

Readings for Lighting the Advent Candles (Option 5 - companion to Advent Paper Candles)

Week One -- Family members may share in the following reading:

- Voice A** I will wait for coffee to brew.
Voice B I will wait for traffic to clear.
Voice A I will wait for fruit to ripen.
Voice B I will wait for flowers to grow.
Voice A I will wait for seasons to change.
Voice B I will wait for the sun to rise.
Voice A I will wait for the weekend to arrive.
Voice B I will wait for my baby's first words.
Voice A I will wait for Christmas to arrive.
Voice B I will wait for hope, because I want to live with hope - today and every day
Voice A I cannot wait for hope, because I want to love with hope - today and every day
Voice B I want to roll my sleeves up and get to work - living, serving, giving, and transforming with the hope of a better day.
Voice A So today we light the **candle of hope** as a reminder and as a prayer that we might stop waiting and start living, stop watching and start moving.
Voice B May the light of this candle burn inside us this week - inspiring hope and action for God's promised day. Amen.

Place the Hope candle on the Advent wreath then reflect on these questions:

- Share about a time when you had to wait for something special to happen. How did you feel when it finally happened?
- What are some things that you need to trust in God to bring a hope to the future?

Sing together as a family:

Hymn 266 Moravian Book of Worship

** Option to play recording by the Rev. Brad Bennett*

People with sickness are praying for health,
come, come, come Jesus Christ;
people in poverty want to have wealth,
come, Lord Jesus Christ.

These days of adventure when all people wait
are days for the advent of Hope.

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Prayer: To the one who gives us hope, thank you for inviting us to this time of waiting. Help us to open our eyes so we can see your light. Open our ears so we can hear your words of hope. Open our minds so we can receive your love. Come, long expected Jesus. We are waiting for you. Amen.

Week Two - Family members may share in the following reading:

- Voice A** I will wait for the sky to clear.
Voice B I will wait for the plot to thicken.
Voice A I will wait for vacation to arrive.
Voice B I will wait for snow to fall.
Voice A I will wait for dinner to be ready.
Voice B I will wait for you to be confident.
Voice A I will wait for my child to walk.
Voice B I will wait for the leaves to change.
Voice A I will wait for the dust to settle.
Voice B I will wait for the lab results.
Voice A I will wait for Christmas to arrive.
Voice B I will wait for a lot of things, but I will not wait for peace.
Voice A This word is rampant with division, walls, grudge holding, and self-doubt.
Voice B I do not want to be a passive bystander in this division.
Voice A We do not want to be passive bystanders in this division.
Voice B So today we light the **candle of peace** as a reminder that we have a role to play.
Voice A May the desire to sow peace kindle in us a light in the darkness.

Place the Peace candle on the Advent wreath then reflect on these questions:

- When you find yourself in times of strife and conflict, how can you seek God for peace?
- Name one conflict or concern in the world that revolves around peace.

Sing together as a family:

Hymn 266 Moravian Book of Worship

** Option to play recording by the Rev. Brad Bennett*

People in trouble would like to be free,
come, come, come Jesus Christ;
people with arguments want to agree,
come, Lord Jesus Christ.
These days of adventure when all people wait
are days for the advent of Peace.

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Prayer: Gracious One, thank you for the promise of peace. Thank you for moments when we feel it deep in our hearts. Teach us to make peace with our words and with our hands for our own place and all places. Amen.

Week Three: Family members may share in the following reading:

- Voice A** I will wait for a promotion.
Voice B I will wait for the sequel.
Voice A I will wait for space to grow.
Voice B I will wait for the phone to ring.
Voice A I will wait for you to ask.
Voice B I will wait for them to call my name.
Voice A I will wait for the water to boil.
Voice B I will wait for the text to come through.
Voice A I will wait for the second season.
Voice B I will wait for the beat to drop.
Voice A I will wait for Christmas to arrive.
Voice B I will wait for a lot of things, but I will no longer wait for joy.
Voice A In a world where suffering and violence plague the news, I will choose to delight in that which is good.
Voice B This week, we light the **candle of joy** to remind us that darkness does not have the last word. May this light guide and inspire us as we work to spread God's joy and delight through this world. Amen.

Place the Joy candle on the Advent wreath then reflect on these questions:

- What robs you of joy?
- What gives you joy?

