



Advent Wreath Candle Lighting Prayers

This Advent at Cap Church we will mark this season of waiting by lighting candles each week. This booklet has prayers and scripture for each week of Advent to guide your household in the ritual of lighting an advent wreath.

On the first Sunday of Advent during All Church we are making Advent wreaths together to take home, but you can use any wreath set-up that works for your household - real boughs or artificial, homemade or store bought, coloured candles or tealights, real wicks or flameless candles. Whatever you use for an Advent wreath is appropriate – the real beauty of this ritual is pausing together during the hustle and bustle of the season to reflect on the growing anticipation of the arrival of Christ, the light of the world.

Like many Christmas traditions, the origins of the Advent wreath are found in the folk practices of pre-Christians. In northern Europe, during the dark, mid-winter, people would make wreaths of evergreen and light fires as signs of hope. These traditions were kept alive by Christians and by the 16th century in Germany Christians used evergreens and fire as symbols to celebrate Advent and renewed hope in the birth and person of Jesus Christ.

Five hundred years later we continue this tradition, using the light of the Advent candles to help guide our journey through this season of waiting. In the midst of all the other celebrations and traditions during December, the ritual of lighting the Advent wreath helps us to hold the anticipation of the arrival of Christ Jesus at the centre of our journey.



Advent Week 1: Hope

Reflect on Hope:

This week, we light a candle in hope. During advent we wait for the coming of Jesus, who is the source of hope. We prepare our hearts for the coming of the baby Jesus, who is a sign of hope for a weary world. There is much in our world that is not how it should be; There is pain and suffering, hurt and heartache. And so we also hope for Jesus' return, when all of creation will be reconciled into God's loving embrace.

Read one or both:

Isaiah 40: 3-5

3 A messenger is calling out,
"In the desert prepare
the way for the Lord.
Make a straight road through it
for our God.
4 Every valley will be filled in.
Every mountain and hill will be made level.
The rough ground will be smoothed out.
The rocky places will be made flat.
5 Then the glory of the Lord will appear.
And everyone will see it together.
The Lord has spoken."

Romans 8: 18, 22-25

18 What we are suffering now is nothing compared with our future glory... 22 We know that all that God created has been groaning. It is in pain as if it were giving birth to a child. The created world continues to groan even now. 23 And that's not all. We have the Holy Spirit as the promise of future blessing. But we also groan inside ourselves. We do this as we look forward to the time when God adopts us as full members of his family. Then he will give us everything he has for us. He will raise our bodies and give glory to them. 24 That's the hope we had when we were saved. But hope that can be seen is no hope at all. Who hopes for what they already have? 25 We hope for what we don't have yet. So we are patient as we wait for it.



Advent Week 1: Hope

Say one of the following prayers while lighting one candle:

Option #1 (multi-person household)	Option #2 (single-person household)
Person One: Prepare the way of the Lord. Person Two: Let us prepare for Jesus who renews hope. Person One: There is much in this world that can make us lose hope, Person Two: But we continue to hope for what we cannot see. <i>Light candle</i> All: Source of hope, help us to wait with patience, and reflect your hope out into the world.	I light the candle of hope as I await the coming of Jesus, who is the source of hope. Thank you, God, for the gift of hope in challenging times.

Conclude this time of prayer by reading a story or singing/listening to a song.

Advent Song Suggestion: Hope is a Star

Christmas Carol Suggestion: Angels we Have Heard on High



Advent Week 2 : Peace

Reflect on Peace:

This week, we light a candle in peace. Although he is the Son of God, who is mighty and powerful, Jesus came into the world as a tiny, helpless baby, as a sign of peace. When he grew up, Jesus, the Prince of Peace did not turn to war and fighting to save us, rather he defeated death through love, by dying for our sins on the cross. May we learn to walk Jesus' way of peace. During advent, may we watch and wait for signs of peace in the world around us.

Read one or both:

Isaiah 11: 6-9

8 The wolf shall live with the lamb;
the leopard shall lie down with the kid;
the calf and the lion will feed together,
and a little child shall lead them.
7 The cow and the bear shall graze;
their young shall lie down together;
and the lion shall eat straw like the ox.
8 The nursing child shall play over the hole
of the asp, and the weaned child shall put its
hand on the adder's den.
9 They will not hurt or destroy
on all my holy mountain,
for the earth will be full of the knowledge of the Lord
as the waters cover the sea.

Romans 15: 4-6

4 For whatever was written in former days was written for our instruction, so that by steadfastness and by the encouragement of the scriptures we might have hope. 5 May the God of steadfastness and encouragement grant you to live in harmony with one another, in accordance with Christ Jesus,⁶ so that together you may with one voice glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.



Advent Week 2 : Peace

Say one of the following prayers while lighting two candles:

Option #1 (multi-person household)	Option #2 (single-person household)
Person One: Prepare the way of the Lord. Person Two: Let us prepare for the coming of the Prince of Peace. Person One: At times we despair that the need for peace in the world is so great. Person Two: May you guide our feet into the way of peace and learn to live in harmony. Light candles All: Source of peace, help us to wait with patience and share your gift of peace into the world.	I light the candle of peace, knowing that Jesus is the Prince of Peace. Thank you, God, for the gift of peace in uncertain times.

Conclude this time of prayer by reading a story or singing/listening to a song.

