Jesus Christ our Lord. Help us prepare our hearts for the Lord's coming by loving others as Christ loves us. We ask this in the name of the one born in Bethlehem, Jesus our Lord. All: Amen

Christmas Eve

Reader 1: Today we celebrate the gift of the Incarnation, Emmanuel, God with us. We celebrate the birth of Christ who is the Light of the World—a Light no darkness can extinguish. Christ's Light can enter any darkness and as members of the Body of Christ, we live in the Light of Christ.

Reader 2: "And the Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us, and we saw his glory, the glory as of the Father's only Son, full of grace and truth." (John 1:14) Jesus, the Son of God, chose to be born of Mary, to become human, one of us. He lived among us, experiencing our joys and hopes, our struggles and challenges. He came to bring us out of the darkness to which we had fallen and into God's wonderful, eternal Light.

(Reader lights all the candles on the Advent Wreath and the Christ candle.)

Reader 3: Let us pray - Loving God, we thank you for your mystery of the Incarnation – Emmanuel, God with us. Help us receive the Light of Christ in our hearts and share it generously and joyfully in our families and communities. We ask this in the name of the one born in Bethlehem, Jesus our Lord.