

ADVENT  
PRAYER

*Tulsa  
Boiler  
Room*

## Opening Sentence

*The glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together. Isaiah 40:5*

## Confession

*Let us confess our sins against God and our neighbor.*

Most merciful God, we confess that we have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done, and by what we have left undone. We have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. We are truly sorry and we humbly repent. For the sake of your Son Jesus Christ, have mercy on us and forgive us; that we may delight in your will, and walk in your ways, to the glory of your Name. Amen.

*Almighty God have mercy on us, forgive us all our sins through our Lord Jesus Christ, strengthen us in all goodness, and by the power of the Holy Spirit keep us in eternal life. Amen.*

## Hope (Week 1)

Today we begin to celebrate the season of Advent. For four weeks leading up to Christmas we will celebrate the Father's great gift to all mankind of Jesus Christ, and commemorate both the original wait for Jesus' coming and our own wait for Jesus' return.

Advent is both a joyful and a solemn time. Solemn because we wait for his return. Joyful because of the anticipation of Christmas, & Christmas means that Christ has come to us, that he is Emmanuel, that God is with us.

To help us celebrate, we Christians light the candles of the Advent wreath. The candles signify that Jesus is the Light of the World. And each candle reminds us of one of the gifts God gave us through Jesus.

On this first Sunday of Advent, at home and at church, we light the candle of hope. Hope is our assurance that God will finish all He has started. Hope is our confidence that He will do all He has promised. Today we remember the hope we have in Christ.

All the promises of God are fulfilled in Jesus Christ. He is our hope, today and forever. (2 Corinthians 1:20)

Thanks be to God for His indescribable gift. (2 Corinthians 9:15)

### **Peace (Week 2)**

The first week of Advent was the week of Hope. Let us relight that candle as we remember how we both hope for God to fulfill His promises to deliver us, and how we have hope because He has acted by sending Christ.

The second week of Advent is the week of Peace. Our world is a world where conflict and hatred reign. Wars and tension exist everywhere between nations and peoples, between political parties and businesses. Anger and resentment boils between families and neighbors, between supporters of one sports team and those of another, between brothers and sisters, parents and children, husbands and wives, and even inside of our churches and inside of ourselves. It is difficult to look anywhere in our world and not see conflict. But the greatest war, and the one that sparks all the others, is the war that exists between our sin and sinless, holy God.

It was through the Prophets that God first promised Peace to the Israelites, even as they were at war with their neighbors, each other, and God. These Prophets promised that the Lord would send His Peace, but also called the people to give up their sin and follow God so that they might have true Peace.

This week we are reminded that Peace begins with the one who was sent, our Lord, Jesus. It is Jesus who takes away our sin and guilt and provides us peace within, and most importantly, peace with God. It is Jesus who teaches us how to live with others so they may see His peace in us. And it is Jesus who will return and establish His peace over all the Earth.

Let us light the candle of Peace.

It is Jesus who is our Peace.

### **Joy (Week 3)**

The first two weeks of Advent we remembered God's gifts to us of Hope and Peace through His Son. Let us light those candles. This week Christians will light a third candle, the candle of Joy.

Ever since mankind's fall this world has been a sad and hurting place. Sin broke our connection with God, the source of all possible true Joy. Our broken connection and wickedness to each other has stolen both our inward joy and stained our outer happiness. All the world over people seek for happiness and try to get it however they can. Because of sin there is no happiness this world offers that is not tainted with sorrow. While we are in this world our joy is incomplete.

Yet God has sent Joy into the world in the person of His Son Jesus. God is with us. The Lord is come. That is reason enough to have Joy and to share that Joy with the world. But God promises that Christ will come again and He will complete our Joy when He transforms the world at His return. Still, that was not enough for our Lord.

This week we remember how, when God was about to give us the Joy of our Savior, He was not content to only fulfill the longing of the World. He also brought joy to the

lives of Zechariah and Elizabeth and gave them a son, John, when they could not have expected it. God used John to bring joy not only to his parents but to everyone who would listen to his message about Jesus, and even to Jesus himself.

Let us light the candle of Joy.

Praise be to God for filling our lives with Joy, and for giving us His Son, our Joy.

#### **Love (Week 4)**

The first three weeks of Advent we lit candles to remember God's gifts of Hope, Peace, and Joy. This week Christians will light a fourth candle and remember God's gift of Love.

“Whoever does not love does not know God, because God is love.” 1 John 4:8

The World does not know love. What it calls “love” is often mere “desire.” And while Love naturally desires its object, Love, unlike mere desire, does not depart when its object loses its desirability. When something or someone becomes ugly or difficult and costly to have, desire turns away. But in circumstances where mere desire flees, Love remains and gives itself to its object all the more.

