

CELEBRATION OF CHRIST'S ARRIVAL • ANTICIPATION OF HIS RETURN •  
PEACE COMPLETE • JOY UNENDING • LOVE EMBODIED • HOPE REALIZED



# ADVENT



Church on the Move

# ADVENT

ENCOUNTERING GOD TOGETHER

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Created by the Church on the Move Spiritual Formation Team

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# WHAT IS ADVENT?

## THE HISTORY OF ADVENT

Christmas has long since gone commercial, hasn't it? When many people think of Advent, they think of plucking chocolates from behind the window of an Advent calendar that counts down the days to Christmas. We have the brilliant holiday marketing minds at *Cadbury* to thank for that: they created the first *chocolate* Advent calendar in 1958.

The word *advent* actually comes from the Latin ***adventus***, which simply means “arrival.” Advent is the coming, the arrival, of the presence of God Himself—*God with us*. For hundreds of years, followers of Jesus from a wide variety of church traditions around the world have set aside the four weeks leading up to Christmas as a meaningful season of **celebration and anticipation**. That's what we're up to here.

## CELEBRATION

In celebration, we remember the earnest expectations and fervent prayers of faithful saints of old who longed for the coming of their Messiah to rescue them from the ravages of sin. Humanity called upon the name of the Lord, and God answered. He **arrived** *living and breathing and walking among us*. Advent is a way to experience their joy as we speak the ancient, Spirit-inspired words of Scripture as a community.

## ANTICIPATION

Advent is something that really *happened*, but Advent *will happen again*. Jesus is coming back. At His first coming, the future kingdom of God burst into the present with Jesus' incarnation, crucifixion, resurrection, and ascension. Because of what Jesus has done, sin and death have been disarmed and we've been invited to walk in a new kind of life. Yet we know our world is not what it will be as we await the reign of our good king. We live in the "already but not yet" of Jesus' kingdom.

During Advent, we give voice to "kingdom come" prayers of our own— looking expectantly for Jesus' return. In that way, this is a season of both **celebration and anticipation**.

For Christians, Christmas is less sentimental than we think. Advent allows us to be honest about what's wrong with our world and to freely celebrate Christmas as good news— King Jesus has come; King Jesus will come again!

## PARTICIPATION

Beginning on the fourth Sunday before Christmas, each of the four weeks of Advent leading up to Christmas Eve will focus on a different theme of celebration and anticipation—**hope, peace, joy, and love**.

Jesus said, "I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and eat with him, and he with Me" (Revelation 3:20). **Encountering God** is not only possible this Christmas season, Jesus said it's a matter of opening the door. Will you make room for His arrival during this season of Advent? He's waiting.



# ABOUT THIS ADVENT GUIDE

If the whole idea of celebrating Advent is new to you, you're in good hands. This book will guide you through weekly Advent Gatherings and a series of **Advent Candle-Lighting Liturgies** (*liturgy* is just a word for a thoughtful order of worship) to do together with your family and friends. This guide will help you make the most of this season with the people you love.

## WEEKLY GATHERINGS

This Christmas season we want you to consider connecting with a few friends or family members once a week (**Sunday evenings** if you can) to enjoy community and encounter God together.

There's a pattern you may have noticed most people tend to fall into during the Christmas season. We spend more, consume more, eat more, and do more in December than any other month of the year.

For this reason, in a season where we want to be the most present with the people around us and the good gifts God has given, we often find ourselves stretched too thin and burnt out. But does it have to be this way? We don't think it does! In fact, we're inviting you to resist that pattern. As the famous Christmas carol proclaims, "*Let every heart prepare Him room.*" Make room for these Advent Gatherings. You won't regret it.

## CANDLE-LIGHTING LITURGIES

This Advent guide will walk you through how to prepare for your gathering, and it will give you step-by-step directions for how to participate in each Advent Candle-Lighting Liturgy in your home. The Advent Candle-Lighting Liturgy itself will take around 20 minutes. The duration of the rest of the gathering is up to you.





# HOW TO PREPARE

For Weekly Gatherings  
With Family and Friends

## Here is what you'll need for Weekly Gatherings & Candle-Lighting Liturgies:

### FRIENDS OR FAMILY

- Friends don't let friends do Advent alone.

### ADVENT CANDLES

- **Traditional**

If a more festive approach suits you, here's what you'll need:

- Advent wreath, your choice of greenery
- A candelabra/candle holders
- Three purple candles (Hope, Peace, and Joy—Weeks 1–3)
- One pink candle (Love—Week 4)
- One larger white candle at the center (Christmas Eve)

- **Non-traditional**

- Any candles will do.
- Add one candle each week leading up to Christmas Eve.

### HOST HOME(S)

- **Find a Host**

- You might offer to host or share the honor of hosting with others.

- **Prepare Food**

- Plan to share a meal together.
- Make it as simple or as extravagant as you like; the point is to be together in celebration and anticipation.

- **Have Fun**

- Play music.
  - We have created an Advent Spotify Playlist for you (search “COTM Advent”).
- Prepare a fun activity for the kids.



