

## THE ADVENT WREATH

The brief liturgy described below is to be used when the household gathers, beginning on the first of the four Sundays in Advent and continuing each day of the week.

**THE FIRST WEEK IN ADVENT** Light one blue candle, saying, “I light this candle to remind us that we must prepare our hearts for the coming of the Christ Child.”

**COLLECT:** Almighty God, give us grace to cast away the works of darkness and put on the armor of light, now in the time of this mortal life in which your son, Jesus Christ, came to visit us in great humility; that in the last day, when he shall come again in his glorious majesty to judge both the living and the dead, we may rise to the life immortal; through him who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen. (BCP, page 211)

**Read One Selection Each Day:** Isaiah 9:1-7, Psalm 33:20, Matthew 3:1-3, Isaiah 2:1-5, Isaiah 11:1-10, Matthew 15:29-39, Colossians 3:15

**Read or Sing:** Come, thou long expected Jesus, born to set thy people free; from our fears and sins release us, let us find our rest in thee. Israel’s strength and consolation, hope of all the earth thou art: dear desire of every nation, joy of every longing heart. Born they people to deliver, born a child, and yet a king, born to reign in us for ever, now thy gracious kingdom bring. By thine own eternal Spirit rule in all our hearts alone; by thine all sufficient merit raise us to thy glorious throne.” (Hymn 66)

**Pray:** Let us pray. Dear God, we pray for the hope that is in Christ to come into our lives in a new way. May we become hope that is alive in our world. **Amen.**

### THE SECOND WEEK IN ADVENT

Light two blue candles, saying, “I light these candles to remind us that we must prepare our hearts for the coming of the Christ Child.”

**COLLECT:** Merciful God, who sent your messengers the prophets to preach repentance and prepare the way for our salvation: Give us grace to heed their warnings and forsake our sins, that we may greet with joy the coming of Jesus Christ our Redeemer; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen. (BCP p. 211)

**Read One Selection Each Day:** Matthew 8:5-13, Psalm 85:8-13, Isaiah 35:1-10, Amos 5:18-24, Matthew 18:12-14, Isaiah 40:25-31, Matthew 11:28-30

**Read or Sing:** “On Jordan’s bank the Baptist’s cry announces that the Lord is nigh; awake and hearken, for he brings glad tidings of the King of kings...” (Hymn 76)

**Pray:** Dear Christ, the light of all who love you, help us to make ready for Your birthday by preparing room for you in our hearts. Let no selfishness of ours darken our homes. Let no ill feelings spoil the joy of being together. Draw us closer by showing us how to truly love and serve you. Amen.

### **THE THIRD WEEK IN ADVENT**

Light two blue candles and the rose one saying, "I light these candles to remind us that we must prepare our hearts for the coming of the Christ Child." (The pink candle symbolizes joy in the midst of waiting.)

**COLLECT:** Stir up your power, O Lord, and with great might come among us; and, because we are sorely hindered by our sins, let your bountiful grace and mercy speedily help and deliver us; through Jesus Christ our Lord, to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit, be honor and glory, now and forever. (BCP p. 212)

**Read One Selection Each Day:** Matthew 21:23-27, Psalm 25:3-8, Matthew 21:28-32, Zephaniah 3:1-2, 9-13, Isaiah 45:5-25, Psalm 30, Luke 1:57-66

**Read or Sing:** "The King shall come when morning dawns and light triumphant breaks; when beauty gilds the eastern hills and life to joy awakes. Not, as of old, a little child, to bear, and fight & die, but crowned with glory like the sun that lights the morning sky..." (Hymn 73)

**Pray:** Dear God, we pray for the joy that is found in Jesus, that those who seek it may truly find it. May we celebrate in the joy found in You. Amen.

### **THE FOURTH SUNDAY IN ADVENT**

Light all four candles saying, "I light these candles to remind us that we must prepare our hearts for the coming of the Christ Child."

**COLLECT:** Purify our conscience, Almighty God, by your daily visitation, that your Son Jesus Christ, at His coming, may find in us a mansion prepared for Himself; and forever. Amen. (BCP p. 212)

**Read One Selection Each Day:** Malachi 3:1-5, Luke 1:57-66, Genesis 3:8-15, 2 Samuel 7:1-16, Matthew 1:18-25, Psalm 61, Luke 1:1-25

**Read or sing:** Once he came in blessing, all our ills redressing; came in likeness lowly, Son of God most holy; bore the cross to save us, hope and freedom gave us. Still he comes within us, still his voice would win us from the sins that hurt us, would to Truth convert us: not in torment hold us, but in love enfold us. Thus, if thou canst name him, not ashamed to claim him, but wilt trust him boldly nor dost love him coldly, he will then receive thee, heal thee, and forgive thee. One who thus endureth bright reward secureth. Come, then, O Lord Jesus, from our sins release us; let us here confess thee till in heaven we bless thee." (Hymn 53)

**Pray:** Lord Jesus, the Son of God, our Father, born in a stable among the oxen and sheep because there was no room in the inn; come into our hearts and dwell in them forever. Help us to cast out all that is unworthy of Your Holy Presence. Grant that the peace and good of which the angels sang may shine forth in our lives. Amen.

**A Prayer for Christmas Eve:** Tonight the Advent season ends and we wait no longer. That great event for which we waited has happened: God's promise of a Redeemer is fulfilled. Christ Jesus is born. Lord, you come as a tiny, fragile baby; yet we know that you are God and you are with us. May the flame of these candle remind us that you are the light of the world and that if we follow you, we will never walk in darkness, but will have the true light of life.