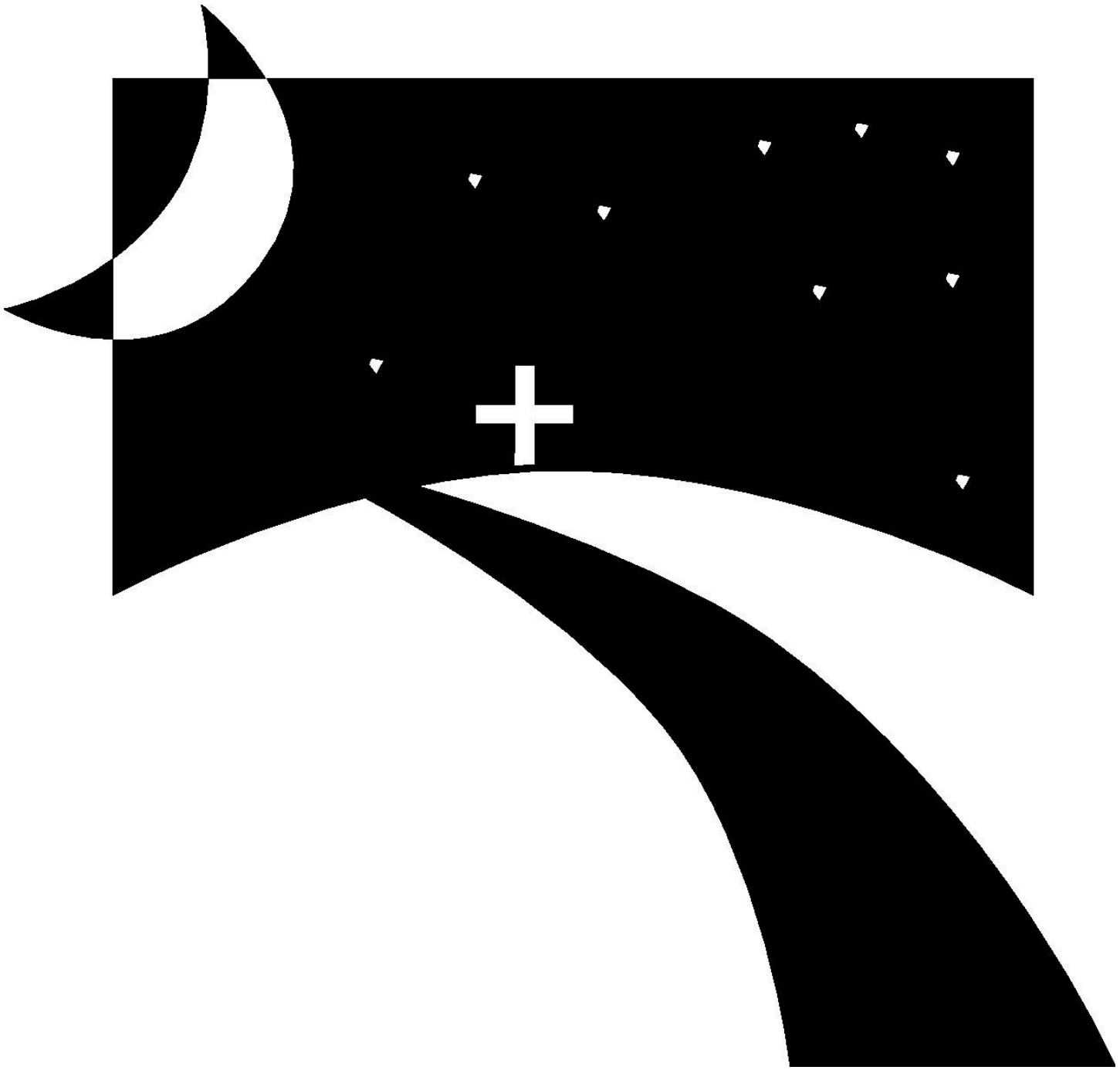


The Journey of Advent

at

Joy in Christ Lutheran Church

The lighting of the Advent candles

Week 1: The first candle on the Advent wreath represents HOPE – the first weekend of Advent not only leads us to anticipate the birth of Christ but celebrate the beginning of a new liturgical season as well. Sometimes called the "Prophecy Candle," the first candle harkens us back to Israel's foretelling of the birth of Christ and all the promises God gave us in the Old Testament that would be fulfilled by the birth of Jesus.

