

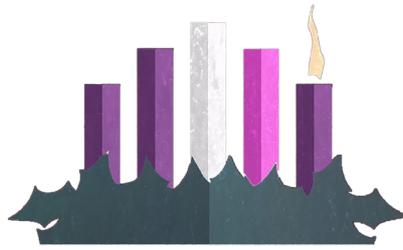


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# Advent Wreath Service

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*St. Mary's Episcopal Church*



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## Hope

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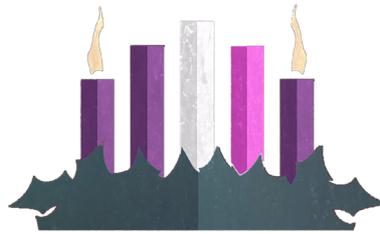
### *The First Sunday in Advent*

**Celebrant:** Today we light the first candle of the Advent wreath. Each candle has a meaning. The first candle is HOPE.

*The candle is lit.*

**Scripture:** We wait in hope for the LORD; he is our help and our shield. **Psalm 33:20**

**Prayer:** Eternal God, as we await the coming of our savior, give the courage to hope. Give grace to see your plans of redemption for our lives, for this community, and for the world. Through Jesus Christ, the source of our redemption and hope. Amen.



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## Peace

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### *The Second Sunday in Advent*

**Celebrant:** Today we light the first and second candles of the Advent wreath. Each candle has a meaning. The first candle is HOPE; the second candle is PEACE.

*The candles are lit.*

**Scripture:** Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as member of one body you were called to peace. **Colossians 3:15**

**Prayer:** Almighty God, you offer rest for our hearts, and peace for our souls. Give us grace to seek peace in our lives, peace in this community, and peace in the world. Through Jesus Christ, the prince of peace. Amen.



## Joy

### *The Third Sunday in Advent*

**Celebrant:** Today we light the first, second, and third candles of the Advent wreath. Each candle has a meaning. The first candle is HOPE; the second candle is PEACE; and the third candle is JOY.

*The candles are lit.*

**Scripture:** You will go out in joy and be led forth in peace; the mountains and hills will burst into song before you, and all the trees of the field will clap their hands. **Isaiah 55:12**

**Prayer:** Gracious God, you came to us in human flesh and you abide with us in the Holy Spirit. Fill us with your joy, and help us shine as a light in the world. Through Jesus Christ, who makes our joy complete. Amen.



## Love

### *The Fourth Sunday in Advent*

**Celebrant:** Today we light the first, second, third and fourth candles of the Advent wreath. Each candle has a meaning. The first candle is HOPE; the second candle is PEACE; the third candle is JOY; and the fourth candle is LOVE.

*The candles are lit.*

**Scripture:** Jesus said to them, I give you a new commandment, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another. **John 13:34**

**Prayer:** Loving God, your mercy and compassion endure forever. Open our hearts, that we may receive your love; and following the example of your Son, spread that love to a love-starved world. Through Jesus Christ, who loved us to the end. Amen.



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# The Christ Candle

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*Christmas Eve or Christmas Day*

This is an addition to the service if desired. Place a large white pillar candle in the center of the wreath to serve as the Christ Candle.

**Celebrant:** Today we light all the candles of the Advent wreath and the Christ Candle. Each candle has a meaning. The first candle is HOPE; the second candle is PEACE; the third candle is JOY; the fourth candle is LOVE. The center candle is the Christ candle.

*The candles are lit.*

**Scripture:** For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace. **Isaiah 9:6**

**Prayer:** O God of hope, peace, joy and love. As Mary and Joseph welcomed you into the world, now help us welcome you into our lives. Give us courage to hope; strength to seek peace. Fill our spirits with joy; and our hearts with love. Through Jesus Christ, the Lord of all. Amen.

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## Conversation Starters

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*for families with young children*

**Week One - HOPE.** The prophets spent years telling people about the hope that God would send a savior to change the world. And He did. Talk about what it feels like to wait in hope and what it feels like to get a gift you've been waiting for.

**Week Two - PEACE.** Being at peace helps us be able to see and feel God's love. Talk about how it feels when people are at peace in your home or at school. This is also a time to share God's peace with others. How might you share that peace this week?

**Week Three - JOY.** There are many different ways to find joy. There is joy in being together, accomplishing a hard task, or helping others. Talk about the different ways you have felt joy this season. What brings you joy in your daily life?

**Week Four - LOVE.** Loving others the way God loves us is no easy task. In fact, it is impossible; but we are still called upon to try every day. Talk about what loving looks like when it is hard, when you don't want to be loving, or what it means making a sacrifice. Discuss what the days before Jesus' birth looked like for Mary and Joseph and the loving sacrifices they had to have made.