# THE THRILL OF HOPE

## CANDLE-LIGHTING LITURGY

*Enjoy yourselves when you gather. Eat. Talk. Laugh. Play. Just be sure to set a time before everyone leaves to take around 20 minutes to walk through this **Advent Candle-Lighting Liturgy** together. You'll read a Psalm together, have a couple of people read scriptures for the group, light a candle, sing a song, and pray together. This guide will walk you through each step.*



# 01

## READ INTRODUCTION

### HOST:

“What kinds of words do we use when we’re looking forward to something in the future? The restaurant we’ve been wanting to try, the trip we’ve been wanting to take, our wedding day or the birth of a child?”

*(Pause for answers.)*

**Hope** is not optional for healthy humans. We need hope to survive. Without hope, we’re stuck in our circumstances and can’t see our way out of the darkness.

Tonight each of us are putting **hope in something**. It could be a new relationship status, something we want to purchase, or someplace we want to be. But true **hope** is different than this. Biblical **hope** is not about getting new things. Biblical **hope** is about **a Person** (Jesus) who makes **us** new. Real **hope** is a new heart with Jesus at the center bringing us new wisdom, new community, and new life.

Tonight, we’re going to explore that kind of hope together in Scripture, prayer, and worship. Let’s begin.”

## 02

## READ A PSALM

### HOST:

“We’ll start by reading the following selections from **Psalm 42** aloud **together**. Let’s read slowly, and let these ancient words be the prayer of our hearts tonight:”

### PARTICIPANTS:

*“As a deer pants for flowing streams,  
so pants my soul for You, O God.*

*My soul thirsts for God, for the living God.  
When shall I come and appear before God?*

*My tears have been my food day and night,  
while they say to me all the day long,  
“Where is your God?”*

*Why are you cast down, O my soul,  
and why are you in turmoil within me?*

### *Hope in God;*

*For I shall again praise Him,  
My salvation and my God.”*

## 03

# CREATE SILENCE

### HOST:

“Now let’s take a few moments to be quiet in God’s presence. Get comfortable. Close your eyes. See yourself offering anything that’s troubling you to God. Allow your thoughts to rest on His care for you.”

*(Take 1–3 minutes. Break the silence with a **short prayer about hope** to conclude this section.)*

04



**READ  
SCRIPTURE**

Choose a child (if available) and another reader for this section.

**HOST:**

“\_\_\_\_\_ & \_\_\_\_\_  
will be reading our next passages  
of Scripture tonight.”

**CHILD (IF AVAILABLE):**

*“The eyes of God  
are on the ones  
who honor Him,  
who find their hope  
in His eternal love.”*

(from **Psalm 33:18**)

**READER:**

“This beautiful prophecy from Isaiah reminds us of the hope God’s people found in expressing their deep longing for their messiah to come:

*‘Nevertheless, there will be no more gloom for those who were in distress. The people walking in darkness have seen a great light; on those living in the land of deep darkness, a light has dawned.*

*You have multiplied the nation; you have increased its joy; they rejoice before you as with joy at the harvest, as they are glad when they divide the spoil.*

*For the yoke of his burden and the staff for his shoulder, the rod of his oppressor, you have broken.*

*For to us a child is born, to us a son is given; He will reign on David’s throne and over his kingdom, establishing and upholding it with justice and righteousness from that time on and forever. The zeal of the Lord Almighty will accomplish this.’*

*This is the Word of God.”*

**PARTICIPANTS:**

*“Thanks be to God!”*



05

## LIGHT THE CANDLE

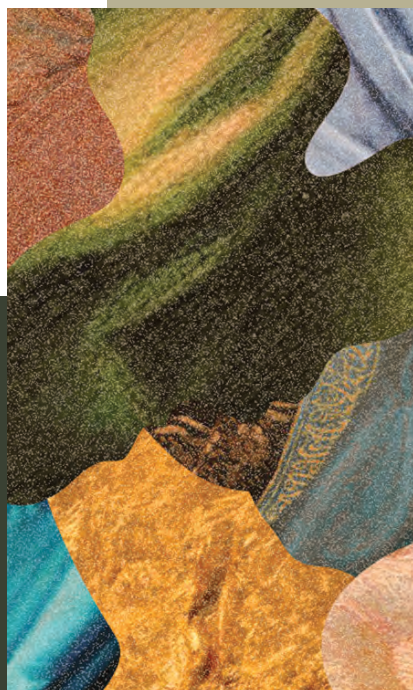
Choose one person (a child if available) to **light the first candle** (purple) and someone to read.

### HOST:

“Tonight \_\_\_\_\_ is going to light our first Advent candle. This is the **hope** candle. The light of this fire represents the spark of hope.

What does this **hope** represent for you tonight?”

*(Pause for responses.)*



**READER:**

“These verses tell us what happened when the light of hope invaded our world through Jesus. One of Jesus’ closest friends poetically described it like this in **John 1:9–14**.