Sing together as a family:

Hymn 266 Moravian Book of Worship

** Option to play recording by the Rev. Brad Bennett*

People in sorrow are yearning to sing,
come, come, come Jesus Christ;
people in misery want bells to ring,
come, Lord Jesus Christ.
These days of adventure when all people wait
are days for the advent of Joy.

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Prayer: Joy giving One, thank you for the ways you accept and celebrate all of who we are. Thank you for the many, many ways you live among us. Teach us to recognize you and to share our joy.

Week Four: Family members may share in the following reading:

Voice A I will wait for the Department of Motor Vehicles
Voice B I will wait for the right moment.
Voice A I will wait for the fire to grow.
Voice B I will wait for the popcorn to pop.
Voice A I will wait for political reform.
Voice B I will wait for the light to turn green.
Voice A I will wait to leave a message at the beep.
Voice B I will wait for my kids to come home.
Voice A I will wait for the paint to dry.
Voice B I will wait for the right words to say.
Voice A I will wait for Christmas to arrive.
Voice B I will wait for a lot of things, but I will not wait for a chance to share love.
Voice A The world needs love. We need love.
Voice B So today we light the **candle of love** to remind us to spread love wherever we go. May we be courageous enough to love our neighbors as ourselves. Amen.

Place the Love candle on the Advent wreath then reflect on these questions:

- How do you know you are loved? What does it feel like?
- What are some words or actions you would use to describe love?
- What kind of things do you see people doing to help in our world today?
- How does this symbolize “love” to you how do you feel when you witness these activities?

Sing together as a family:

Hymn 266 Moravian Book of Worship

** Option to play recording by the Rev. Brad Bennett*

People in darkness are looking for light,
come, come, come Jesus Christ;
People with blindness are longing for sight,
come, Lord Jesus Christ.
These days of adventure when all people wait
are days for the advent of Love.

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Prayer: Generous one, thank you for all the ways we are loved. Thank you for all the ways we can love. Teach us to listen closely to each other and to our world for all of the ways and places love is shared. Amen.

Christmas Eve:

We have arrived in Bethlehem, following the footsteps of our ancestors. We are grateful for our faith ancestors who have shown us the way. Let us remember those of past generations who have celebrated the birth of Jesus. We remember those people who on future Christmas Eves will celebrate Jesus birth. We commit ourselves to celebrating the birth of Jesus each and every year. As we leave Bethlehem tonight and begin to share the good news of this special birth, let us carry Jesus Christ in our hearts.

Voice A In the beginning, God dreamed of a beautiful world.
Voice B In Egypt, the Israelites dreamed of freedom.
Voice A In the wilderness, the people dreamed of safety.
Voice B In Jerusalem, the people dreamed of a Messiah.
Voice A In Bethlehem, the shepherds and Wise Men dreamed of a new beginning.
Voice B Then, several years later, Jesus walked this earth and dreams came true.
Voice A The sick were healed.
Voice B The poor had food.
Voice A The forgotten and ignored were seen.
Voice B The children were welcomed.
Voice A Everyone was invited to the table, and the word has never been the same.
Voice B So tonight, we are those who dream.
Voice A So tonight, we dream the same dreams of our ancestors before us.
Voice B Tonight, we dream of justice and mercy, of love and kindness, of peace and hope.
Voice A Tonight we dream of a God that draws near to us out of unfailing love.
Voice B May this **Christ Candle** be a reminder that there will be a day when every dream will be fulfilled. And until then, we will be those who dream.
Voice A Let us worship Holy God.

Place the Christ Candle on the Advent wreath

Prayer:

One: Ever-present God, from time to time we dream radical dreams.
All: We dream of freedom for the imprisoned, food for the hungry, and equality for all.
One: We dream bold, radical dreams, until the world tells us that these dreams are impossible.
All: And when that happens, we are tempted to tuck our dreams into coat pockets and let them collect dust on the shelves of our hearts. Forgive us for giving up so easily.
One: Forgive us for giving up so easily, for on this night we remember and celebrate a radical dream -- that you dwelled among us.
All: Give us the courage to dust old dreams off the shelf with the confidence that with you, the impossible is possible.
One: With you a light always shines in the darkness.
All: With you, even an unwed teenage couple and a band of shepherds can bring joy to the world.
One: Thanks be to God for a dream.
All: Amen.

Adapted from "Sanctified Art"