We know love because of how Christ Our Lord showed it to us. We have spoiled the good world that our God created, and corrupted its beauty. Because of sin, there is nothing in us that should make Him desire us.

“But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.” Romans 5:8

Our Lord gave Himself to die for us while we were His enemies. That is love. Our Savior humbled himself and came into this world as a servant, as nothing. That is love.

His mother, Mary, and his father, Joseph, chose to submit to and rejoice in God's will when it meant shame and humiliation for them personally. That is love.

Because of what Jesus has done, we know what love is, no matter how unloving this world becomes. But when Jesus returns He will remake the whole world in His image, the image of Love. We pray for Jesus' return so that His Love can rule all things.

### **Versicle and Response**

*Lord, open our lips. And our mouth shall proclaim your praise.*

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit,  
As it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever.  
Amen.

*Our King and Savior now draws near: Come let us adore him.*

### **Venite**

Come let us sing to the Lord;\*  
let us shout for joy to the Rock of our salvation.

Let us come before his presence with thanksgiving\*  
and raise a loud shout to him with psalms.

For the Lord is a great God,\*  
and a great King above all gods.

In his hand are the caverns of the earth,\*  
and the heights of the hills are his also.

The sea is his, for he made it,\*  
and his hands have molded the dry land.

Come, let us bow down, and bend the knee,\*  
and kneel before the Lord our Maker.

For he is our God,

and we are the people of his pasture and the sheep of his hand.\*

Oh, that today you would hearken to his voice!

### **Antiphon**

Our King and Savior now draws near:

Come let us adore him.

### **Psalms**

#### **Week 1**

#### **Psalm 146**

1 Hallelujah! Praise the LORD, O my soul!\*

I will praise the LORD as long as I live;

I will sing praises to my God while I have my being.

2 Put not your trust in rulers, nor in any child of earth,\*  
for there is no help in them.

3 When they breathe their last, they return to earth,\*  
and in that day their thoughts perish.

4 Happy are they who have the God of Jacob for their  
help!\*

whose hope is in the LORD their God;

5 Who made heaven and earth, the seas, and all that is in  
them;\*

who keeps his promise for ever;

6 Who gives justice to those who are oppressed, \*  
and food to those who hunger.

7 The LORD sets the prisoners free;  
the LORD opens the eyes of the blind;\*  
the LORD lifts up those who are bowed down;

8 The LORD loves the righteous;  
the LORD cares for the stranger;\*  
he sustains the orphan and widow,  
but frustrates the way of the wicked.

9 The LORD shall reign for ever,\*  
your God, O Zion, throughout all generations.

Hallelujah!

## **Week 2**

### **Psalm 148**

1 Hallelujah!

Praise the LORD from the heavens;\*  
praise him in the heights.

2 Praise him, all you angels of his;\*  
praise him, all his host.

3 Praise him, sun and moon,\*  
praise him, all you shining stars.

4 Praise him, heaven of heavens,\*  
and you waters above the heavens.

5 Let them praise the Name of the LORD;\*  
for he commanded, and they were created.

6 He made them stand fast for ever and ever;\*  
he gave them a law which shall not pass away.

7 Praise the LORD from the earth,\*

you sea-monsters and all deeps;

8 Fire and hail, snow and fog,\*

tempestuous wind, doing his will;

9 Mountains and all hills,\*

fruit trees and all cedars;

10 Wild beasts and all cattle,\*

creeping things and winged birds;

11 Kings of the earth and all peoples,\*

princes and all rulers of the world;

12 Young men and maidens,\*

old and young together.

13 Let them praise the Name of the LORD,\*

for his Name only is exalted,

his splendor is over earth and heaven.

14 He has raised up strength for his people

and praise for all his loyal servants,\*

the children of Israel, a people who are near him.

Hallelujah!

### **Week 3**

### **Psalm 149**

1 Hallelujah!

Sing to the LORD a new song,\*

sing his praise in the congregation of the faithful.

2 Let Israel rejoice in his Maker;\*  
let the children of Zion be joyful in their King.  
3 Let them praise his Name in the dance;\*  
let them sing praise to him with timbrel and harp.  
4 For the LORD takes pleasure in his people \*  
and adorns the poor with victory.  
5 Let the faithful rejoice in triumph;\*  
let them be joyful on their beds.  
6 Let the praises of God be in their throat \*  
and a two-edged sword in their hand;  
7 To wreak vengeance on the nations\*  
and punishment on the peoples;  
8 To bind their kings in chains\*  
and their nobles with links of iron;  
9 To inflict on them the judgment decreed; \*  
this is glory for all his faithful people.  
Hallelujah!