*‘The true light, which gives light to everyone,  
was coming into the world.*

*He was in the world,  
and the world was made through Him,  
yet the world did not know Him.*

*He came to His own,  
and His own people  
did not receive Him.*

*But to all who did receive Him,  
who believed in His name,  
He gave the right to become children  
of God, who were born, not of blood  
nor of the will of the flesh  
nor of the will of man,  
but of God.  
And the Word became flesh  
and dwelt among us,  
and we have seen His glory,  
glory as of the only Son from the Father,  
full of grace and truth.’*

*This is the Word of God.”*

**PARTICIPANTS:**

*“Thanks be to God!”*

## 06

## SING A SONG

**HOST:**

“Let’s sing an old, beautiful Christmas carol. Just like in your car on your morning commute or in the shower when you think no one else is listening, this is a safe space for loud singing, so sing!”

**PARTICIPANTS:*****O HOLY NIGHT***

*O holy night, the stars are brightly shining;  
It is the night of the dear Savior’s birth;*

*Long lay the world in sin and error pining,  
Till He appeared and the soul felt its worth.*

*A thrill of hope the weary soul rejoices,  
For yonder breaks a new and glorious morn;*

*Fall on your knees,  
O hear the angel voices!*

*O night divine, o night when Christ was born  
O night divine, o night, oh night divine.  
A thrill of hope the weary soul rejoices,  
For yonder breaks a new and glorious morn;*

*Fall on your knees,  
O hear the angel voices!*

*O night divine, o night when Christ was born  
O night divine, o night, o night divine.*



07

## PRAY FOR ONE ANOTHER

**HOST:**

“Let’s take a moment to pray for one another. These don’t need to be long, eloquent prayers. But let’s lift one another up by name before God in prayer.”

08

## CONSIDER THE FUTURE

Choose one person from your gathering for the final reading.

**HOST:**

“\_\_\_\_\_ will be doing our final Scripture reading tonight. This one comes to us from the book of Revelation.”

**READER:**

“The purpose of this reading is to turn our hearts from what *has happened* in the coming of Jesus and awaken our hopes for what *will happen* at Jesus’ return. Come quickly, Lord Jesus.

*‘Then the angel showed me the river of the water of life,  
bright as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the  
Lamb through the middle of the street of the city;*

*Also, on either side of the river, the tree of life  
with its twelve kinds of fruit, yielding its fruit each month.  
The leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations.*

*No longer will there be anything accursed,  
but the throne of God and of the Lamb will be in it,  
and His servants will worship Him.  
They will see His face, and His name will be on their foreheads.*

*And night will be no more.*

*They will need no light of lamp or sun,  
**for the Lord God will be their light,**  
and they will reign forever and ever.*

*“And behold, I am coming soon.  
Blessed is the one who keeps the words  
of the prophecy of this book.”*

*This is the Word of the Lord.”*

**PARTICIPANTS:**

*“Thanks be to God forever.”*



09

## FINAL PRAYER

**HOST:**

“Let’s pray.”

*(Pray a closing prayer.)*



10

## PRONOUNCE A FINAL BLESSING

### HOST:

“To end our time together, let’s speak this priestly blessing over each other found in **Numbers 6** that has been spoken over the people of God for the last 3,500 years.”

### HOST (OR A CHILD):

*“Now may the Lord bless you and keep you;  
The Lord make His face to shine upon you and be gracious to you;  
The Lord lift up His countenance upon you and give you peace.”*

[END OF CANDLE-LIGHTING LITURGY]



# WEEKLY JOURNAL

## WEEK ONE | A THRILL OF HOPE

Today's Date:

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What was the highlight of your gathering?

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As you look back on time spent with friends and/or family,  
what are three things you are grateful for in this moment?

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Anything you would like to change for next week?

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# THE PROMISE OF PEACE

## CANDLE-LIGHTING LITURGY

*Enjoy your meal and fellowship together. **Set a time** before everyone leaves to walk through this Advent Candle-Lighting Liturgy together. Before you get started, light the **Hope** candle (the first purple candle).*



# 01

## READ INTRODUCTION

### HOST:

“Last week we started our Advent season talking about the theme of **hope**. This week we’re talking about another big idea connected to the Christmas story, and that’s the idea of **peace**.

Does anyone remember what the angels sang when they appeared to the shepherd boys after Jesus was born? (*Pause for responses.*) That’s right. They said, ‘Glory to God in the highest! **Peace** on earth to those with whom He is pleased.’

At beauty pageants, sometimes contestants are asked, ‘If you had one wish, what would you wish for?’ What do we expect them to answer? ‘World peace,’ of course! Yes, that’s a good answer, but what is **peace** exactly? In the Bible, it’s the word *shalom*, and it does mean an end to war and conflict, but it also means ‘complete’ or ‘whole’— maybe another way to say it is ‘not broken.’

Our world is broken. It’s interesting that the angels said that Jesus, the Messiah, would come to bring **peace**. But how does Jesus *un-break* our world? How does He bring wholeness and completeness to God’s good world? Tonight, we’re going to explore that kind of **peace** together in Scripture, prayer, and worship.”

## 02

## READ A PSALM

### HOST:

“Let’s begin by reading the following selections from **Psalm 23** aloud. Make these ancient words the prayer of your heart tonight.”

