

**Reader 2:** The fourth candle helps us to remember that God is love. (*The fourth candle is lit.*) The Bible tells us that it is because God loved the world so much that Jesus came. Mary sings her song in praise of God's love and goodness. Because God loves us, we must love and care for others. Jesus came to show us how to love.

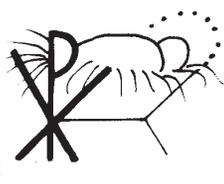
**Reader 1:** We are Jesus' disciples in the world today. Jesus came to show us God's way of love. This candle reminds us that God loves us, and that we must show that love by loving one another.

**(All) Prayer:** Thank you, God, for loving us and for sending us Jesus to teach us about your love. As we prepare for Christ's coming, strengthen us to love others as you love us.

**Hymn:** "This Joy" #50 *Sunshine Songbook*  
\* substitute "love" for the word "joy"

## Christmas Day / Eve

# THE CHRIST CANDLE



**Reader 1:** This is the last time this year we will light the Advent candles.  
(*The four candles are re-lit.*)

**Reader 2:** For four weeks the candles have been burning as we thought about hope, peace, joy, and love. These are the gifts which Jesus brought to us that first Christmas long ago, and offers to us today. The waiting is over and Jesus is born.

**Reader 1:** Each week another candle glowed, and our wreath shone more brightly. Today/Tonight we light our white candle, the candle which represents Jesus. It is at the centre of our wreath, just as Jesus is the centre of our lives. Happy Birthday, Jesus! (*They light the Christ candle together.*)

**(All) Prayer:**  
God, our hearts sing with joy and praise because of Jesus.  
At this happy season, we rejoice that Jesus came among us.  
By his birth and life  
he has shown us that we are your people  
and that we are greatly loved.  
Help us to remember Christmas all year long  
by giving to others the gifts of life:  
hope, peace, joy, love,  
kindness and understanding. Amen.

**Hymn:** "Joy to the World"



## Candlelighting Liturgy to Accompany the Advent Wreath

*The First Sunday of Advent*

# HOPE



**ADVENT**  
HOPE  
PEACE  
JOY  
LOVE

**Reader 1:** Today is the first Sunday in the season of Advent. Advent means "coming," and in this season we prepare for Jesus' coming. One of the ways we can celebrate Advent is by making an Advent wreath and lighting its candles.

**Reader 2:** The Advent wreath includes many symbols. The wreath is in the shape of a circle, with no beginning and no ending, and its branches are made from evergreen boughs, reminding us that there is no beginning and no ending to God, and that God's love and caring for us never ends. The four coloured candles help us count down the four Sundays to Christmas. With each successive week an additional candle is lit culminating on Christmas Eve/Day, when the full brightness of all the candles burn to remind us that Jesus has come and is leading us forth to be light for the world. Today we light the first candle, the candle of hope. (*The first blue/purple candle is lit.*)

**Reader 1:** The people of Israel heard of God's promises through the prophets. The prophet Jeremiah spoke words of hope to Israel. He proclaimed the coming of a leader through whom God's promise of Shalom would be fulfilled. We, too, hope and pray for a world of peace and harmony.

**Reader 2:** Hope is like a light shining in a dark place. As we light this candle, we celebrate the hope of Israel, and the hope that we have in Jesus Christ.

**(All) Prayer:** Thank you, God, for the light of hope. As we prepare for Christ's coming, help us to share our hope with others.

**Hymn:** "This Joy" (verse 1) #50 *Sunshine Songbook*  
*The song works well for the four weeks of Advent, substituting the words hope, peace, joy and love for the word "joy."*

## The Second Sunday of Advent

# PEACE



**Reader 1:** Last Sunday, we lit the first candle in our Advent wreath, the candle of hope. Let us light it again, remembering that the light of hope shines for us in the darkness. *(The first candle is re-lit.)*

**Reader 2:** Peace is one of God's gifts to us. John the Baptist was a prophet calling the people of Israel to repent, to find peace with God. John called them to "Prepare the way of the Lord, make straight paths for him."

**Reader 1:** There are valleys, the way is rough, the road is often crooked. There are many places in our world where there is war and unrest, violence and fear. The world is not how God intends it to be.

**Reader 2:** We light this second candle to remind us of Jesus, the Prince of Peace, and our longing for peace in the world. *(The second blue/purple candle is lit.)*

**(All) Prayer:** Thank you, God, for the light of peace. As we prepare for Christ's coming, help us to share our peace with others.

**Hymn:** "This Joy" #50 *Sunshine Songbook*  
\* substitute "peace" for the word "joy"

## The Third Sunday of Advent

# JOY



*(The first two candles in the Advent Wreath are re-lit.)*

**Reader 1:** We have lit again the two candles in our Advent wreath, to remind us of God's gifts of hope and peace. Today we will light the third candle, the one representing joy.

**Reader 2:** As we wait for Christmas, the birth of Jesus, we look forward to the joyful celebrations we will share with those we love. The prophet Zephaniah calls us to shout for joy, because God will gather together all people and renew them in love.

**Reader 1:** When Jesus was born in Bethlehem, the angel told the shepherds not to be afraid for they brought "good news of a great joy, which shall be to all people." The good news of Jesus' birth and the promise of Shalom are still "tidings of great joy" for us today.

**Reader 2:** The third candle reminds us of our joy in Jesus Christ. *(The third, pink candle, is lit.)*

**(All) Prayer:** Thank you, God, for your promise of joy. As we prepare for Christ's coming, help us to recognize the moments of joy in our lives and to live joyfully so that others may come see the joy that comes from following in your way.

**Hymn:** "This Joy" #50 *Sunshine Songbook*

## The Fourth Sunday of Advent

# LOVE



**Reader 1:** Today we will light the fourth candle in our Advent wreath, the candle reminding us of God's gift of love. Before we do that, let us remember the gifts of God symbolized by the other candles in the wreath: the light of hope, the light of peace, and the light of joy. *(Two blue/purple candles and one pink candle in the Advent Wreath are re-lit.)*