

Lighting the Candles

A Simple Form for Household Prayer in the Seasons of Advent and Christmas

Make the seasons of Advent and Christmas a meaningful time in your home, using some of the ideas that follow.

Purchase or make an Advent wreath. Use blue candles for the Sundays and weeks of Advent. Replace the blue candles with new white candles on Christmas Eve. Add white votive candles in the center or around the outside of the wreath during the twelve days of Christmas (beginning on Christmas Day). Or remove the Advent wreath on Christmas Eve and create a circle of white votive candles, adding one candle each day until Epiphany (January 6). Prayers to accompany the candle lighting are provided on this page. Make plans to gather daily, beginning on the first Sunday of Advent, for a time to reflect upon the gift of love God shared with all people. Continue this gathering throughout the twelve days of Christmas. Decide what kinds of things your daily gathering will include. Decide on a time, such as morning, evening, or mealtime, to meet. Suggested table prayers are provided here for gatherings that take place at mealtime. Decide who will light and snuff out the candles. Daily scripture readings drawn from year B of the Revised Common Lectionary and the Daily Lectionary prepared by the Consultation on Common Texts are listed on the next page. After the reading each day, take time to think about or discuss the passage, as well as any feelings or experiences that relate to the scripture reading. Reflections may also take the form of an art response (drawing, clay, painting) or journaling. Sing or read the words to an Advent or Christmas hymn and reflect upon the significance those words have for your life. Some hymns from Evangelical Lutheran Worship are suggested below under the "Hymns" heading.

PRAYERS TO ACCOMPANY THE CANDLE LIGHTING

Week 1

Lord Jesus, we do not lack any spiritual gift as we wait for your coming. Keep us awake and help us use our gifts to serve those who look for the dawn of your justice and mercy. Amen.

Week 2

God our shepherd, gather us as lambs in your arms. Forgive our sins so that we may rejoice in your coming. Amen.

Week 3

Lord Jesus, you continue to do great things for us. Give us your gift of peace as we await your coming. Amen.

Week 4

God our Savior, nothing is impossible for you. Prepare our hearts to rejoice in your glorious advent. Amen.

Week 5

Lord God, may your Word become flesh through our lives so that we may see him in the fullness of his glory. Amen.

TABLE PRAYERS

Week 1

Come, Lord Jesus, be our guest; let these gifts to us be blest.

Keep us ever in your sight; be our joy, our hearts' delight. Amen.

Week 2

Come, Lord Jesus, be our guest; let these gifts to us be blest.

May there be a goodly share on every table everywhere. Amen.

Week 3

Come, Lord Jesus, be our guest; let these gifts to us be blest.

Guide us on the servant's way; lead us to your dawning day. Amen.

Week 4

Come, Lord Jesus, be our guest; let these gifts to us be blest.

Deep within us come to dwell that we might all your goodness tell. Amen.

Week 5

Come, Lord Jesus, be our guest; let these gifts to us be blest.

Every day your praise we sing; help us shine the light you bring. Amen.

DAILY BIBLE READINGS FOR ADVENT AND CHRISTMAS 2017–2018

Week 1

Sunday, December 3: Isaiah 64:1-9

Monday, December 4: Psalm 80:1-7

Tuesday, December 5: 1 Corinthians 1:3-9

Wednesday, December 6: Mark 13:24-37

Thursday, December 7: Psalm 85:8-13

Friday, December 8: Jeremiah 1:4-10

Saturday, December 9: Ezekiel 36:24-28

Week 2

Sunday, December 10: Mark 1:1-8

Monday, December 11: Isaiah 40:1-11

Tuesday, December 12: Psalm 27

Wednesday, December 13: Luke 1:5-17

Thursday, December 14: Habakkuk 2:1-4

Friday, December 15: Philippians 3:12-16

Saturday, December 16: John 1:6-8, 19-28

Week 3

Sunday, December 17: Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11

Monday, December 18: Psalm 126

Tuesday, December 19: 1 Thessalonians 5:16-24

Wednesday, December 20: Psalm 89:1-4, 19-26

Thursday, December 21: Luke 1:26-38

Friday, December 22: Luke 1:39-45

Saturday, December 23: Luke 1:46-55

Week 4

Sunday, December 24: Luke 2:1-20

Monday, December 25: John 1:1-14

Tuesday, December 26: Psalm 148

Wednesday, December 27: 1 John 1:1-9

Thursday, December 28: Jeremiah 31:15-17

Friday, December 29: Isaiah 49:5-15

Saturday, December 30: Psalm 148

Week 5

Sunday, December 31: Isaiah 61:10—62:3

Monday, January 1: Galatians 4:4-7

Tuesday, January 2: Luke 2:22-40

Wednesday, January 3: Psalm 110

Thursday, January 4: Isaiah 60:1-6

Friday, January 5: Psalm 72:1-7, 10-14

Saturday, January 6: Matthew 2:1-12

HYMNS

Advent

Come now, O Prince of peace ELW 247

Come, thou long-expected Jesus ELW 254

Hark, the glad sound! ELW 239

He came down ELW 253

Joy to the world ELW 267

Light one candle to watch for Messiah ELW 240

O come, O come, Emmanuel ELW 257

Savior of the nations, come ELW 263

Wait for the Lord ELW 262

Christmas

Angels we have heard on high ELW 289

Away in a manger ELW 277/278

Go tell it on the mountain ELW 290

Hark! The herald angels sing ELW 270

Infant holy, infant lowly ELW 276

Jesus, what a wonderful child ELW 297

O little town of Bethlehem ELW 279

The first Noel ELW 300

'Twas in the moon of wintertime ELW 284

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