### PARTICIPANTS:

*“The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want.  
He makes me lie down in green pastures.  
He leads me beside still waters.  
He restores my soul.  
He leads me in paths of righteousness  
for His name’s sake.*

*Even though I walk through the valley  
of the shadow of death,  
I will fear no evil,  
for You are with me;  
Your rod and Your staff,  
they comfort me.*

*Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me  
all the days of my life,  
and I shall dwell in the house of the Lord forever.”*



## 03

# CREATE SILENCE

**HOST:**

“Now let’s take a few moments to be quiet in God’s presence. Get comfortable. Close your eyes. See yourself offering anything that’s troubling you to God.”

*(Take 1–3 minutes. Break the silence with a **short prayer for peace** to end this section.)*

04



**READ  
SCRIPTURE**

Choose a child (if available) and another reader for this section.

**HOST:**

“\_\_\_\_\_ & \_\_\_\_\_  
will be reading our next passages  
of Scripture tonight.”

**CHILD (IF AVAILABLE):**

*“How beautiful on the mountains  
are the feet of those who bring good news,  
who proclaim peace,  
who proclaim salvation,  
who say to Zion,  
‘Your God reigns!’”*  
(from **Isaiah 52:7**)

**READER:**

“These verses from **Isaiah 53** tell us the ways in which God promises to give us **peace** through Jesus. Listen closely as I read:

*He was despised and rejected by men,  
a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief;  
and as one from whom men hide their faces  
He was despised, and we esteemed Him not.*

*Surely He has borne our griefs  
and carried our sorrows;  
yet we esteemed Him stricken,  
smitten by God, and afflicted.*

*But He was pierced for our transgressions;  
He was crushed for our iniquities;  
upon Him was the chastisement that brought us peace,  
and with His wounds we are healed.’*

*This is the Word of God.”*

**PARTICIPANTS:**

*“Thanks be to God!”*



05

## LIGHT THE CANDLE

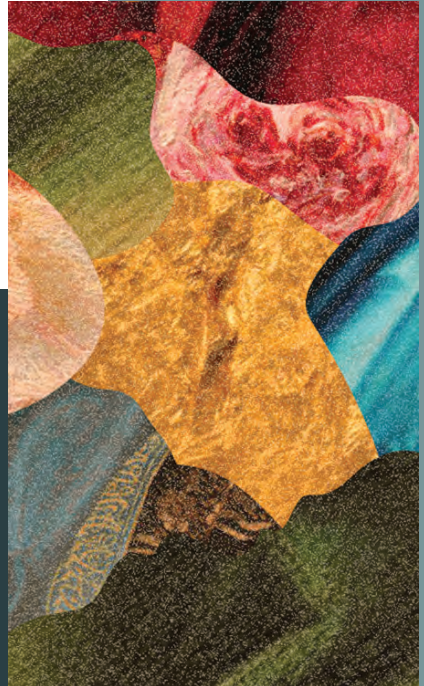
Choose one person (a child if available) to **light the second candle** (purple) and someone to read.

### HOST:

“Tonight \_\_\_\_\_ is going to light our second Advent candle. Last week we lit the **Hope** candle. Tonight we light the **Peace** candle (second purple candle).

Keeping in mind that peace is wholeness in every area of our lives, what would **peace** look like for you right now?”

*(Pause for responses.)*



**READER:**

“This passage also comes from **Isaiah**.  
Listen for the promise of peace as I read:

*‘The people who walked in darkness  
have seen a great light;  
those who dwelt in a land of deep darkness,  
on them has light shone.*

*For to us a child is born,  
to us a son is given;  
and the government shall be upon His shoulder,  
and His name shall be called  
Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God,  
Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.*

*Of the increase of His government and of peace  
there will be no end,  
on the throne of David and over His kingdom,  
to establish it and to uphold it  
with justice and with righteousness  
from this time forth and forevermore.  
The zeal of the Lord of hosts will do this.’”*

## 06

## SING A SONG

**HOST:**

“Okay, it’s time to sing a Christmas carol together. This is a safe space for loud singing, so don’t hold back. Let’s sing.”

**PARTICIPANTS:*****HARK! THE HERALD ANGELS SING***

*Hark! the herald angels sing,  
“Glory to the newborn King;  
Peace on earth, and mercy mild,  
God and sinners reconciled!”*

*Joyful, all ye nations, rise,  
Join the triumph of the skies;  
With the angelic hosts proclaim,  
“Christ is born in Bethlehem!”  
Hark! the herald angels sing,  
“Glory to the newborn King!”*

*Hail the heav’n-born Prince of Peace!  
Hail the Son of Righteousness!  
Light and life to all He brings,  
Ris’n with healing in His wings.  
Mild He lays His glory by,  
Born that man no more may die,  
Born to raise us from the earth,  
Born to give us second birth  
Hark! the herald angels sing  
“Glory to the newborn King!”*



GLORY TO THE NEWBORN KING; PEACE ON EARTH, AND MERCY MILD, GOD AND SINNERS RECONCILED!

