

First Sunday of Advent: Hope

Reader: Jesus said, "I am the light of the world. Those who follow me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life."

All: Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly.

Reader: The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light. They lived in a land of shadows, but now light is shining on them. (Isaiah 9:2)

We light this candle to remind us of the hope of all people for a Saviour who will bring us freedom and peace. This hope was promised by the prophets of the Old Testament, who shared their vision of justice coming to the earth by the mighty acts of God.

The first candle is lit.

Reader: Let us pray:

Father, you awaken in us the desire for the coming of your Son Jesus. May he kindle in us the light of his love, and bring the kingdom of peace and justice that you promised for the whole earth.

All: Amen.

Second Sunday of Advent: Peace

Reader: Jesus said, "I am the light of the world. Those who follow me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life."

All: Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly.

Reader: At that time, John the Baptist came to the desert of Judea and started preaching. "Turn away from your sins," he said, "because the kingdom of heaven is near!" John was the man whom the prophet Isaiah was talking about when he said, "Someone is shouting in the desert, 'Prepare a road for the Lord; make a straight path for him to travel!'" (Matthew 3:1-3)

We light this candle to remind us of the last of the prophets, John the Baptist, who called all people to prepare for the coming of the Messiah. He asked us all to search our own hearts, and rid ourselves of the dark things that keep us from God and from each other.

The second candle is lit.

Reader: Let us pray:

Father, you sent us John the Baptist to prepare the way for the Messiah. Help us to prepare our hearts for Christ to be born in them, and to prepare our world for Christ to come and restore the kingdom.

All: Amen.

Third Sunday of Advent: Joy

Reader: Jesus said, "I am the light of the world. Those who follow me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life."

All: Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly.

Reader: The sovereign Lord has filled me with his spirit. He has chosen me to bring good news to the poor, to heal the broken-hearted, to announce release to captives and freedom to those in prison. He has sent me to proclaim that the time has come when the Lord will save his people. (Isaiah 61:1-2)

We light this candle to remind us of our task in preparing our world for the coming of the Messiah. We are also called to be prophets who will relieve suffering, promote justice, and bring hope to those who live without light and love.

The third candle is lit.

Reader: Let us pray:

Father, you have called us to share in Christ's ministry to a troubled world. Fill us with your Spirit, so that we may faithfully proclaim your Word in all that we say and do, until your kingdom comes upon the earth.

All: Amen.

Fourth Sunday of Advent: Love

Reader: Jesus said, "I am the light of the world. Those who follow me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life."

All: Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly.

Reader: The angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary; God has been gracious to you. You will soon become pregnant and give birth to a son, and you will name him Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High God. The Lord God will make him a king, as his ancestor David was, and he will be the king of the descendants of Jacob forever; his kingdom will never end! (Luke 1:30-33)

We light this candle to remind us of Mary, who was willing, first of all people, to let the light of the Lord shine through her and bring the Saviour to the world. Because of her faithfulness and love, Jesus the Messiah, was born to us.

The fourth candle is lit.

Reader: Let us pray:

Father, you called Mary to be the mother of your Son, so that the world could be saved and brought to new birth. Help us also to bring the light of Christ to birth wherever there is darkness and despair, and to work for the coming of your kingdom.

All: Amen.