Advent Song Suggestion: All Earth is Waiting

Christmas Carol Suggestion: Hark the Herald Angels Sing



Advent Week 3: Joy

Reflect on Joy:

This week, we light a candle in joy. In Christ, we find joy which runs deeper than a fleeting emotion. In Christ, we find life-giving joy. This is a joy which is not dependent on our success, material gains, or sense of worth. This is a joy that can be held alongside grief and despair. This is a joy that we cannot keep to ourselves. The joy which we wait with during Advent is the joy of the world. It is the fulfillment of God's promise - that God comes into the world through Jesus Christ to redeem all of creation.

Read one or both:

Isaiah 12: 3-6

3 With joy you will draw water from
the wells of salvation.
4 And you will say on that day:
“Give thanks to the Lord;
call on his name;
make known his deeds among the nations;
proclaim that his name is exalted.
5 Sing praises to the Lord, for he has done
gloriously; let this be known in all the earth.
6 Shout aloud and sing for joy, O royal Zion,
for great in your midst is the Holy One of Israel.”

Romans 16: 25-27

25 Now to God who is able to strengthen you
according to my gospel and the proclamation
of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of
the mystery that was kept secret for long
ages²⁶ but is now disclosed and through the
prophetic writings is made known to all the
gentiles, according to the command of the
eternal God, to bring about the obedience of
faith— 27 to the only wise God, through Jesus
Christ, to whom be the glory forever! Amen.



Advent Week 3: Joy

Say one of the following prayers while lighting three candles:

Option #1 (multi-person household)	Option #2 (single-person household)
Person One: Prepare the way of the Lord. Person Two: Let us prepare for the coming of the joy of the world. Person One: Too often we try to find joy in earthly treasures. Person Two: Teach us to turn to your life-giving joy. Light candles All: Source of joy, help us to wait with patience as we are bursting with the joy we have in you.	I light the candle of joy, knowing that my comfort and help comes from God. Thank you, God, for the gift of joy in hard times.

Conclude this time of prayer by reading a story or singing/listening to a song.

Advent Song Suggestion: Come Thou Long Expected Jesus

Christmas Carol Suggestion: Joy to the World!



Advent Week 4: Love

Reflect on Love:

This week, we light a candle in love. During advent we wait for Jesus, the one we call Emmanuel, or God-with-us. Jesus is the embodiment of God's love and compassion - he cared for the most vulnerable, he ate meals with the outcasts. His love for us is ultimately shown up on the cross, where he gave his life on the cross, so that we might have a pathway to freedom. Because we have been loved so deeply by God, we are also able to love others in this way. During advent we wait for the love that comes down to earth - the one who teaches us to love.

Read one or both:

Isaiah 61: 1-4

1 The spirit of the Lord God is upon me
because the Lord has anointed me;
he has sent me to bring good news to the
oppressed,
to bind up the brokenhearted,
to proclaim liberty to the captives
and release to the prisoners,
2 to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor
and the day of vengeance of our God,
to comfort all who mourn,
3 to provide for those who mourn in Zion—
to give them a garland instead of ashes,
the oil of gladness instead of mourning,
the mantle of praise instead of a faint spirit.
They will be called oaks of righteousness,
the planting of the Lord, to display his glory.
4 They shall build up the ancient ruins;
they shall raise up the former devastations;
they shall repair the ruined cities,
the devastations of many generations.

Romans 13: 8-10

8 Owe no one anything, except to love one another, for the one who loves another has fulfilled the law. 9 The commandments, "You shall not commit adultery; you shall not murder; you shall not steal; you shall not covet," and any other commandment, are summed up in this word, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself." 10 Love does no wrong to a neighbor; therefore, love is the fulfilling of the law.



Advent Week 4: Love

Say one of the following prayers while lighting four candles:

Option #1 (multi-person household)	Option #2 (single-person household)
Person One: Prepare the way of the Lord. Person Two: Let us prepare for the love incarnate coming into the world. Person One: At times it can be hard to love our neighbour. Person Two: May God's love be revealed to us through Jesus Christ. Light candles All: Source of love, help us to wait with patience, and love others as you love us.	I light the candle of love, knowing that God is love revealed to us in Jesus Christ. Thank you, God, for the gift of love in a time of loneliness.

Conclude this time of prayer by reading a story or singing/listening to a song.

Advent Song Suggestion: O Come, O Come, Emmanuel

Christmas Carol Suggestion: Silent Night



Christmas Eve or Christmas Day

Reflect on Jesus' Arrival:

Today, we light all the candles. We have waited with anticipation and prepared our hearts to receive the source of hope, peace, joy, and love. Now Christ has arrived. Jesus has come. Let us celebrate and join in together as heaven and nature sing.

Read one or both:

Isaiah 9: 6-7

6 For a child has been born for us,
a son given to us;
authority rests upon his shoulders,
and he is named
Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God,
Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.
7 Great will be his authority,
and there shall be endless peace
for the throne of David and his kingdom.
He will establish and uphold it
with justice and with righteousness
from this time onward and forevermore.

Romans 15: 13

13 May the God of hope fill you with all joy and
peace in believing, so that you may abound in
hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.



Christmas Eve or Christmas Day

Say one of the following prayers while lighting all the candles:

Option #1 (multi-person household)	Option #2 (single-person household)
Person One: Joy to the world, the Lord has come! Person Two: Jesus has been born, God's promise has arrived as a babe in a manger. Light candles All: Source of hope, peace, joy, and love, shine in our lives and in your world with your unending love.	I light this candle because Jesus, light of the world, was born this day. Thank you, God, for the gift of your son. Joy to the world, the saviour reigns.

Conclude this time of prayer by reading a story or singing/listening to a song.

Christmas Carol Suggestions: Go Tell it on the Mountain, The First Noel