07

## PRAY FOR ONE ANOTHER

### HOST:

“Let’s take a moment to pray for one another. These don’t need to be long, eloquent prayers. But let’s lift one another up to God in prayer now.”

08

## CONSIDER THE FUTURE

Choose one person from your gathering for the final reading.

### READER:

“The purpose of this reading is to turn our hearts from what has happened and awaken our hopes for what is to come.

These are the words of Jesus found in **John 14**:

*‘These things I have spoken to you while I am still with you.  
But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name,  
He will teach you all things and bring to your remembrance  
all that I have said to you.*

*Peace I leave with you;  
My peace I give to you.  
Not as the world gives do I give to you.  
Let not your hearts be troubled,  
neither let them be afraid.*

*You heard Me say to you, “I am going away, and I will come to you.”  
And now I have told you before it takes place,  
so that when it does take place you may believe.*

*I will no longer talk much with you,  
for the ruler of this world is coming.  
He has no claim on Me,  
But I do as the Father has commanded Me,  
so that the world may know that I love the Father.  
Rise, let us go from here.’*

*This is the Word of the Lord.”*

**PARTICIPANTS:**

*“Thanks be to God forever.”*

09

## FINAL PRAYER

**HOST:**

“Let’s pray.”

*(Pray a closing prayer.)*



# 10

## PRONOUNCE A FINAL BLESSING

### HOST:

“To end our time together, let’s speak this priestly blessing over each other found in **Numbers 6** that has been spoken over the people of God for the last 3,500 years.”

### HOST (OR A CHILD):

*“Now may the Lord bless you and keep you;  
The Lord make His face to shine upon you and be gracious to you;  
The Lord lift up His countenance upon you and give you peace.”*

[END OF CANDLE-LIGHTING LITURGY]





# WEEKLY JOURNAL

## WEEK TWO | THE PROMISE OF PEACE

Today's Date:

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What was the highlight of your gathering?

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As you look back on time spent with friends and/or family, what are three things you are grateful for at this moment?

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Anything you would like to change for next week?

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# THE ANTICI- PATION OF JOY

## CANDLE-LIGHTING LITURGY

*Enjoy one another's company, but take at least **20 minutes** during your time together to walk through this Advent Candle-Lighting Liturgy. Before you get started, light the **Hope** and **Peace** candles (first two purple candles).*

## 01

READ  
INTRODUCTION

## HOST:

“The Christmas season is generally a happy time, isn’t it? The lights, the colors, the music, the food, the gifts, and the Christmas movies just put us in a good mood. Most of us would say some of our best memories are Christmas memories. Spending time with the people we love and enjoying the good things life has to offer just tend to give us **joy**.

But for some, Christmas is not a happy season. In fact, Christmas can be the loneliest season for some people. All the lights and music and parties remind them of someone they don’t have with them anymore—a spouse, a child, a mother or father, a dear friend. Christmas, for them, may have some good memories, but mostly it makes them sad.

**Joy** is a theme that runs through the whole Bible. Sometimes **joy** is connected to beauty or being with kids or to a glass of wine. But the Bible also talks about a kind of **joy** not based on happy circumstances but based on the promise of God’s presence. In tonight’s Candle-Lighting Liturgy, together we’re going to consider the **anticipation of joy** in God’s promised, yet completely unexpected, arrival in the form of a baby born in the lowliest of places.”



02

## READ A PSALM

HOST:

“Let’s all read the following verses from **Psalm 16** together. Make these ancient words the prayer of your heart tonight.”

PARTICIPANTS:

*“Preserve me, O God, for in You I take refuge.  
I say to the Lord, ‘You are my Lord;  
I have no good apart from You.’*

*The Lord is my chosen portion and my cup; You hold my lot.  
The lines have fallen for me in pleasant places;  
indeed, I have a beautiful inheritance.*

*I bless the Lord who gives me counsel;  
in the night also my heart instructs me.*

*I have set the Lord always before me;  
because He is at my right hand, I shall not be shaken.*

*Therefore my heart is glad, and my whole being rejoices;  
my flesh also dwells secure.*

*For You will not abandon my soul to Sheol,  
or let Your holy one see corruption.*

*You make known to me the path of life;  
in Your presence there is fullness of joy;  
at Your right hand are pleasures forevermore.”*

## 03

# CREATE SILENCE

### HOST:

“Now let’s take a few moments to be quiet in God’s presence. Get comfortable. Close your eyes. See yourself offering anything that’s troubling you to God.”

*(Take 1–3 minutes. Break the silence with a **short prayer about joy** to end this section.)*

04



**READ  
SCRIPTURE**

Choose a child (if available) and another reader for this section.

**HOST:**

“\_\_\_\_\_ & \_\_\_\_\_  
will be reading our next passages  
of Scripture tonight.”

**CHILD (IF AVAILABLE):**

*“Don’t be so sad;  
the joy of the Lord  
is your strength.”*

(from **Nehemiah 8:10**)

**READER:**

“Tonight’s reading comes to us from **Isaiah 12:1–6**.

Let’s listen for the **anticipation of joy** in the coming Messiah.”

