

# Advent Liturgy

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<http://www.processandfaith.org/resources/worship/Liturgies/Advent%20Candle%20Liturgy.shtml>

## First Sunday of Advent

Candle liturgy

One: The Gospel of John speaks of Christ as the true light coming into the world. In commemoration of that coming, we light candles for the four weeks leading to Christmas and reflect on the coming of Christ. It is significant that the church has always used that language—the *coming* of Christ—because it speaks to a deep truth. Christ *is* coming. Christ is always coming, always entering a troubled world, a wounded heart. And so we light the first candle, the candle of hope, and dare to express our longing for peace, for healing, and the well-being of all creation.

*(First candle is lit. Optional: sing one verse of "O Come, O come Emmanuel")*

**All: Loving God, as we enter this Advent season,  
We open all the dark places in our lives and memories to the healing light of  
Christ.**

**Show us the creative power of hope.  
Prepare our hearts to be transformed by you,  
That we may walk in the light of Christ.**

Benediction/Commission and Blessing

Take time, in the busyness of this season, for quiet reflection—  
For the light of God's love is discernible everywhere.

**We will let ourselves be surprised by wonder,  
And set aside time to offer quiet thanks.**

The good news of Advent is this:

Christ is coming. Christ is always coming.

**We will welcome Christ into our hearts.**

**We will let ourselves be guided by his ministry.**

**We will go forth from this place in hope.**

## Second Sunday of Advent

Candle liturgy

One: Last Sunday we lit the first candle—the candle of hope. Today we light the second candle, the candle of peace. We light it knowing full well that peace is

elusive, and in some parts of the world, it is almost completely absent. Yet in this season of Advent, we trust that God is never absent from us. God is always preparing something new. And even where there is war and discord, whether between countries, within families, or within our own hearts, God is present, gently leading us to new possibilities.

*{Two candles are lit. Optional: sing one verse of "O Come, O come Emmanuel"}*

**All: Loving God, in this time of preparation and planning,  
We thank you for the hope and peace you unfailingly offer us.  
Show us the creative power of hope.  
Teach us the peace that comes from justice.  
Prepare our hearts to be transformed by you,  
That we may walk in the light of Christ.**

Benediction/Commission and Blessing

Take your encouragement from Christ,  
that your joy may be complete.

**We will share in the Spirit;  
We will find consolation in love.**

Practice a ministry of humility and compassion  
For God is at work in you, empowering you

**We will welcome Christ into our hearts.  
We will live worthy of the Gospel.  
We will go forth in hope and in peace.**

### Third Sunday in Advent

Candle liturgy

One: We have lit the first two candles, one for hope and one for peace. Today we light the third candle, the candle of joy. This should be the easy one, because joy is all around us—in the children, the lights, the music, the gathering together. But how often do we let our preparations—or our memories—push joy to the side? Joy is like an underground spring that wells up within us, but joy is also a choice, an attitude. Like a muscle, it needs to be exercised. So today we open ourselves to joy, trusting that God has already planted it in us. All we need to do is give it care and offer it to share.

*{Three candles are lit. Optional: sing one verse of "O Come, O come Emmanuel"}*

**All: Loving God, we open ourselves to you,  
trusting that this is how you made us:  
you created us for joy-filled hearts and lives.**

Show us the creative power of hope.  
Teach us the peace that comes from justice.  
Fill us with the kind of joy that cannot be contained, but must be shared.  
Prepare our hearts to be transformed by you,  
That we may walk in the light of Christ. Amen.

Benediction/Commission and Blessing

Rejoice in God always, and again I say, rejoice  
For God has created you with the capacity for joy.  
**We will find what makes us joyful,  
And make that our gift to the world.**  
Trust in God's good will for all of creation  
and open yourself to God's gentle, transforming love.  
**We will welcome new possibilities in our lives.  
We will offer ourselves to God's goodness.  
We will go forth in hope, and peace, and joy.**

**Fourth Sunday in Advent**

Candle liturgy

One: We have lit three candles—for hope, for peace, and for joy. Today we light the fourth candle—the candle of love. With this flame we signify the love of God that surrounds and fills us at all times, but that we recognize in a special way in the Christmas story. There is no greater power than love. It is stronger than rulers and empires, stronger than grief or despair, stronger even than death. We love, because God loves us.

*(Four candles are lit. Optional: sing one verse of "O Come, O come Emmanuel")*

**All: Loving God, we open ourselves to you this Christmas season.  
As these candles are lit, light our lives with your imagination.  
Show us the creative power of hope.  
Teach us the peace that comes from justice.  
Fill us with the kind of joy that cannot be contained, but must be shared.  
Magnify your love within us.  
Prepare our hearts to be transformed by you,  
That we may walk in the light of Christ. Amen.**

Benediction/Commission and Blessing

Depart in peace, and take with you the certain knowledge  
That God is always coming into the world.  
**We will seek God, not in a long ago stable or ancient manger,**

**But in the people we meet and the depths of our own hearts.**

May the blessing of Christmas make you a blessing to others;

May the peace of the season pervade all that you do.

**We will welcome the challenge of discipleship.**

**We will offer ourselves as God's ministers.**

**We will go forth in hope, peace, joy, and love.**

## Christmas Eve

Candle liturgy

One: Hope, peace, joy, and love. Four candles, four promises continually offered to us by God, and all of them manifest in this one we light tonight: the Christ candle. In Christ we find the hope of transformation, the peace that follows justice, the joy of self-fulfillment in community, and the love that encompasses us in all our diversity, empowering us to make our own unique contribution to this world. In Christ we find light and life, and the courage to be like him, answering his call and following in his footsteps.

*[All candles are lit.]*

**All: We rejoice in God's steadfast presence in our lives,  
and in God's unique presence in the life of Jesus of Nazareth—  
born of Mary, growing through childhood into an adult ministry,  
in all his life manifesting the peace, love, and justice of God;  
his voice undimmed by the centuries  
his call and his promise as clear to us as it was to his disciples so long ago.  
Come to us, Lord Jesus,  
Be born in us this night, in our hearts, our minds, our lives.  
May the light of your life be kindled in us,  
And lead us to the shining truth,  
of God with us, God for us, God in us. Amen.**