#### **Week 4**

#### **Psalm 24**

<sup>1</sup> The earth is the LORD'S and all that is in it, \*  
the world and all who dwell therein.

<sup>2</sup> For it is he who founded it upon the seas \*  
and made it firm upon the rivers of the deep.

<sup>3</sup> "Who can ascend the hill of the LORD? \*  
and who can stand in his holy place?"

<sup>4</sup> "Those who have clean hands and a pure heart, \*  
who have not pledged themselves to falsehood,  
nor sworn by what is a fraud.

<sup>5</sup> They shall receive a blessing from the LORD \*  
and a just reward from the God of their salvation."

<sup>6</sup> Such is the generation of those who seek him, \*  
of those who seek your face, O God of Jacob.

<sup>7</sup> Lift up your heads, O gates;  
lift them high, O everlasting doors; \*  
and the King of glory shall come in.

<sup>8</sup> "Who is this King of glory?" \*  
"The LORD, strong and mighty,  
the LORD, mighty in battle."

<sup>9</sup> Lift up your heads, O gates;  
lift them high, O everlasting doors; \*  
and the King of glory shall come in.

<sup>10</sup> "Who is he, this King of glory?" \*  
"The LORD of hosts,  
he is the King of glory."

## **Gloria Patri**

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost  
as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen.

### **Canticle 11: The Third Song of Isaiah:**

**Isaiah 60:1-3, 11a, 14c, 18-19**

#### **Surge, illuminare**

Arise, shine, for your light has come, \*  
and the glory of the Lord has dawned upon you.

For behold, darkness covers the land; \*  
deep gloom enshrouds the peoples.

But over you the Lord will rise, \*  
and his glory will appear upon you.

Nations will stream to your light, \*  
and kings to the brightness of your dawning.

Your gates will always be open; \*  
by day or night they will never be shut.

They will call you, The City of the Lord, \*  
The Zion of the Holy One of Israel.

Violence will no more be heard in your land, \*  
ruin or destruction within your borders.

You will call your walls, Salvation, \*  
and all your portals, Praise.

The sun will no more be your light by day; \*  
by night you will not need the brightness of the moon.

The Lord will be your everlasting light, \*  
and your God will be your glory.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit  
as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be for ever.

# Readings

## Week 1

Ask yourself these questions and keep them in your heart as we listen to these passages from the Word of God.

What are you hoping from God? What does God want to do for you and for the world? What does God want us to hope for in this season of Advent?

### **Genesis 3:8-15**

*8 Then the man and his wife heard the sound of the LORD God as he was walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and they hid from the LORD God among the trees of the garden. 9 But the LORD God called to the man, "Where are you?"*

*10 He answered, "I heard you in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked; so I hid."*

*11 And he said, "Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree that I commanded you not to eat from?"*

*12 The man said, "The woman you put here with me – she gave me some fruit from the tree, and I ate it."*

*13 Then the LORD God said to the woman, "What is this you have done?"*

*The woman said, "The serpent deceived me, and I ate."*

*14 So the LORD God said to the serpent, "Because you have done this,*

*"Cursed are you above all livestock and all wild animals! You will crawl on your belly and you will eat dust all the days of your life.*

*15 And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; he will crush your head, and you will strike his heel."*

### **Isaiah 40:1-11 (NIV)**

*1 Comfort, comfort my people,*

says your God.  
2 Speak tenderly to Jerusalem,  
and proclaim to her  
that her hard service has been completed,  
that her sin has been paid for,  
that she has received from the LORD's hand  
double for all her sins.

3 A voice of one calling:  
"In the wilderness prepare  
the way for the LORD;  
make straight in the desert  
a highway for our God.

4 Every valley shall be raised up,  
every mountain and hill made low;  
the rough ground shall become level,  
the rugged places a plain.

5 And the glory of the LORD will be revealed,  
and all people will see it together.  
For the mouth of the LORD has spoken."

6 A voice says, "Cry out."  
And I said, "What shall I cry?"  
"All people are like grass,  
and all their faithfulness is like the flowers of the field.

7 The grass withers and the flowers fall,  
because the breath of the LORD blows on them.  
Surely the people are grass.

8 The grass withers and the flowers fall,  
but the word of our God endures forever."

9 You who bring good news to Zion,  
go up on a high mountain.  
You who bring good news to Jerusalem,  
lift up your voice with a shout,  
lift it up, do not be afraid;  
say to the towns of Judah,  
"Here is your God!"