Week 2: The second candle on the Advent wreath represents PEACE. Often called the "Bethlehem Candle," this candle reminds us of Mary and Joseph's journey from Nazareth to Bethlehem before Mary gave birth to Jesus. It also builds on the meaning of the Prophecy Candle, recalling that after the division, destruction, and dispersion of the kingdom in the Old Testament, there might finally be peace on Earth.

Week 3: The third candle of Advent symbolizes JOY. As we continue to approach Christmas Day, our joy grows more and more. It takes us back to the joyful anticipation of the shepherds who journeyed to see Jesus in Bethlehem, even before the wise men. On this third weekend of Advent, which the church calls "Gaudette Sunday," meaning rejoice or praise, we light the third candle and rejoice like the shepherds. For this reason, it is called the "Shepherd's Candle."

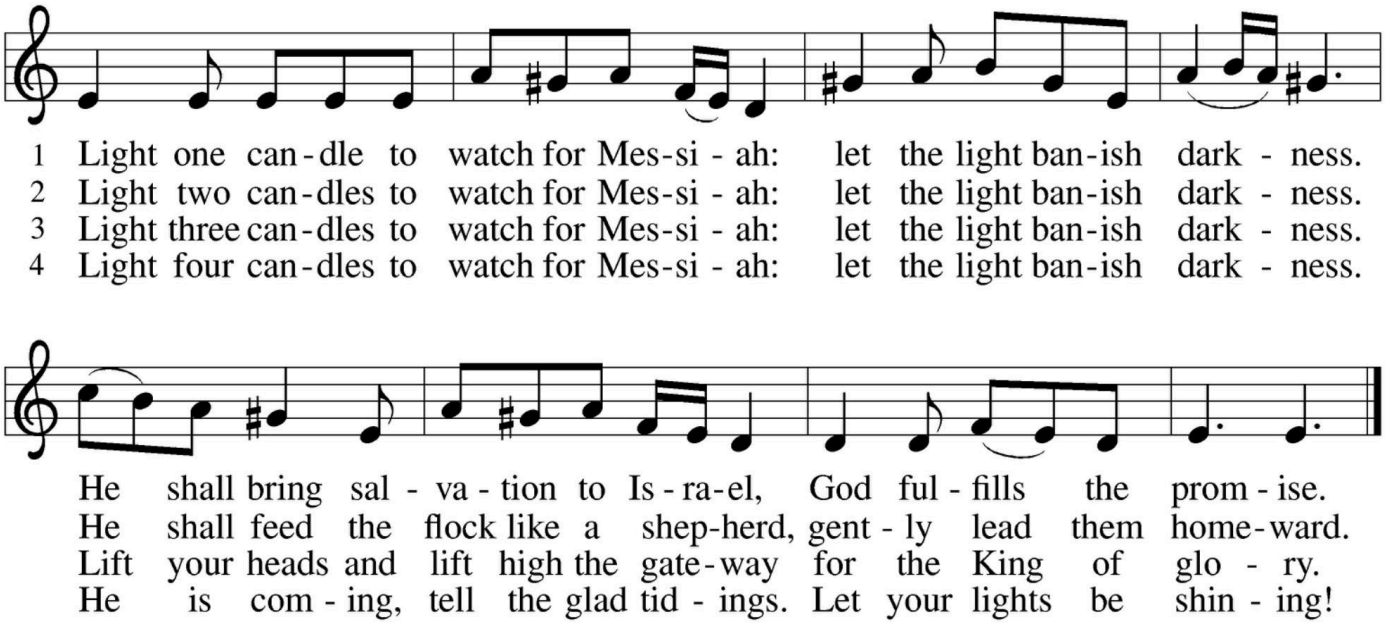
Week 4: The fourth candle of Advent represents LOVE, the ultimate love of God made know to us in the sending of God's only son for us. Called the "Angel's Candle," the fourth candle of Advent is lit the weekend before Christmas, leading us to eagerly await the new Kingdom of God on Earth.

Let us pray.

Lord Jesus, Master of both light and darkness,
send your Holy Spirit upon our preparation for Christmas.
We who have so much to do seek quiet spaces to hear your voice each day.
We who are anxious over many things look forward to your coming among us.
We who are blessed in so many ways long for the complete joy of your Kingdom.
We whose hearts are heavy seek the joy of your presence.
We are your people, walking in darkness yet seeking the light.
To you, we say, “Come, Lord Jesus!”
Amen.

Sing only the verse of the week

Light One Candle to Watch for Messiah



The assembly rises in body or in spirit. All may make the sign of the cross, the sign that is marked at baptism, as the presiding minister begins.

