

#### **WEEK 4 (DEC. 18-24)**

**Light** the four candles and say, "Today we light the candle of peace."

**Read** Isaiah 9:6-7.

**Pray:** Lord God, we light this candle to thank you for your Son our Savior Jesus Christ, who is the Prince of Peace. We who live in conflict and strife have found peace in the promise of life with Jesus Christ. We give you thanks and praise in Jesus' name, because he lives and reigns with you in your glory, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, Amen.

**Discussion:** How can we work for peace? With whom do I need to make peace?

**Activity:** Move Mary and Joseph into the nativity set, leaving the manger empty.

#### **CHRISTMAS DAY**

**Light** the outside four candles, then the center candle, and say, "Today we light the Christ candle."

**Read** Luke 2:1-20.

**Pray:** Almighty God, we praise you, because on this day, your Word became flesh in our Savior Jesus Christ. Help us to imitate your coming to us by showing our faith in our conduct as well as in our speech. Be near to all those today who are lonely, sad, or far from home. We give you, Lord, our honor, praise, and love, in the most holy name of the One who is born today; because He lives and reigns with you in your glory. Amen.

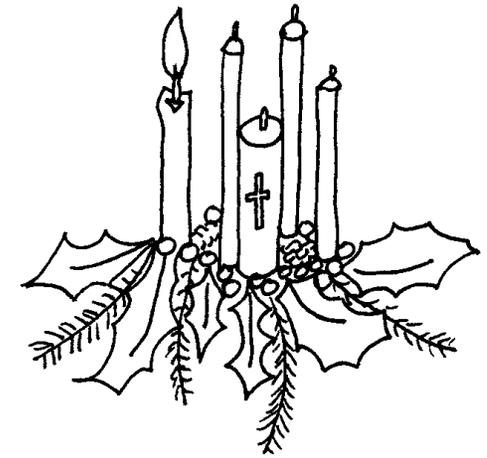
**Discussion:** How can we let Jesus into our hearts today?

**Activity:** Move the baby Jesus into the nativity set, and add the rest of the figures. Sing "Happy Birthday" to Jesus!

# **THE COMING OF THE LIGHT**

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*Weekly Devotions for  
the Advent Season*



Compiled by Rev. Adria W. Pearson

## INSTRUCTIONS AND BACKGROUND

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These devotions have been provided for you to use, by yourself or with your family, with the lighting of the Advent wreath. Choose one time during the week when you can sit down together around the wreath, each week of Advent.

Light the candle(s) at the beginning then do the readings and prayer together. Each time you light the candles in the order you lit them before. The devotions are meant to be guidelines that you can modify, with optional questions and activities.

Many families have the tradition of lighting the candle(s) at the beginning of each dinner throughout the week. Remember to snuff out the candles after dinner, so they don't burn down the house!

### *About the Season*

Advent means "to come." During this first season of the Christian year, we prepare for three "comings" of the Light.

First, we prepare to celebrate the coming of the Light, two thousand years ago, in the baby Jesus. Then we welcome the Light into our hearts today. Finally, we look ahead to the second coming of Christ, when the Light shall swallow the darkness forever.

### *About the Symbols*

The first Advent wreath is believed to have been invented by Johann Hinrich Wichern, a Protestant pastor in Germany in the mid-1800s. Soon the practice spread to other countries and denominations.

There is much discussion about the

meaning of the various Advent symbols. Here is one interpretation:

The wreath represents Christ's crown of thorns. The greenery reminds us of everlasting life. The four candles symbolize faithful waiting and show how the light increases as we draw near to Christmas. The purple candles symbolize the royalty of Christ, and the pink candle has often stood for joy. The central white candle is often called the "Christ candle." Christian tradition varies on what the four candles represent. We have chosen to follow the themes of hope, love, joy and peace.

## DEVOTIONS FOR ADVENT

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### WEEK 1 (NOV. 27 – DEC. 3)

**Light** the first candle and say, "Today we light the candle of hope."

**Read** Isaiah 60:2-3.

**Pray:** Lord God, we light this candle to thank you for your Son our Savior Jesus Christ, who is the light of the world. We who have sat in darkness have seen a great light, the light of Jesus Christ, our salvation. We give you thanks and praise in Jesus' name, because he lives and reigns with you in your glory, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, Amen.

**Discussion:** How is Jesus the light that comes into the darkness?

**Activity:** Set up a nativity set, but without any of the people. Put Mary, Joseph, and the baby Jesus in a room far away.

### WEEK 2 (DEC. 4 – 10)

**Light** the first and second candles and say, "Today we light the candle of love."

**Read** Mark 1:4.

**Pray:** Lord God, we light this candle to thank you for your Son our Savior Jesus Christ, who is the way. We are like sheep who have gone astray and have found the way to you through Jesus Christ. We give you thanks and praise in Jesus' name, because he lives and reigns with you in your glory, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, Amen.

**Discussion:** In what ways does God show love to us?

**Activity:** Move Mary, Joseph, and Jesus one room closer. Tell someone that you love them.

### WEEK 3 (DEC. 10 – 17)

**Light** the first two candles and the pink candle: "Today we light the candle of joy."

**Read** Isaiah 35:10.

**Pray:** Lord God, we light this candle to thank you for your Son our Savior Jesus Christ, who brings us great joy. We who have walked in the shadow of the valley of death have found life in the resurrection of Jesus Christ. We give you thanks and praise in Jesus' name, because he lives and reigns with you in your glory, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, Amen.

**Discussion:** What is joy? Who can we bring joy to today?

**Activity:** Move Mary, Joseph, and Jesus one room closer. Take some cookies to a lonely or home-bound person.