10 See, the Sovereign LORD comes with power,

*and he rules with a mighty arm.  
See, his reward is with him,  
and his recompense accompanies him.  
11 He tends his flock like a shepherd:  
He gathers the lambs in his arms  
and carries them close to his heart;  
he gently leads those that have young.*

*The Word of the Lord.*

Thanks be to God.

Now is a time, with the reading in mind and in heart, for us to share with each other: What are you hoping from God? What does God want to do for you and for the world? What does God want us to hope for in this season of Advent?

## **Week 2**

Ask yourself these questions and keep them in your heart as we listen to these passages from the Word of God. What is peace? Where do you need peace? What does God's peace look like for you? What does God's peace look like for the world? How does God want to bring peace in this season of Advent?

### ***Isaiah 9:2-7***

*2 The people walking in darkness  
have seen a great light;  
on those living in the land of deep darkness  
a light has dawned.*

*3 You have enlarged the nation  
and increased their joy;  
they rejoice before you  
as people rejoice at the harvest,  
as warriors rejoice  
when dividing the plunder.*

*4 For as in the day of Midian's defeat,*

*you have shattered  
the yoke that burdens them,  
the bar across their shoulders,  
the rod of their oppressor.*

*5 Every warrior's boot used in battle  
and every garment rolled in blood  
will be destined for burning,  
will be fuel for the fire.*

*6 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, Prince of Peace.*

*7 Of the greatness of his government and peace  
there will be no end.  
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.*

### **Isaiah 11:1-9**

*A shoot will come up from the stump of Jesse;  
from his roots a Branch will bear fruit.*

*2 The Spirit of the LORD will rest on him –  
the Spirit of wisdom and of understanding,  
the Spirit of counsel and of might,  
the Spirit of the knowledge and fear of the LORD –*

*3 and he will delight in the fear of the LORD.*

*He will not judge by what he sees with his eyes,  
or decide by what he hears with his ears;*

*4 but with righteousness he will judge the needy,  
with justice he will give decisions for the poor of the earth.*

*He will strike the earth with the rod of his mouth;  
with the breath of his lips he will slay the wicked.*

*5 Righteousness will be his belt  
and faithfulness the sash around his waist.*

*6 The wolf will live with the lamb,  
the leopard will lie down with the goat,  
the calf and the lion and the yearling together;  
and a little child will lead them.*

*7 The cow will feed with the bear,  
their young will lie down together,  
and the lion will eat straw like the ox.*

*8 The infant will play near the cobra's den,  
and the young child will put its hand into the viper's nest.*

*9 They will neither harm nor destroy  
on all my holy mountain,  
for the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the LORD  
as the waters cover the sea.*

*The Word of the Lord.*

Thanks be to God.

Now is a time, with the reading in mind and in heart, for us to share with each other: What is peace? Where do you need peace? What does God's peace look like for you? What does God's peace look like for the world? How does God want to bring peace in this season of Advent?

### **Week 3**

Ask yourself these questions and keep them in your heart as we listen to these passages from the Word of God. When is a time you felt joy? Is God's joy different from the world's joy? What does the joy God gives look like? How does God want to bring joy to us in this season of Advent?

*Luke 1:5-25, 57-80*

5 In the time of Herod king of Judea there was a priest named Zechariah, who belonged to the priestly division of Abijah; his wife Elizabeth was also a descendant of Aaron. 6 Both of them were righteous in the sight of God, observing all the Lord's commands and decrees blamelessly. 7 But they were childless because Elizabeth was not able to conceive, and they were both very old.

8 Once when Zechariah's division was on duty and he was serving as priest before God, 9 he was chosen by lot, according to the custom of the priesthood, to go into the temple of the Lord and burn incense. 10 And when the time for the burning of incense came, all the assembled worshipers were praying outside.

11 Then an angel of the Lord appeared to him, standing at the right side of the altar of incense. 12 When Zechariah saw him, he was startled and was gripped with fear. 13 But the angel said to him: "Do not be afraid, Zechariah; your prayer has been heard. Your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you are to call him John. 14 He will be a joy and delight to you, and many will rejoice because of his birth, 15 for he will be great in the sight of the Lord. He is never to take wine or other fermented drink, and he will be filled with the Holy Spirit even before he is born. 16 He will bring back many of the people of Israel to the Lord their God. 17 And he will go on before the Lord, in the spirit and power of Elijah, to turn the hearts of the parents to their children and the disobedient to the wisdom of the righteous – to make ready a people prepared for the Lord."