Confession and Forgiveness

Blessed be the holy Trinity, ☩ one God,
whose home is heaven and earth,
whose salvation is sure.
Amen.

Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another.

Long-expected God,
we confess that we are captive to sin and cannot free ourselves. 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. For the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ, have mercy on us.
Forgive us, renew us, and lead us, so that we may delight in your will and walk in your ways, to the glory of your holy name. Amen.

God judges us not as we deserve,
but according to God's own righteousness.
☩ You are freed and forgiven,
saved by grace,
and ready to welcome the Savior.
Amen.

Gathering Hymn *(Refer to the hymn board for the hymn number)*

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God,
and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.
And also with you.

Kyrie *(ELW p.138)*

In peace, let us pray to the Lord.
Lord, have mercy.
For the peace from above, and for our salvation, let us pray to the Lord.
Lord, have mercy.
For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the Church of God, and for the unity of all, let us pray to the Lord.
Lord, have mercy.
For this holy house, and for all who offer here their worship and praise, let us pray to the Lord.
Lord, have mercy.
Help, save, comfort, and defend us, gracious Lord.
Amen.

Canticle of Praise *(ELW p.139)*

Glory to God in the highest, and peace to God's people on earth.
Lord God, heavenly King, almighty God and Father,
we worship you, we give you thanks, we praise you for your glory.
Lord Jesus Christ, only Son of the Father,
Lord God, Lamb of God,
you take away the sin of the world: have mercy on us;
you are seated at the right hand of the Father: receive our prayer.
For you alone are the Holy One, you alone are the Lord,
you alone are the Most High,
Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit,
in the glory of God the Father. Amen.

Prayer of the Day *(see bulletin insert)*

The assembly is seated.

The readings are printed in the bulletin insert.

First Reading, Psalm, Second Reading

Response: Thanks be to God.

The assembly rises in body or in spirit.

Gospel Acclamation *(ELW p.142)*

Alleluia. Lord, to whom shall we go?
You have the words of eternal life.
Alleluia. Alleluia.

Gospel

The holy gospel according to _____. **Glory to you, O Lord.**

The reading

The gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you, O Christ.**

The assembly is seated.

Sermon

The assembly rises in body or in spirit.

Hymn of the Day *(Refer to the hymn board for the hymn number)*

Apostles' Creed

With the whole church, let us confess our faith:

I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.
I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the virgin Mary,
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,
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,
and he will come 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.

Prayers of the Faithful

Friends, as we joyfully await the full manifestation of God's reign in Christ, let us pray for the needs of the church and the world.

O Wisdom, you come forth from the mouth of the Most High and reach from beginning to end, mightily and sweetly ordering all things. Behold and bless your church, remembering especially Yehiel, our presiding bishop; Becca, our bishop; and Julie, our pastor. Be present in ordering the life of this and every congregation.

Come and teach us the way of prudence.

O Adonai, God of the Covenant, ruler of the house of Israel, you appeared to Moses in the fire of the burning bush and on Mount Sinai gave your law. Forgive us when we stray from your guidance and will.

Come and redeem us for our life together.

O Root of Jesse, you stand as an ensign to humankind; before you rulers will shut their mouths, and nations bow in worship: We pray for your peace and justice in every nation and throughout the world; be present to all whose lives are ravaged by war and strife. Guide the leaders of this and every land into the paths of peace and goodwill.

Come and save us; do not delay.

O Key of David, and scepter of the house of Israel, you open and no one can shut, you shut and no one can open: Guide us in opening the doors of opportunity for the unemployed, for the unhoused, for prisoners, and for all who are oppressed; and lead us in closing the doors that lead to poverty, bigotry, and injustice.

Come and bring the captives out of the prison house.

O King of the Nations and their Desire, you are the cornerstone that makes us one: We lift up all who are suffering and in need, especially those we now name aloud and in our hearts. *(Pause)* Tend the sick, give rest to the weary, bless the dying, soothe the suffering, pity the afflicted, shield the joyous and help us minister to them in your love.

Come and save us, whom you have fashioned out of clay.

O Dayspring, radiance of the Light Eternal and Sun of Righteousness: Shine your light on those who have died; remember especially those we now name aloud or in our hearts. *(Pause)* Bring comfort to all those who mourn.

Come and enlighten all who sit in darkness and the shadow of death.

O Emmanuel, God with us, Expected One and Savior, We give thanks for all the blessings of this life. Make each of us ready to receive you, to serve you in all whom we meet, and to greet you in the fullness of your glory in the day of your appearing.

