

1 Advent One

LITANY OF THE ADVENT CANDLE

One: Advent is a journey of preparation. Whether God feels near or far to you; whether faith feels like a gift or a struggle; welcome to this journey.

All: Let's watch, let's rest, let's make space for love to be born again.

One: Many things have tried to overwhelm us- division, oppression, sickness, poverty and war.

All: We need to be surprised by the Spirit this season.

One: Today is a first step of turning toward God with expectation.

All: We have come to be overwhelmed with hope.

(Lighting the first Advent Candle)

One: This morning we light the candle of Hope. The start of a new, yet familiar, journey. A bold proclamation. Though all predictions seem dire, we light a candle in the shadows, trusting it will magnify God's hope in the world.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

One: As we begin our Advent journey,
we confess that our lives, our communities and our cultures are not always pleasing to God.

**All: We remember the separation and the isolation that our actions can cause.
Our shame leaves us feeling distant from God and from one another.**

One: Yet even now, our longing for the One who tears open the heavens and comes down,
kindles like a fire in our soul.

**All: Even now, as we wait, we dare to hope;
we dare to trust in God's forgiveness;
and we dare to let go of our shame.**

One: Gracious God, overwhelm our doubts and fears with your hope. Amen.

WORDS OF ASSURANCE

One: Even though we can't see our way through Advent yet, God is ready to surprise us. Trust that the One who created you renews you today and every day. In that great love, we are forgiven and restored. That love overwhelms us with hope. Amen.

INVITATION TO THE OFFERING

One: We take a moment to share our offerings in worship because giving is an act of faith. Whether we offer money, prayers, or volunteer our time, our gifts are like seeds of hope. When we offer them, we are trusting God to bless them and to use them. We are saying that we believe in God's vision of restoration and justice. Let us be bold in our hope as we share our offerings.

PRAYER OF DEDICATION

All: Thank you, Holy God, for the wake-up call, reminding us to be ready, reminding us that you are waiting to surprise us with hope. Bless these gifts, so that others may know your hope on their darkest nights, your love when they feel most alone. We pray that you will not rest until all the world is overwhelmed with you hope. Amen.

JOY!