18 Zechariah asked the angel, "How can I be sure of this? I am an old man and my wife is well along in years."

19 The angel said to him, "I am Gabriel. I stand in the presence of God, and I have been sent to speak to you and to tell you this good news. 20 And now you will be silent and not able to speak until the day this happens, because you did not believe my words, which will come true at their appointed time."

21 Meanwhile, the people were waiting for Zechariah and

wondering why he stayed so long in the temple. 22 When he came out, he could not speak to them. They realized he had seen a vision in the temple, for he kept making signs to them but remained unable to speak.

23 When his time of service was completed, he returned home. 24 After this his wife Elizabeth became pregnant and for five months remained in seclusion. 25 "The Lord has done this for me," she said. "In these days he has shown his favor and taken away my disgrace among the people."

57 When it was time for Elizabeth to have her baby, she gave birth to a son. 58 Her neighbors and relatives heard that the Lord had shown her great mercy, and they shared her joy.

59 On the eighth day they came to circumcise the child, and they were going to name him after his father Zechariah, 60 but his mother spoke up and said, "No! He is to be called John."

61 They said to her, "There is no one among your relatives who has that name."

62 Then they made signs to his father, to find out what he would like to name the child. 63 He asked for a writing tablet, and to everyone's astonishment he wrote, "His name is John." 64 Immediately his mouth was opened and his tongue set free, and he began to speak, praising God. 65 All the neighbors were filled with awe, and throughout the hill country of Judea people were talking about all these things. 66 Everyone who heard this wondered about it, asking, "What then is this child going to be?" For the Lord's hand was with him.

67 His father Zechariah was filled with the Holy Spirit and prophesied:

68 "Praise be to the Lord, the God of Israel,  
because he has come to his people and redeemed them.  
69 He has raised up a horn of salvation for us  
in the house of his servant David  
70 (as he said through his holy prophets of long ago),  
71 salvation from our enemies

*and from the hand of all who hate us –  
72 to show mercy to our ancestors  
and to remember his holy covenant,  
73 the oath he swore to our father Abraham:  
74 to rescue us from the hand of our enemies,  
and to enable us to serve him without fear  
75 in holiness and righteousness before him all our days.*

*76 And you, my child, will be called a prophet of the Most High;  
for you will go on before the Lord to prepare the way for him,  
77 to give his people the knowledge of salvation  
through the forgiveness of their sins,  
78 because of the tender mercy of our God,  
by which the rising sun will come to us from heaven  
79 to shine on those living in darkness  
and in the shadow of death,  
to guide our feet into the path of peace.”*

*80 And the child grew and became strong in spirit; and he lived  
in the wilderness until he appeared publicly to Israel.*

*The Word of the Lord.*

Thanks be to God.

Now is a time, with the reading in mind and in heart, for us to share with each other: When is a time you felt joy? Is God's joy different from the world's joy? What does the joy God gives look like? How does God want to bring joy to us in this season of Advent?

#### **Week 4**

Ask yourself these questions and keep them in your heart as we listen to these passages from the Word of God. What does God's love look like? What does responding to God's love look like? Has the cost of love ever stopped you from giving it? How did God show His love to the world? How can we share that love with the world?

**Luke 1:26-56**

26 In the sixth month of Elizabeth's pregnancy, God sent the angel Gabriel to Nazareth, a town in Galilee, 27 to a virgin pledged to be married to a man named Joseph, a descendant of David. The virgin's name was Mary. 28 The angel went to her and said, "Greetings, you who are highly favored! The Lord is with you."

29 Mary was greatly troubled at his words and wondered what kind of greeting this might be. 30 But the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary; you have found favor with God. 31 You will conceive and give birth to a son, and you are to call him Jesus. 32 He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his father David, 33 and he will reign over Jacob's descendants forever; his kingdom will never end."

34 "How will this be," Mary asked the angel, "since I am a virgin?"

35 The angel answered, "The Holy Spirit will come on you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So the holy one to be born will be called the Son of God. 36 Even Elizabeth your relative is going to have a child in her old age, and she who was said to be unable to conceive is in her sixth month. 37 For no word from God will ever fail."

38 "I am the Lord's servant," Mary answered. "May your word to me be fulfilled." Then the angel left her.

39 At that time Mary got ready and hurried to a town in the hill country of Judea, 40 where she entered Zechariah's home and greeted Elizabeth. 41 When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the baby leaped in her womb, and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit. 42 In a loud voice she exclaimed: "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the child you will bear! 43 But why am I so favored, that the mother of my Lord should come to me? 44 As soon as the sound of your greeting reached my ears, the baby in my womb leaped for joy. 45 Blessed is she who has believed that the Lord would fulfill his promises to

her!"