Come and save us, O Lord our God.

Draw near to us, O God, as we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in your mercy through Jesus Christ, Emmanuel.

Amen.

The peace of Christ be with you always.

And also with you.

The assembly is seated.

Your regular offering ensures that God's life-giving ministry through this community continues. You may make your offering in the offering plates as they are passed or by using the QR code from your smart phone.

The assembly rises in body or in spirit.

Offering Hymn: *God, Whose Giving Knows No Ending (ELW 678)*

God, whose giving knows no ending,
from your rich and endless store:
nature's wonder, Jesus' wisdom,
costly cross, grave's shattered door,
gifted by you, we turn to you,
off'ring up ourselves in praise;
thankful song shall rise forever,
gracious donor of our days.

Let us pray.
God of abundance, we bring before you the precious fruits of your creation, and with them our very lives. Teach us patience and hope as we care for all those in need until the coming of your Son, our Savior and Lord.
Amen.

The Lord be with you.
And also with you.
Lift up your hearts.
We lift them to the Lord.
Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
It is right to give our thanks and praise.

It is indeed right, our duty and our joy,
that we should at all times and in all places
give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God,
through our Savior Jesus Christ.
You comforted your people with the promise of the Redeemer,
through whom you will also make all things new
in the day when he comes to judge the world in righteousness.
And so, with all the choirs of angels,
with the church on earth and the hosts of heaven,
we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

(ELW p.144)
Holy, holy, holy Lord,
God of pow'r and might,
heaven and earth are full of your glory.
Hosanna. Hosanna. Hosanna in the highest.
Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest.

Holy One, the beginning and the end,
the giver of life:
Blessed are you for the birth of creation.
Blessed are you in the darkness and in the light.
Blessed are you for your promise to your people.
Blessed are you in the prophets' hopes and dreams.
Blessed are you for Mary's openness to your will.
Blessed are you for your Son Jesus, the Word made flesh.

In the night in which he was betrayed,
our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks;
broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying:
Take and eat; this is my body, given for you.
Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks,
and gave it for all to drink, saying:
This cup is the new covenant in my blood,
shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin.
Do this for the remembrance of me.

Overflowing with hope, peace, joy, and love, we proclaim the mystery of faith:
Christ has died.
Christ is risen.
Christ will come again.

With this bread and cup
we remember your Word dwelling among us,
full of grace and truth.
We remember our new birth in his death and resurrection.
We look with hope for his coming.
Come, Lord Jesus.

Holy God, we long for your Spirit.
Come among us.
Bless this meal.
May your Word take flesh in us.
Awaken your people.
Fill us with your light.
Bring the gift of peace on earth.
Come, Holy Spirit.

All praise and glory are yours,
Holy One of Israel,
Word of God incarnate,
Power of the Most High,
one God, now and forever.
Amen.

Let us pray for the coming of the kingdom as Jesus taught us:
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,
forever and ever. Amen.

Behold the Lord whose Advent we await, who will come with glory on the day of judgement.
Blessed are those who are called to the banquet of the Lamb.

The assembly is seated.
(ELW p.146)
Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world; have mercy on us.
Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world; have mercy on us.
Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world; grant us peace.

We practice Eucharistic hospitality: all are welcome to receive communion. Please alert an usher if you desire communion in your seat. Gluten-free wafers are available upon request. The inside ring of cups is filled with non-alcoholic white grape juice.

Once all have communed, the assembly rises in body or in spirit.
The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in God's grace. **Amen.**

(ELW p.135)
Now, Lord, you let your servant go in peace:
your word has been fulfilled.
My own eyes have seen the salvation
which you have prepared
in the sight of ev'ry people:
a light to reveal you to the nations
and the glory of your people Israel.

Let us pray.
God for whom we wait, in this meal you give us a foretaste of that day when the hungry will be fed with good things. Send us forth to make known your deeds and to proclaim the greatness of your name, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.
Amen.

May God the Father, judge all-merciful,
make us worthy of a place in his kingdom.
Amen.
May God the Son, coming among us in power,
reveal in our midst the promise of his glory.
Amen.
May God the Holy Spirit make us steadfast in faith,
joyful in hope and constant in love.
Amen.
Almighty God, Father, ☩ Son, and Holy Spirit, bless you now and forever.
Amen.

Sending Hymn *(Refer to the hymn board for the hymn number)*

The Lord's coming is close at hand.
Go forth in peace to prepare the way of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

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