

This liturgy has been prepared to be used during the time of Advent, which means 'coming'. It is designed to be used by all ages.



Advent is the time when we prepare to celebrate the coming of God into the world - in the gift of the baby Jesus. Advent wreaths are made in the shape of a circle with greenery and decorations to remind us of God's never-ending love for us.

An idea for a congregation/faith community is to gather together the weekend of the first Sunday of Advent for a wreath-making event. Provide an oasis (available from nursery or craft outlets) for each participating household/group, and give instructions that each group bring along their own greenery/decorations/candles. Before the event, display some examples of how they can be made, to encourage those who may be "artistically challenged," and give

an invitation, with all of the details and items needed, for all to attend. Set up the area (e.g. church hall) with tables and extra greenery/pinecones, etc and have Christmas music playing in the background (or perhaps use this as an opportunity for local musicians to test out their latest Christmas compositions or finds!). The younger children who may be keen to do their own creation can use the centres of the oasis.

When everyone is finished, gather them together and use the litany for Advent One, using various ages; representatives of each wreath-making group light their first candle. On completion, invite the groups to place their wreaths in a central place of the worship centre. On the Sunday, use part of, or the entire litany, during worship, inviting those who made the wreaths to light their first candle, as well as the one that will be used for worship. At the completion of the service, the wreaths are collected and taken home with a copy of the liturgies to be used by households.

Advent One

*Light the first candle -
the candle of hope.*



Voice One: We light the candle of hope. We come, we listen - listen for the voice of the one who gives us hope. Like the whisper of an angel's wings, let us hear the whispered voice of hope.

Voice two: Psalm 65



Voice three: We know that through the promises of God and through the gift of God's son Jesus to us, we are people of hope. I invite you to share with people next to you, a hope that you have for this Christmas. Please share this now.

Voice four: Gentle God, fill us now with your whispered hope. Let us hear your voice reminding us gently of the hope you have given us. In the busyness of the next few weeks, help us to remember the one who came to give us hope.



Help us to not have lives that reflect an unwelcoming inn that has no place for you, but to make room and welcome you each day into our lives. Let us know how to make room for others so that they can also know your voice of welcome and hope. Amen.

Advent Two

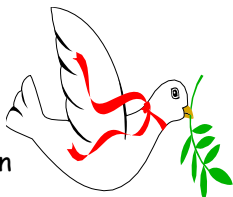
Light the hope candle and the second candle - the candle of peace.



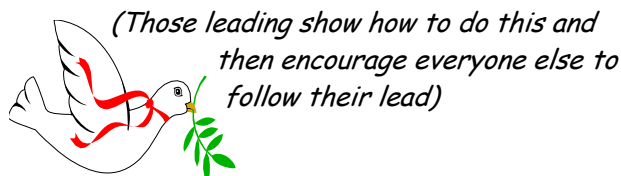
Voice one: We light the candle of peace. The light of Christ has come into our world - the light that brings peace to all people on this earth. A peace that crosses all boundaries, a peace that can be in all situations. The peace of Jesus who brought goodwill to our world.

Voice two: Luke 1:68 -79

Voice three: No person can say that they truly understand the peace of God, but every person can experience it. We can be God's instruments of peace in all that we do.



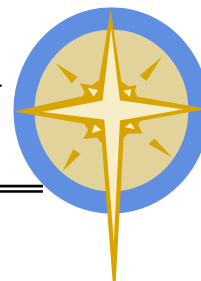
Let's share God's peace with each other now by tracing the sign of the cross on each other's forehead and saying "The peace of God be with you."



(Those leading show how to do this and then encourage everyone else to follow their lead)

Voice four: God of peace, you came into our world not with a loud noise like thunder and lightning, not with a great army or with fireworks, but as a little baby.

This child was the peace-maker for the world. Help us to be peace-makers, and to share the light of Christ in a world that needs to remember at Christmas that you gave us the best gift in the world - the Prince of Peace. Amen.

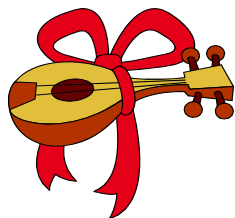


Advent Three

Light the hope & peace candles and the third candle - the candle of joy.



Voice one: We light the candle of joy. Joy to the world, the Lord is come. And we come to share in that joy, and to share with each other the joy that can fill us completely. As we wait in this season of Advent, we think of the times when we have been hurt, or when we have hurt others. Let us be forgiving and sorry, and to replace sadness with joy.



Voice two: Psalm 98:1-8

Voice three: Even when we are experiencing times that are not easy, we can still know God's joy. Let us think of, and pray for people who are sad, lonely, hurting or afraid, that they might be filled with reassurance and a deep sense of joy.

Voice four: Thankyou God that whatever happens in our lives, you are there. Thankyou for the joy that babies bring, and especially for the great joy of baby Jesus. Thankyou that like Mary, Joseph, the shepherds and wise men, we can all know your joy bursting into our lives. We pray that this Christmas, people will dance and sing for joy because they know that you are Lord. Amen.



Advent Four

Light the candles of hope, peace and joy and the fourth candle - the candle of love.



Voice one: We light the candle of love. God loved the world so much, that God gave us the greatest gift of all - God's only Son. This love is with us now and always will be. As we share together, let us share the love that makes us one - and celebrate that we are the community of Christ.

Voice two: Luke 6:27-36.

Voice three: People everywhere are shopping and wrapping gifts and preparing for Christmas Day. God showed us how to love, by giving us the gift of Jesus.

Let's each of us share how someone has been a gift to us - perhaps in something they did, or said, or a smile or hug they gave.



Voice four: There is a song called "Love isn't love till you give it away."

In the silence, think of a way that you and I can be a gift of love this Christmas.

(Silence)

Loving God, we thank you that you love us.

Thank you for people who love us. Help us to share your love with everyone - even when it is not easy to do. May your love live in our hearts and lives for ever. Amen

Christmas Day

Light all of the candles and the Christ candle.

Sing Christmas carols and songs together and be filled with the hope, peace, joy and love on this, the birthday of Jesus.