46 And Mary said:

*"My soul glorifies the Lord*

47 *and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior,*

48 *for he has been mindful*

*of the humble state of his servant.*

*From now on all generations will call me blessed,*

49 *for the Mighty One has done great things for me –*

*holy is his name.*

50 *His mercy extends to those who fear him,*

*from generation to generation.*

51 *He has performed mighty deeds with his arm;*

*he has scattered those who are proud in their inmost thoughts.*

52 *He has brought down rulers from their thrones*

*but has lifted up the humble.*

53 *He has filled the hungry with good things*

*but has sent the rich away empty.*

54 *He has helped his servant Israel,*

*remembering to be merciful*

55 *to Abraham and his descendants forever,*

*just as he promised our ancestors."*

56 *Mary stayed with Elizabeth for about three months and then returned home.*

### **Matthew 1:18-25**

18 *This is how the birth of Jesus the Messiah came about: His mother Mary was pledged to be married to Joseph, but before they came together, she was found to be pregnant through the Holy Spirit. 19 Because Joseph her husband was faithful to the law, and yet did not want to expose her to public disgrace, he had in mind to divorce her quietly.*

20 *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. 21 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."*

*22 All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had said through the prophet: 23 "The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel" (which means "God with us").*

*24 When Joseph woke up, he did what the angel of the Lord had commanded him and took Mary home as his wife. 25 But he did not consummate their marriage until she gave birth to a son. And he gave him the name Jesus.*

*The Word of the Lord.*

Thanks be to God.

Now is a time, with the reading in mind and in heart, for us to share with each other: What does God's love look like? What does responding to God's love look like? Has the cost of love ever stopped you from giving it? How did God show His love to the world? How can we share that love with the world?

## Singing of Hymns

### Week 1

#### O come, O come, Emmanuel

O come, O come, Emmanuel,  
and ransom captive Israel,  
that mourns in lonely exile here  
until the Son of God appears.  
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel,  
shall come to thee o Israel!

O come, Thou Wisdom, from on high,  
and order all things far and nigh;

to us the path of knowledge show,  
and teach us in her ways to go.  
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel,  
shall come to thee, o Israel!

O come, o come, Thou Lord of might,  
who to thy tribes on Sinai's height  
in ancient times did give the law,  
in cloud, and majesty, and awe.  
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel,  
shall come to thee, o Israel!

O come, Thou Rod of Jesse's stem,  
from ev'ry foe deliver them  
that trust Thy mighty power to save,  
and give them vict'ry o'er the grave.  
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel,  
shall come to thee, o Israel!

O come, Thou Key of David, come,  
and open wide our heav'nly home,  
make safe the way that leads on high,  
that we no more have cause to sigh.  
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel,  
shall come to thee o Israel!

O come, Thou Dayspring from on high,  
and cheer us by thy drawing nigh;  
disperse the gloomy clouds of night  
and death's dark shadow put to flight.  
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel,  
shall come to thee o Israel!

O come, Desire of the nations, bind  
in one the hearts of all mankind;  
bid every strife and quarrel cease

and fill the world with heaven's peace.  
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel,  
shall come to thee o Israel!

**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 Heaven above!  
Glory to God, 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.

Yea, Lord, we greet thee, born this happy morning;  
Jesus, to thee be glory given!  
Word of the Father, now in flesh appearing!  
O come, let us adore Him,  
O come, let us adore Him,  
O come, let us adore Him,  
Christ the Lord.

**Week 2**

**I Heard the Bells on Christmas Day**

I Heard the Bells on Christmas Day  
Their old familiar carols play,  
And wild and sweet the words repeat

Of peace on earth, good will to men.

I thought how, as the day had come,  
The belfries of all Christendom  
Had rolled along the unbroken song  
Of peace on earth, good will to men.

And in despair I bowed my head:  
"There is no peace on earth," I said,  
"For hate is strong and mocks the song  
Of peace on earth, good will to men."

Then pealed the bells more loud and deep:  
"God is not dead, nor doth he sleep;  
The wrong shall fail, the right prevail,  
With peace on earth, good will to men."

### **It Came Upon a Midnight Clear**

1. It came upon the midnight clear,  
That glorious song of old,  
From angels bending near the earth,  
To touch their harps of gold:  
"Peace on the earth, goodwill to men,  
From heaven's all-gracious King."  
The world in solemn stillness lay,  
To hear the angels sing.

2. Still through the cloven skies they come,  
With peaceful wings unfurled,  
And still their heavenly music floats  
O'er all the weary world;  
Above its sad and lowly plains,  
They bend on hovering wing,  
And ever o'er its Babel sounds  
The blessed angels sing.