*“In that day you will say:  
‘I will praise you, Lord.  
Although you were angry with me,  
your anger has turned away  
and you have comforted me.*

*Surely God is my salvation;  
I will trust and not be afraid.  
The Lord, the Lord Himself, is my strength and my  
defense; He has become my salvation.’*

*With joy you will draw water  
from the wells of salvation.*

*In that day you will say:  
‘Give praise to the Lord, proclaim His name;  
make known among the nations what He has done,  
and proclaim that His name is exalted.*

*Sing to the Lord, for He has done glorious things;  
let this be known to all the world.*

*Shout aloud and sing for joy, people of Zion,  
for great is the Holy One of Israel among you.’*

*This is the Word of God.”*

**PARTICIPANTS:**

*“Thanks be to God!”*



05

## LIGHT THE CANDLE

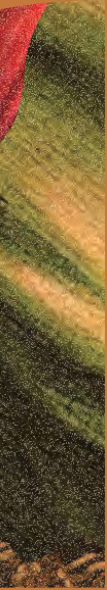
Choose one person (a child if available) to **light the third candle** (purple) and someone to read.

### HOST:

“Tonight \_\_\_\_\_ is going to light our third Advent candle. So far we have lit the **Hope** and **Peace** candles. Tonight we light the **Joy** candle (third purple candle).”

Where do you experience **joy** the most in this season?” *(Pause for responses.)*





**READER:**

“This passage also comes from **John 15:11–15**.  
Listen to what Jesus has to say about how **joy** works.

*‘These things I have spoken to you,  
that My joy may be in you, and that your joy may be full.*

*This is My commandment, that you love  
one another as I have loved you.*

*Greater love has no one than this,  
that someone lay down his life for his friends.  
You are My friends if you do what I command you.*

*No longer do I call you servants,  
for the servant does not know what his master is doing;  
but I have called you friends,  
for all that I have heard from My Father  
I have made known to you.’*

*This is the Word of God.”*

**PARTICIPANTS:**

*“Thanks be to God!”*

# 06

## SING A SONG

### HOST:

“Okay, we’re going to sing “Joy to the World” together. Just like in your car on your morning commute or in the shower when you think no-one else is listening (they are and they love you anyway), this is a safe space for loud singing, so don’t hold back. Let’s sing.”

### PARTICIPANTS:

#### *JOY TO THE WORLD*

*Joy to the world! The Lord is come;  
Let earth receive her King;  
Let ev’ry heart prepare him room,  
And heav’n and nature sing,  
And heav’n and nature sing,  
And heav’n, and heav’n and nature sing.*

*He rules the world with truth and grace,  
And makes the nations prove  
The glories of His righteousness,  
And wonders of His love,  
And wonders of His love,  
And wonders, wonders of His love.*

ROOM. JOY TO THE WORLD! THE LORD IS COME; LET EARTH RECEIVE HER KING; LET EVERY HEART PREPARE HIM



07

## PRAY FOR ONE ANOTHER

### HOST:

“Let’s take a moment to pray for one another. These don’t need to be long, eloquent prayers, but let’s lift one another up to God in prayer now.”

08

## CONSIDER THE FUTURE

Choose one person from your gathering for the final reading.

### READER:

“The purpose of this reading is to turn our hearts from what has happened and awaken our hopes for what is to come.

These are the words of Jesus in **Revelation 21:1–5**:

*‘Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth,  
for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away,  
and the sea was no more.*

*And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem,  
coming down out of heaven from God,  
prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.*

*And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying,  
“Behold, the dwelling place of God is with man.  
He will dwell with them, and they will be His people,  
and God Himself will be with them as their God.*

*He will wipe away every tear from their eyes,  
and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning,  
nor crying, nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away.”  
And He who was seated on the throne said,  
“Behold, I am making all things new.”*

*This is the Word of the Lord.”*

**PARTICIPANTS:**

*“Thanks be to God forever.”*

09

## FINAL PRAYER

**HOST:**

“Let’s pray.”

*(Pray a closing prayer.)*



10

## PRONOUNCE A FINAL BLESSING

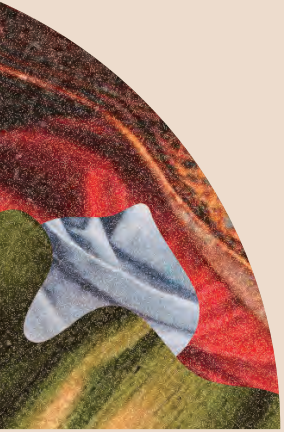
### HOST:

“To end our time together, let’s speak this priestly blessing over each other found in **Numbers 6** that has been spoken over the people of God for the last 3,500 years.”

### HOST (OR A CHILD):

*“Now may the Lord bless you and keep you;  
The Lord make His face to shine upon you and be gracious to you;  
The Lord lift up His countenance upon you and give you peace.”*

[END OF CANDLE-LIGHTING LITURGY]





# WEEKLY JOURNAL

## WEEK THREE | THE ANTICIPATION OF JOY

Today's Date:

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What was the highlight of your gathering?

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As you look back on time spent with friends and/or family,  
what are three things you are grateful for at this moment?

