



.Advent.

THE FOUR SUNDAYS OF ADVENT

THIS IS A RESOURCE PROVIDED BY THE
FOURTH EPISCOPAL DISTRICT
CHRISTIAN EDUCATION DEPARTMENT



December 1
.Hope.

FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT

MUSICIAN PLAYING IN THE BACKGROUND

"Come Thou Long- Expected Jesus"

A.M.E. Hymnal #103

READER #1

Advent is a time of the "Preparation of the Coming of the Messiah". It is a season of reflection and retrospect on the greatest gift that was ever given, Jesus the Christ.

The four Sundays leading up to Christmas help us focus our attention on the four pillars of the season: Hope, Peace, Joy, and Love.

The altar is dressed in purple, representing the royalty of the season. Candles are lit to represent the Hope, Peace, Joy, and Love that Christ continuously brings to Earth. Today we begin our journey together as we focus on the HOPE the Christ child brings.

The First Sunday of Advent is: "HOPE"

READER #2

"The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light. For those who lived in a land of deep shadows— light! Sunbursts of light! You repopulated the nation, you expanded its joy. For a child has been born—for us! The gift of a son—for us! He'll take over the running of the world. His name will be: Amazing Counselor, Strong God, Eternal Parent, Prince of Wholeness. His ruling authority will grow, and there'll be no limits to the wholeness this gift brings. He'll rule from the historic David throne over that promised kingdom. He'll put that kingdom on a firm footing and keep it going with fair dealing and right living, beginning now and lasting always.

The zeal of God-of-the-Angel-Armies will do all this."

Isaiah 9:2a-3

MSG

(Pause as the Hope Candle is lit)

READER #2

Unexpected God, your advent alarms us. Wake us from drowsy worship, from the sleep that neglects hope, and the sedative of misdirected frenzy. Awaken us now to your coming, and awaken our senses to the HOPE you bring. Amen

Pastoral Prayer for Hope

Congregational Hymn

"O Little Town of Bethlehem"

A.M.E. Hymnal #109



December 8
.Peace.

SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT

MUSICIAN PLAYING IN THE BACKGROUND

"Let There Be Peace on Earth"

READER #1

Advent is a time of the "Preparation of the Coming of the Messiah". It is a season of reflection and retrospect on the greatest gift that was ever given, Jesus the Christ. Last Sunday we lit the candle of Hope. We relight the candle of Hope reminding us that we are bearers and bringers of hope to the world.

(Pause as the Hope Candle is lit)

We are reminded that we, as children of that light, must let our light shine because we represent:

HOPE FOR OTHERS and
HOPE FOR THE WORLD

READER #2

'The Second Sunday of Advent is: "PEACE"

When we think of peace, we think of calm, pleasantness or quiet.

There is a very special Hebrew word translated called Shalom. This peace, however, does not just mean absence of trouble, or quiet. This peace represents prosperity, and divine favor, independent of our circumstances. It is the peace that passes all understanding. Today we light the Peace candle reminding us of the Shalom that the Christ child brings.

(Pause as the Peace Candle is lit)

There were shepherders camping in the neighborhood. They had set night watches over their sheep. Suddenly, God's angel stood among them and God's glory blazed around them. They were terrified. The angel said, "Don't be afraid. I'm here to announce a great and joyful event that is meant for everybody, worldwide: A Savior has just been born in David's town, a Savior who is Messiah and Master. This is what you're to look for: a baby wrapped in a blanket and lying in a manger."¹³⁻¹⁴ At once the angel was joined by a huge angelic choir singing God's praises: Glory to God in the heavenly heights, Peace to all men and women on earth who please him.

Isaiah 2:8-14

MSG

Pastoral Prayer for Peace

Congregational Hymn

"Let There Be Peace On Earth"



December 15
. Foy.

THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT

MUSICIAN PLAYING IN THE BACKGROUND

"Joy To The World"
A.M.E. Hymnal #120

READER #1

Advent is a time of the "Preparation of the Coming of the Messiah". It is a season of reflection and retrospect on the greatest gift that was ever given, Jesus the Christ. The first Sunday we lit the candle of Hope. Last Sunday we lit the candle of Peace. We relight the candle of Hope and Peace reminding us that everyday we should bring God's Hope and Peace to the world.

(Pause as the Hope & Peace Candles are lit)

READER #2

The Third Sunday of Advent is: "JOY"

And there were shepherds living out in the fields nearby, keeping watch over their flocks at night. An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them, do not be afraid. I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all people. Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is Christ the Lord. This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in strips of cloth and lying in a manger.

Luke 2:8-12

(Pause as the Joy Candle is lit)

The Joy of Jesus the Christ should always abide in us. Biblical joy is different than what most people think of as joy. It is not just a happy emotion that we either feel or don't feel, it is a state of being that finds its source in God. The Bible is clear that joy comes from God and our joy is a product of what God has done and continues to do. This joy I have, the world didn't give it, and the world can't take it away.

Pastoral Prayer for JOY

Congregational Hymn
"Joy To The World" A.M.E. Hymnal #120



December 22
.Love.

FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT

MUSICIAN PLAYING IN THE BACKGROUND

"O Holy Night"
A.M.E. Hymnal #121

READER #1

Advent is a time of the "Preparation of the Coming of the Messiah". It is a season of reflection and retrospect on the greatest gift that was ever given, Jesus the Christ. We began our journey together by lighting the candle of Hope. We know that Jesus is the HOPE for the world. The second Sunday we lit the Candle of Peace. God brings to us the Peace that passes all understanding. Last Sunday we lit the candle of Joy. This Joy we have the world did not give it, and the world can not take it away! As we pause and see the light flicker from each of the flames, let us remember that Jesus is the light of the world. It is in Jesus that we find our hope, peace and joy.

(Pause as the Hope, Peace, and Joy Candles are lit)

READER #2

The Fourth Sunday of Advent is: "LOVE"

The Christ child represents the Love that GOD has for each and every one of us. Not just any kind of Love, but AGAPE which is GOD's unconditional love.

John 3:16 states "For GOD so loved the world, that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish, but have eternal life." We are to receive this LOVE, AGAPE LOVE which is the unconditional divine love from GOD and apply it to everyday living.

(Pause as the Love Candle is lit)

As we reflect on the birth of Christ, let us all be reminded that his birth represents love for all, and his ministry represents GOD's love for the world. Let us also be reminded that as Jesus' disciples, we, the children of faith represent love for the world. Let us remember that holy night that LOVE came to dwell among us.

Pastoral Prayer for LOVE

Congregational Hymn
"O Holy Night"
A.M.E. Hymnal #121

CHRISTMAS SUNDAY READING

MUSICIAN PLAYING IN THE BACKGROUND

"Angels We Have Heard On High"

A.M.E. Hymnal #118

PAUSE AS ALL THE CANDLES ARE LIT

READER #1

Now we come to Christmas Morning, when we celebrate thanksgiving to GOD for the Christ Child:

“This is how the birth of Jesus Christ came about.

His mother Mary was pledged to be married to Joseph, but before they came together, she was found to be with child through the Holy Spirit.

Because Joseph her husband was a righteous

man and did not want to expose her to public disgrace, he had in mind to divorce her quietly. But after he had considered this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said,

‘Joseph son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary home as your wife, because what is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. She will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins.’ All this took place to fulfill what the Lord has said through the prophet: The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel – which means GOD with us.

When Joseph woke up, he did what the angel of the Lord had commanded him and took Mary home as his wife. But he had no union with her until she gave birth to a son. And he gave him the name, Jesus.

Matthew 1:18–25

ALL: The Christ child is here. The Christ child has brought us Hope, Peace, Joy, and Love.

May we continue to be givers of these gifts to all we meet.

Pastoral Christmas Prayer

Congregational Hymn]

"Angels We Have Heard On High"

A.M.E. Hymnal #118



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