3. Yet with the woes of sin and strife  
The world has suffered long;  
Beneath the angel-strain have rolled  
Two thousand years of wrong;  
And man, at war with man, hears not  
The love-song which they bring;  
O hush the noise, ye men of strife,  
And hear the angels sing.

4. And ye, beneath life's crushing load,  
Whose forms are bending low,  
Who toil along the climbing way  
With painful steps and slow,  
Look now! for glad and golden hours  
come swiftly on the wing.  
O rest beside the weary road,  
And hear the angels sing!

5. For lo!, the days are hastening on,  
By prophet bards foretold,  
When with the ever-circling years  
Comes round the age of gold  
When peace shall over all the earth  
Its ancient splendors fling,  
And the whole world give back the song  
Which now the angels sing.

### Week 3

#### God Rest Ye Merry, Gentlemen

God rest ye merry, gentlemen  
Let nothing you dismay  
Remember, Christ, our Saviour  
Was born on Christmas day  
To save us all from Satan's power  
When we were gone astray  
O tidings of comfort and joy,

Comfort and joy  
O tidings of comfort and joy

In Bethlehem, in Israel,  
This blessed Babe was born  
And laid within a manger  
Upon this blessed morn  
The which His Mother Mary  
Did nothing take in scorn  
O tidings of comfort and joy,  
Comfort and joy  
O tidings of comfort and joy

From God our Heavenly Father  
A blessed Angel came;  
And unto certain Shepherds  
Brought tidings of the same:  
How that in Bethlehem was born  
The Son of God by Name.  
O tidings of comfort and joy,  
Comfort and joy  
O tidings of comfort and joy

"Fear not then," said the Angel,  
"Let nothing you affright,  
This day is born a Saviour  
Of a pure Virgin bright,  
To free all those who trust in Him  
From Satan's power and might."  
O tidings of comfort and joy,  
Comfort and joy  
O tidings of comfort and joy

The shepherds at those tidings  
Rejoiced much in mind,  
And left their flocks a-feeding

In tempest, storm and wind:  
And went to Bethlehem straightway  
The Son of God to find.  
O tidings of comfort and joy,  
Comfort and joy  
O tidings of comfort and joy

And when they came to Bethlehem  
Where our dear Saviour lay,  
They found Him in a manger,  
Where oxen feed on hay;  
His Mother Mary kneeling down,  
Unto the Lord did pray.  
O tidings of comfort and joy,  
Comfort and joy  
O tidings of comfort and joy

Now to the Lord sing praises,  
All you within this place,  
And with true love and brotherhood  
Each other now embrace;  
This holy tide of Christmas  
All other doth deface.  
O tidings of comfort and joy,  
Comfort and joy  
O tidings of comfort and joy

### **Joy To the World**

1. Joy to the world! the Lord is come;  
Let earth receive her King;  
Let every heart prepare him room,  
And heaven and nature sing,  
And heaven and nature sing,  
And heaven, and heaven, and nature sing.

2. Joy to the world! the Savior reigns;

Let men their songs employ;  
While fields and floods, rocks, hills, and plains

Repeat the sounding joy,  
Repeat the sounding joy,  
Repeat, repeat the sounding joy.

3. No more let sins and sorrows grow,  
Nor thorns infest the ground;

He comes to make His blessings flow  
Far as the curse is found,  
Far as the curse is found,  
Far as, far as, the curse is found.

4. 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.

#### **Week 4**

#### **Silent Night**

1. Silent night! Holy night!  
All is calm, all is bright,  
Round yon Virgin Mother and Child!  
Holy Infant, so tender and mild,  
Sleep in heavenly peace!  
Sleep in heavenly peace!

2. Silent night! Holy night!  
Shepherds quake at the sight!  
Glories stream from Heaven afar,  
Heavenly Hosts sing Alleluia!  
Christ, the Savior, is born!  
Christ, the Savior, is born!

3. Silent night! Holy night!  
Son of God, loves pure light  
Radiant beams from Thy Holy Face  
With the dawn of redeeming grace,  
Jesus, Lord, at Thy Birth!  
Jesus, Lord, at Thy Birth!

### **What Child is This**

1. What Child is this who, laid to rest  
On Mary's lap is sleeping?  
Whom Angels greet with anthems sweet,  
While shepherds watch are keeping?

This, this is Christ the King,  
Whom shepherds guard and Angels sing;  
Haste, haste, to bring Him laud,  
The Babe, the Son of Mary.

2. Why lies He in such mean estate,  
Where ox and ass are feeding?  
Good Christians, fear, for sinners here  
The silent Word is pleading.