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Anything you would like to change for next week?

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# THE GIVING OF LOVE

## CANDLE-LIGHTING LITURGY

*Enjoy one another's company for a while, just remember to **take 20 minutes** before everyone leaves to walk through this Advent Candle-Lighting Liturgy together. Just before you get started, light the **Hope, Peace, and Joy** candles (all three purple candles).*



# 01

## READ INTRODUCTION

### HOST:

“In this Advent season thus far we have considered the Christmas themes of **Hope**, **Peace**, and **Joy**. Tonight we will light the fourth of our Advent candles (pink candle), the **Love** candle.

Jesus told us **love** is the meaning of life. The greatest commandment, He says, is a commandment to **love**. But there’s a problem. In English, we use the word **love** for a whole lot of things. It’s not a very precise word. We **love** our friends. But we might also **love** a particular sports team. We **love** our family. But we also **love** Netflix™. We **love** God. But we also **love** tacos and ice cream. See the issue? If **love** is the greatest commandment, what does **love** actually mean?

The word **love** in the Bible is often associated with breathtaking acts of trust and sacrifice. In fact, the first time the word **love** is used in the Bible, God puts Abraham’s **love** to the test by asking him to make an unthinkable sacrifice. He says, ‘Take your son, your only son, **whom you love**, and offer him as an offering.’ Of course, we know Abraham passed the test. But the point is that in the Bible, **love** is not just a feeling. **Love** is an act, a sacrifice you make, a gift you give.

Tonight we’re going to explore the theme of the **giving of love.**”

# 02

## READ A PSALM

### HOST:

“Let’s all read the following selection from **Psalm 116** aloud.  
Make these ancient words the prayer of your heart tonight.”

### PARTICIPANTS:

*“I love the Lord,  
because He has heard my voice  
and my pleas for mercy.  
Because He inclined His ear to me,  
therefore I will call on Him as long as I live.*

*Gracious is the Lord, and righteous;  
our God is merciful.  
For you have delivered my soul from death,  
my eyes from tears,  
my feet from stumbling;*

*I will walk before the Lord  
in the land of the living.*

*What shall I render to the Lord  
for all His benefits to me?  
I will lift up the cup of salvation  
and call on the name of the Lord!*

*I will offer to You the sacrifice of thanksgiving  
and call on the name of the Lord.”*

## 03

# CREATE SILENCE

**HOST:**

“Now let’s take a few moments to be quiet in God’s presence. Get comfortable. Close your eyes. See yourself offering anything that’s troubling you to God.”

*(Take 1–3 minutes. Break the silence with a **short prayer about God’s love.**)*

04



**READ  
SCRIPTURE**

Choose a child (if available) and another reader for this section.

**HOST:**

“\_\_\_\_\_ & \_\_\_\_\_  
will be reading our next passages  
of Scripture tonight.”

**CHILD (IF AVAILABLE):**

*“For God so loved the world,  
that He gave His only Son,  
that whoever believes in Him  
should not perish  
but have eternal life.”*  
(from **John 3:16**)

**READER:**

“Tonight’s Scripture reading comes  
to us from **Psalm 13**.

*‘How long, O Lord?  
Will You forget me forever?  
How long will You hide Your face from me?’*

*How long must I take counsel in my soul  
and have sorrow in my heart all the day?  
How long shall my enemy be exalted over me?*

*Consider and answer me, O Lord my God;  
light up my eyes, lest I sleep the sleep of death,  
lest my enemy say, “I have prevailed over him,”  
lest my foes rejoice because I am shaken.*

***But I have trusted in Your steadfast love;  
my heart shall rejoice in Your salvation.***

*I will sing to the Lord,  
because He has dealt bountifully with me.’*

*This is the Word of God.”*

**PARTICIPANTS:**

*“Thanks be to God!”*



05

## LIGHT THE CANDLE

Choose one person (a child if available) to **light the fourth candle** (pink) and someone to read.

### HOST:

“Tonight, \_\_\_\_\_ is going to light our last Advent candle before Christmas Eve. We’ve already lit the candles for **Hope, Peace,** and **Joy.** Tonight we light the **Love** candle.”

In what ways have you received or given **love** this week?”

*(Pause for responses.)*



**READER:**

“This passage comes from **1 John 4:7–12**.

Listen for the biblical definition  
of **love** as I read these verses.

*In this the love of God was made manifest among us,  
that God sent His only Son into the world,  
so that we might live through Him.*

*In this is love,  
not that we have loved God  
but that He loved us and sent His Son  
to be the propitiation for our sins.*

*Beloved, if God so loved us,  
we also ought to love one another.  
No one has ever seen God;  
if we love one another,  
God abides in us  
and His love is perfected in us.’*

*This is the Word of God.”*

**PARTICIPANTS:**

*“Thanks be to God forever.”*

**HOST:**

“Okay, it’s time to sing! Just like in your car on your morning commute or in the shower when you think no-one else is listening, this is a safe space for loud singing, so don’t hold back. Let’s sing.”

