

HOPE



ADVENT CANDLE LIGHTING

This week we light the candle of hope. Light the first candle and say... *Jesus Christ is our hope.*

JESUS STORYBOOK BIBLE READING

Get Ready! | p. 170

SCRIPTURE READING

Matthew 1:18–25

TABLE QUESTION OF THE WEEK

God's people, the Israelites, had been through a LOT! From slavery in Egypt to living freely in the Promised Land, only to eventually be run out of their home once again. Over and over, God's people forgot all the good things God had done for them, and they made a bunch of mistakes. But God repeatedly sent his prophets to tell the people about a Rescuer who was coming. The people put their hope in that promise, and they waited to see what God was going to do. Have you ever had to wait for something? How did it feel? Why do you think God still promised to rescue His people even after they kept forgetting and disobeying Him? What does that say about how God feels about you? Name some ways you can share the hope you have in God with others who might be discouraged. For example, you could bake cookies for a neighbor or make a card for a friend who is having a hard time.

WEEK 1

HOPE

Place your candle here.

PRAYER

Dear God, as we enter the season of Advent—a time of waiting—help us remember the hope we have in you. Just like the Israelites, we run away from you, we make not-so-good choices, and we get distracted by people or things we can't put our hope in. Try as we might, nothing compares to the hope you have given us through your Son, Jesus. Show us how to share that hope with others who are hurting or waiting or lonely. Amen.

PEACE



ADVENT CANDLE LIGHTING

This week we light the candle of peace. Light the first candle and say... *Jesus Christ is our hope.* Light the second candle and say... *As we light the candle of peace, we celebrate the Prince of Peace, Jesus Christ, who covers us with perfect peace that only He can give, a peace that we get to share with others.*

JESUS STORYBOOK BIBLE READING

He's Here! | pp. 176–179

SCRIPTURE READING

Luke 1:26–28

TABLE QUESTION OF THE WEEK

What do you think Mary was feeling when the angel Gabriel appeared to her? If God could turn Mary's fears, doubts, and concerns into confidence, peace, and trust within this single conversation, do you think He can do the same for you? The very same power that God gave to Mary is in you right this moment! Wow! That peace from the Lord is such a blessing to our human hearts, and what a privilege it is to get to share that blessing with others! Who do you think could use some of that special peace this week? Do you think you could pretend to be Gabriel for that person this week? You might not appear to them as a tall and glowing angel, but I bet you could help by listening to their worldly worries and pointing them to Jesus so that His perfect peace can wipe out those worries!

WEEK 2

PEACE

Place your candle here.

PRAYER

Dear God, thank you for the gift of your son Jesus, the Prince of Peace. We praise you for giving us peace that the world cannot give, and we ask that you would help us to be mindful of how we can share Your peace with others. The hustle and bustle of the Christmas season is upon our community, and we pray, Lord, for Your peace to radiate from us in such a powerful way that the people in our midst will feel Your peace through the power of Your Holy Spirit. We love you. Amen.

JOY



ADVENT CANDLE LIGHTING

This week we light the candle of joy. Light the first two candles and say... *Jesus Christ is our hope and peace. Our joy comes from Him.* Light the third candle and say... *As we light the candle of joy, we celebrate the miracle and joy of Jesus' birth with the intention to spread God's joy to others.*

JESUS STORYBOOK BIBLE READING

He's Here! | pp. 180–183

SCRIPTURE READING

Luke 2:1–7

TABLE QUESTION OF THE WEEK

What does Emmanuel mean? How does that meaning help us to understand part of Jesus' purpose in being born? The celebration of Jesus' birth brings us great joy! Think of the people your family comes into contact with; it can be a neighbor, friend, acquaintance, or even your mail carrier. How can you bring God's joy to one of those people this week?

WEEK 3

JOY

Place your candle here.

PRAYER

Dear God, thank you for Jesus, God's Great Gift, and the joy he brings. May we know the amazing spirit of joy that we can experience in Your presence. Your Word teaches us that joy is a fruit of the Holy Spirit; help us to share and spread that joy to others this season. Amen.

LOVE



ADVENT CANDLE LIGHTING

This week we light the candle of love. Light the first three candles and say... *Jesus Christ is our hope and peace. Our joy comes from Him.* Light the fourth candle and say... *As we light the candle of love we celebrate that God's love is for ALL and we delight in sharing that with others.*

JESUS STORYBOOK BIBLE READING

The Light of the Whole World | p. 184

SCRIPTURE READING

Luke 2:8–20

TABLE QUESTION OF THE WEEK

Shepherds weren't known for being the most "important" of people. What does it say about God that He chose to announce Jesus' birth to them first? Who specifically comes to mind when you ask God who needs His love? How can you and your family help show them God's love this season?

PRAYER

Dear God, thank you for loving us with a never-stopping, never-giving-up, unbreaking, always-and-forever love. We delight in knowing that you love us through our strengths and our struggles. Open our eyes to those who might need to know about your love today. Through your Spirit, help us to love others the way that you love us. Amen.

WEEK 4

LOVE

Place your candle here.

ADVENT CANDLE LIGHTING

Relight the first four candles and the Christ candle saying, *Jesus is our hope, Jesus is our peace, Jesus is our joy, Jesus is our love. As we light the Christ candle we celebrate the birth of Jesus—Emmanuel, God with us, the King of all kings.*

JESUS STORYBOOK BIBLE READING

The King of All Kings | p. 192

SCRIPTURE READING

Luke 2:25–35

TABLE QUESTION OF THE WEEK

Think of a time you opened a gift and it wasn't what you expected. Was it a good surprise? Disappointing? Confusing? God promised to send Jesus to be our "King of Kings" MANY MANY MANY years before Jesus was born. What kind of King do you think people were expecting? God knows what we need even better than we do and sent Jesus to us as the King we did not expect—a Servant King. We serve others as Jesus did to follow his example and be more like him.

Think of how you can serve others by "gifting" them in unexpected ways. Surprise a family member by cleaning up without being asked. Give a friend an unexpected compliment. Hold a door open for someone at school or a store. There are so many ways we can show Jesus' love to people through small gifts of service!

PRAYER

Dear God, today we celebrate the birth of Jesus—the best gift of all! Thank you for loving us and knowing that we need Jesus more than any gift we could ever receive. Help us to be more like Jesus by choosing to serve others. Let them see Jesus' love shine in our every action all year long. Happy Birthday, Jesus!

CHRISTMAS EVE

CHRIST

Place your candle here.

CHILDREN & FAMILY ADVENT EVENTS



Dodgeball With Dudes

FRI | DEC 2 | 6:30 PM | GRAND HALL

K–5th graders are invited to bring your favorite dude—dad, grandpa, stepdad, uncle—with them and have a fun night of dodgeball games and dinner.

Advent Celebration

SUN | DEC 4 | 11:45 AM | FELLOWSHIP HALL

Join us for lunch in Fellowship Hall after worship! We'll have plenty of fun, family activities and Advent Missions Market shopping.

Christmas PJ Party

SUN | DEC 18 | 9:30 AM | SUNDAY SCHOOL CLASSES

Come to Sunday School in your Christmas PJs! We'll have fun activities and treats as we celebrate Jesus' birthday. Feel free to bring pillows, blankets, and favorite stuffies, too!

Family Christmas Eve Service

SAT | DEC 24 | 3 PM | GRAND HALL

This is a special Christmas Eve service for families with younger children followed by fellowship, Christmas Cookies, and activities.



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