

Instructions for Advent Candlelighters 2023

Thank you for being willing to participate! There will be a 'lighter' upfront. Please keep it up before the service begins so that you have it ready. You will immediately follow the Welcome.

You will read all the text below for your week. The **bold** just indicates where the congregation will join you in speaking.

***Please bring your copy of the liturgy with you. We are NOT printing your part in the bulletins, just the congregational prayer.

Thank you!

First Sunday of Advent

December 3

- A. In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth and set lights in the sky — sun and moon and stars. By these stars, our ancestors charted their journeys. By these stars, they knew God was with them.
- B. Today we light one candle to bring the fire of the stars down from heaven to earth, to nestle among the greens.
- C. We name this candle Hope. (*Light the candle.*)
- D. We, too, are on a journey, and we do not always know the way. But we chart our path by the star of hope. Even when better days seem very far away, and the weight of the world seems to crush your promises, we set our face steadily towards the light. E. Listen now to the prayer of an ancient poet: “For God alone, my soul waits in silence, for my hope is from him. God alone is my rock and my salvation, my fortress; I shall not be shaken. On God rests my deliverance and my honor; my mighty rock, my refuge is in God. Trust in him at all times, O people; pour out your heart before him; God is a refuge for us” (*Psalm 67:5-8*).

Let us pray:

Lord Jesus, as we search for signs of hope this week, help us to become the signs of hope that others are searching for. As these candles are but a glimpse of the light of the heavens, help us to be a glimpse of heaven’s hope. Amen.

Second Sunday of Advent

December 10

- A. In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth and set lights in the sky — sun and moon and stars. By these stars, our ancestors charted their journeys. By these stars, they knew God was with them.
- B. Today we light two candles to bring the fire of the stars down from heaven to earth, to nestle among the greens.
- C. We name this candle Hope. (*Light the first candle.*) We name this candle Peace. (*Light the second candle.*)
- D. We, too, are on a journey, and we do not always know the way. But we chart our path by the star of peace. Even when violence and fear are raging, and peace seems like a pipedream, we set our faces steadily towards the light.
- E. Listen now to the plea of the apostle Paul: “Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus” (*Philippians 4:6-7*).

Let us pray:

Lord Jesus, as we search for signs of peace this week, help us to *become* the signs of peace that others are searching for. As these candles are but a glimpse of the light of the heavens, help us to be a glimpse of heaven’s peace. Amen.

Third Sunday of Advent

December 17

- A. In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth and set lights in the sky — sun and moon and stars. By these stars, our ancestors charted their journeys. By these stars, they knew God was with them.
- B. Today we light two candles to bring the fire of the stars down from heaven to earth, to nestle among the greens.
- C. We name this candle Hope. (*Light the first candle.*) We name this candle Peace. (*Light the second candle.*)
- D. We, too, are on a journey, and we do not always know the way. But we chart our path by the star of peace. Even when violence and fear are raging, and peace seems like a pipedream, we set our faces steadily towards the light.
- E. Listen now to the plea of the apostle Paul: “Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus” (*Philippians 4:6-7*).

Let us pray:

Lord Jesus, as we search for signs of joy this week, help us to *become* the signs of joy that others are searching for. As these candles are but a glimpse of the light of the heavens, help us to be a glimpse of heaven’s joy. Amen.

Fourth Sunday of Advent

December 24

- A. In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth and set lights in the sky — sun and moon and stars. By these stars, our ancestors charted their journeys. By these stars, they knew God was with them.
- B. Today we light four candles to bring the fire of the stars down from heaven to earth, to nestle among the greens.
- C. We name this candle Hope. (*Light the first candle.*) We name this candle Peace. (*Light the second candle.*) We name this candle Joy. (*Light the third candle.*) We name this candle Love. (*Light the fourth candle.*)
- D. We, too, are on a journey, and we do not always know the way. But we chart our path by the star of love. Even when sharp words rattle in our ears, and our hearts sit cold and numb,
we set our faces steadily towards the light.
- E. Listen now to the wisdom of the early Christians:
“Beloved, let us love one another, because love is from God; everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. Whoever does not love does not know God, for God is love. God’s love was revealed among us in this way: God sent his only Son into the world so that we might live through him. In this is love, not that we loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the atoning sacrifice for our sins. Beloved, since God loved us so much, we also ought to love one another. No one has ever seen God; if we love one another, God abides in us, and his love is perfected in us” (*1 John 4:7-12*).

Let us pray:

Lord Jesus, as we search for signs of love this week, help us to *become* the signs of love that others are searching for. As these candles are but a glimpse of the light of the heavens, help us to be a glimpse of heaven’s love. Amen.