



Advent Candle Lighting Prayers *For 2024 Liturgical Year C*

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Note

Lighting Advent candles is a tradition coming, it is thought, from 17th Century German Lutherans. The tradition has evolved and become popular across the Church. A Lutheran pastor, tired of children asking if it was Christmas yet, got an old cartwheel, put 24 small candles and four larger candles and light one a day as a way of leading up to Christmas. One small candle was lit each weekday with a larger one each Sunday. The custom evolved into the Advent ring we see today and was taken up by German Catholics in the 1920s. Advent is, primarily, looking forward to Jesus' coming again at the end of time but inevitably is also experienced as a countdown to Christmas.

The prayers are designed to be used as the candles are lit and focus on the themes in the Lectionary readings which are outlined for each week.

You may wish to ask a younger person to light the candles each week; an older younger person might read the prayer.

Advent 1

Jeremiah 33: 14 – 16 | God will fulfil the promise to raise up a righteous branch for David who shall execute justice and righteousness.

Psalms 25: 1- 10 | God's paths are of love and faithfulness; God teaches sinners the way.

1 Thessalonians 3: 9 – 13 | May your hearts be strengthened in holiness

St Luke 21: 35 – 36 | Watch for the coming of the Son of Man; your redemption is drawing near.

Yearning God,
You draw close, aching to hold us in Your love;
teach us to follow Your paths of justice and faithfulness.
Show us Your ways that we may be strengthened in holiness
as we await our redemption which draws ever nearer. Amen

Advent 2

Baruch 5: 1 – 9 | ...For God has ordered that every high mountain and the everlasting hills be made low and the valleys filled up, to make level ground, so that Israel may walk safely in the glory of God...

Or

Malachi 3:1-4 | ...But who can endure the day of his coming, and who can stand when he appears? For he is like a refiner's fire and like washers' soap; he will sit as a refiner and purifier of silver, and he will purify the descendants of Levi and refine them like gold and silver, until they present offerings to the LORD in righteousness...

St Luke 1:68-79 | Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, for he has looked favourably on his people and redeemed them...

Philippians 1:3-11 | ...the one who began a good work in you will continue to complete it until the day of Jesus Christ...

St Luke 3:1-6 | Prepare the Way of the Lord

Redeeming God,
You refine us with the fire of Your love
that we might prepare Your way in our hearts and homes,
in our towns and cities, and in the fields and valleys of our lives,
as we await our redemption which draws ever nearer. Amen

Advent 3

Zephaniah 3:14-20 | ...he will rejoice over you with gladness; he will renew you in his love; he will exult over you with loud singing...

Isaiah 12:2-6 | ... Shout aloud and sing for joy, O royal Zion, for great in your midst is the Holy One of Israel...

Philippians 4:4-7 | ... Let your gentleness be known to everyone. The Lord is near....

St Luke 3:7-18 | ... Therefore, bear fruits worthy of repentance...

Loving God,
teach us that Your ways of justice, Your paths of righteousness, and Your rule of love,
come at a cost; a cost to You, and a need for us to change.
May our lives show the fruit of repentance
as we await our redemption which draws ever nearer. Amen

Advent 4

Micah 5:2-5a | ... from you shall come forth for me one who is to rule in Israel, whose origin is from of old, from ancient days...and he shall be the one of peace.

St Luke 1:46b-55 | ... He has shown strength with his arm; he has scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts. He has brought down the powerful from their thrones and lifted up the lowly;...

Or

Psalm 80: 1 – 7 | ...Restore us, O God; let your face shine, that we may be saved...

Hebrews 10:5-10 | See, I have come to do your will.

St Luke 1:39-45, (46-55) | ...My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my Saviour...

Table-turning God,
You scatter the proud and bring down the powerful,
You fill the hungry and send the rich away empty;
help us to do Your will as we await our redemption which draws ever nearer. Amen

Lighting the Christ Candle

This may take place at a Christmas Eve or Christmas Day service or whenever the church meets to celebrate Christmas together.

We who dwell in a land of great shadows, O God
light these candles to celebrate Your light and life.
For in the gloom of oppression You have freed Your people
bringing salvation to all and showing Your glory
in the cries of a vulnerable helpless baby
in whom our redemption draws ever nearer. Amen.