**PARTICIPANTS:*****O COME ALL YE FAITHFUL***

*O come, all ye faithful,  
 Joyful and triumphant!  
 O come ye, O come ye to Bethlehem!  
 Come and behold Him,  
 Born the King of angels;  
 O come, let us adore Him,  
 O come, let us adore Him,  
 O come, let us adore Him,  
 Christ, the Lord!*

*Sing, choirs of angels,  
 Sing in exultation,  
 Sing, all ye citizens of heav’n above:  
 Glory to God,  
 all glory in the highest!  
 O come, let us adore Him,  
 O come, let us adore Him,  
 O come let us adore Him,  
 Christ, the Lord!*

*For He alone is worthy,  
 For He alone is worthy,  
 For He alone is worthy,  
 Christ the Lord.*

O COME, ALL YE FAITHFUL, JOYFUL AND TRIUMPHANT!  
O COME YE TO BETHLEHEM! O COME YE, O COME YE,



07

## PRAY FOR ONE ANOTHER

**HOST:**

“Let’s take a moment to pray for one another. These don’t need to be long, eloquent prayers. But let’s lift one another up to God in prayer now.”

08

## CONSIDER THE FUTURE

Choose one person from your gathering for the final reading.

**READER:**

“The purpose of this reading is to turn our hearts from what has happened and awaken our hopes for what is to come.

These are the words of Jesus in **Revelation 5:1–11**.

*“Then I saw in the right hand of Him who was seated on the throne  
a scroll written within and on the back, sealed with seven seals.  
And I saw a mighty angel proclaiming with a loud voice,  
“Who is worthy to open the scroll and break its seals?”*

*And no one in heaven or on earth or under the earth was able to open  
the scroll or to look into it, and I began to weep loudly because no  
one was found worthy to open the scroll or to look into it.*

*And one of the elders said to me, “Weep no more!  
Behold, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David,  
has conquered, so that He can open the scroll and its seven seals.”*

*And when he had taken the scroll, the four living creatures and the  
twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb, each holding a harp,  
and golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints.  
And they sang a new song, saying,*

*“Worthy are You to take the scroll and to open its seals,  
for You were slain, and by Your blood You ransomed people for God  
from every tribe and language and people and nation, and You have  
made them a kingdom and priests to our God, and they shall reign  
on the earth.”*

*This is the Word of God.”*

**PARTICIPANTS:**

*“Thanks be to God forever.”*

09

## FINAL PRAYER

**HOST:**

“Let’s pray.”

*(Pray a closing prayer.)*



10

## PRONOUNCE A FINAL BLESSING

HOST:

“To end our time together, let’s speak this priestly blessing over each other found in **Numbers 6** that has been spoken over the people of God for the last 3,500 years.”

HOST (OR A CHILD):

*“Now may the Lord bless you and keep you;  
The Lord make His face to shine upon you and be gracious to you;  
The Lord lift up His countenance upon you and give you peace.”*

[END OF CANDLE-LIGHTING LITURGY]





# WEEKLY JOURNAL

## WEEK FOUR | THE GIVING OF LOVE

Today's Date:

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What was the highlight of your gathering?

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As you look back on time spent with friends and/or family,  
what are three things you are grateful for at this moment?

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**CHRISTMAS  
EVE**

FINAL GATHERING • FINAL GATHERING • FINAL GATHERING • FINAL GATHERING • FINAL GATHERING

# CANDLE-LIGHTING LITURGY

*This may be the most meaningful Advent gathering of this season. During the past four weeks, you've been celebrating with close family and friends but for Christmas Eve we will be gathering as a church family for the culmination of the Advent season as we light the **Christ** candle together.*

## HOW TO PREPARE

**Plan to join us in person** at one of our three churches to celebrate Christmas together.

If you are unable to join us in person, feel free to gather with your family and reflect on your Advent journey together. How was it meaningful to you and what parts stood out the most?

If you are celebrating from home, prepare your five candles. Thus far we've lit the **Hope, Peace, Joy, and Love** candles. Finally, you will light the Christ candle together (the large white candle in the center of your wreath).

## PRAY FOR YOUR CHURCH FAMILY

As you and your friends and family prepare to join us, pray for all the people that will gather in our churches across the city and all the homes tuning in as the body of Christ is united in celebration, anticipation, and participation in the **Hope, Peace, Joy, and Love** of our Savior.

Stay tuned to Church on the Move's social media pages or **churchonthemove.com** for more details.

## **APPENDIX A**

If you'd like to read the Christmas story from Scripture with family or friends, here are a collection of passages from the Gospels surrounding the birth of Jesus.

### **MARY'S GOOD NEWS**

Luke 1:26–38

### **JOSEPH'S DREAM**

Matthew 1:18–25, Luke 2:1–7

### **SHEPHERDS WORSHIP**

Luke 2:8–20

### **WISE MEN WORSHIP**

Matthew 2:1–12

### **JOSEPH'S WARNING**

Matthew 2:13–23

• CELEBRATION OF CHRIST'S ARRIVAL • ANTICIPATION OF HIS RETURN •  
• JOY UNENDING • PEACE COMPLETE • LOVE EMBODIED • HOPE REALIZED •



# Notes

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