Nails, spear shall pierce Him through,  
The cross be borne for me, for you.  
Hail, hail the Word made flesh,  
The Babe, the Son of Mary.

3. So bring Him incense, gold and myrrh,  
Come peasant, king to own Him;  
The King of kings salvation brings,  
Let loving hearts enthrone Him.

Raise, raise a song on high,  
The virgin sings her lullaby.  
Joy, joy for Christ is born,  
The Babe, the Son of Mary.

# Communion Service

## The Apostle's Creed

I believe in God, the Father almighty,  
creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, his only son, our Lord.

He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit  
and born of the Virgin Mary.

He suffered under Pontius Pilate,  
was crucified, died, and was buried.

He descended to the dead.

On the third day he rose again.

He ascended into heaven,  
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.

He will come again to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit,  
the holy catholic Church,  
the communion of saints,  
the forgiveness of sins,  
the resurrection of the body,  
and the life everlasting. Amen.

## The Lord's Prayer

Our Father, who art in heaven,  
hallowed be thy Name,  
thy kingdom come, thy will be done,  
on earth as it is in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread.

And forgive us our trespasses,  
as we forgive those who trespass against us.

And lead us not into temptation,  
but deliver us from evil.

For thine is the kingdom,  
and the power, and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen.

## **A Prayer of Self-Dedication**

Almighty and eternal God, so draw our hearts to you, so guide our minds, so fill our imaginations, so control our wills, that we may be wholly yours, utterly dedicated unto you; and then use us, we pray you, as you will, and always to your glory and the welfare of your people; through our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Amen.

## **Communion**

Matthew 26:26-28 (ESV)

*26 Now as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and after blessing it broke it and gave it to the disciples, and said, "Take, eat; this is my body." 27 And he took a cup, and when he had given thanks he gave it to them, saying, "Drink of it, all of you, 28 for this is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins.*

*The Word of the Lord.*

Thanks be to God.

## **Collects**

### **First Sunday of Advent**

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 for ever. Amen.

### **Second Sunday of Advent**

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 for ever. Amen.

### **Third Sunday of Advent**

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 for ever. Amen.

### **Fourth Sunday of Advent**

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; who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

## **Final Prayers**

### **Advent Prayer to Jesus**

You are our eternal salvation,  
The unfailing light of the world.  
Light everlasting,  
You are truly our redemption.  
Grieving that the human race was perishing  
through the tempter's power,  
without leaving the heights  
You came to the depths in your loving kindness.  
Readily taking our humanity by Your gracious will,

You saved all earthly creatures, long since lost,  
Restoring joy to the world.

Redeem our souls and bodies, O Christ,  
and so possess us as Your shining dwellings.

By Your first coming, make us righteous;

At your second coming, set us free:

So that, when the world is filled with light

and you judge all things,

We may be clad in spotless robes

and follow in Your steps, O King,

Into the heavenly hall.

*Unknown Author, 10th century*

### **A Prayer Attributed to St. Francis**

Lord, make us instruments of your peace. Where there is hatred, let us sow love; where there is injury, pardon; where there is discord, union; where there is doubt, faith; where there is despair, hope; where there is darkness, light; where there is sadness, joy. Grant that we may not so much seek to be consoled as to console; to be understood as to understand; to be loved as to love. For it is in giving that we receive; it is in pardoning that we are pardoned; and it is in dying that we are born to eternal life. Amen.

### **General Thanksgiving**

Almighty God, Father of all mercies, we your unworthy servants give you humble thanks for all your goodness and loving-kindness to us and to all whom you have made. We bless you for our creation, preservation, and all the blessings of this life; but above all for your immeasurable love in the redemption of the world by our Lord Jesus Christ; for the means of grace, and for the hope of glory. And, we pray, give us such an awareness of your

mercies, that with truly thankful hearts we may show forth your praise, not only with our lips, but in our lives, by giving up our selves to your service, and by walking before you in holiness and righteousness all our days; through Jesus Christ our Lord, to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit, be honor and glory throughout all ages. Amen.

### **A Prayer of St. Chrysostom**

Almighty God, you have given us grace at this time with one accord to make our common supplication to you; and you have promised through your well-beloved Son that when two or three are gathered together in his Name you will be in the midst of them: Fulfill now, O Lord, our desires and petitions as may be best for us; granting us in this world knowledge of your truth, and in the age to come life everlasting. Amen.

### **Benediction**

*Let us bless the Lord.*

Thanks be to God.

*May the God of hope fill us with all joy and peace in believing through the power of the Holy Spirit. Amen.*

Romans 15:13