

God's Love Is Like a Blanket:
Responsive Advent Litanies of Light and Warmth

The litanies included here were penned to accompany College Hill Moravian Church's Parking Lot worship during Pandemic Advent 2020. While it would be typical for my congregation to have a wreath-lighting ritual for every Sunday morning of the Advent season, in our current set-up, the candles would not be visible by the gathered worshipers from their vehicles. Here, I've created something that *feels* a little bit like a wreath-lighting ritual but which really isn't. Instead, it's a prayerful acknowledgement of how difficult the past 9 months have been, and it highlights our heightened awareness of what it is to wait and hope for the next better thing. It ties in, somewhat, with the lectionary readings for Year B. It is also designed to accompany the related BLANKET DRIVE we'll be conducting throughout Advent. If you find the litanies to be meaningful in your setting, indoors or out, please use them without condition.

Blessings,
Christine Sobania Johnson

LITANIES OF LIGHT & WARMTH

Advent 1: The Blanket You Want to Hide Under

One Voice: Times have been harsh.

ALL: WE HAVE KNOWN THE FEAR AND FRENZY THAT ACCOMPANIES UNCERTAINTY.

Times have been edgy.

WE HAVE KNOWN THE DANGER AND DARKNESS OF DANCING WITH PERIL.

Times have been tense.

WE HAVE KNOWN THE COLLECTIVE ANXIETY OF A WORLD DRAPED IN CHAOS.

Times have been stressful.

WE LONG FOR A WORLD DRAPED IN SOFT FOLDS OF SECURITY.

Holy God, come to us. Wrap us in the promise of your Incarnation.

BLANKET US WHEN ALL WE WISH TO DO IS HIDE BENEATH THE COVER OF YOUR PRESENCE.

And one more thing, Holy God...

**BE A LIGHT TO US—LIKE ONE CANDLE OF ADVENT—WARMING OUR BRITTLE HEARTS
AND SHOWING US THE PATH TO HOPE.**

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Hymn suggestion to follow the reading:

“O Come, O Come, Immanuel”

LITANIES OF LIGHT & WARMTH

Advent 2: The Weighted Blanket That Stills Anxiety

One Voice: The days have been difficult.

ALL: WE HAVE KNOWN THE SEPARATION AND LONELINESS OF ISOLATION.

The days have been trying.

WE HAVE KNOWN THE FRUSTRATION AND TEARS OF QUARANTINE.

The days have been heavy.

WE HAVE KNOWN THE CRUSH AND HEFT OF GRIEF.

The days have been overwrought.

WE LONG FOR SOOTHING, FOR TOUCH, FOR CALM.

Holy God, come to us. Wrap us in the promise of your Incarnation.

BLANKET US WITH COMFORT WHEN WE ARE DEMOLISHED BY WORRY.

And one more thing, Holy God...

**BE A LIGHT TO US—LIKE TWO CANDLES OF ADVENT—WARMING OUR BRITTLE HEARTS
AND SHOWING US THE PATH TO HOPE.**

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Hymn suggestion to follow the reading:

“Comfort, Comfort, Now My People”

LITANIES OF LIGHT & WARMTH

Advent 3: The All-Purpose Utility Blanket

The nights have been prolonged.

WE HAVE KNOWN THE TOSSING AND TURNING OF SLEEPLESSNESS.

The nights have been wearisome.

ALL: WE HAVE KNOWN THE DAMAGE AND MISTRUST OF INEQUITY.

One Voice: The nights have been foreboding.

WE HAVE KNOWN THE SCOPE AND EFFECT OF CALAMITY.

The nights have been treacherous.

WE LONG FOR A STURDY STABILITY UPHOLDING ALL WHO ARE VULNERABLE.

Holy God, come to us. Wrap us in the promise of your Incarnation.

BLANKET US WITH THE SCRATCHY FABRIC OF IRRITATION THAT MOTIVATES US TO PARTICIPATE MORE FULLY IN YOUR COMPASSIONATE INTENTIONS.

And one more thing, Holy God...

BE A LIGHT TO US — LIKE THREE CANDLES OF ADVENT — WARMING OUR BRITTLE HEARTS AND SHOWING US THE PATH TO HOPE.

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Hymn suggestion to follow the reading:

“The Blanket Song”

LITANIES OF LIGHT & WARMTH
Advent 4: The Baby Blanket

One Voice: This realm has been restless.

ALL: WE HAVE KNOWN THE CHALLENGE AND IMPATIENCE OF WAITING.

This realm has been agitated.

WE HAVE KNOWN THE WANT AND DESIRE FOR SOMETHING MORE.

This realm has been fidgety.

WE HAVE KNOWN THE PULL AND THE YEARNING TO GET ON WITH IT.

This realm has been manic.

WE LONG FOR CHANGE, FOR RESTORATION, FOR TRANSFORMATION.

Holy God, come to us. Let us wrap you in welcoming ways at the promise of your Incarnation.

LET US BLANKET YOU! LET US CRADLE YOU LOVINGLY WHEN YOU BRING YOURSELF FROM YOUR REALM TO OUR REALM.

And one more thing, Holy God...

BE A LIGHT TO US — LIKE FOUR CANDLES OF ADVENT — WARMING OUR READY HEARTS AND SHOWING US THE PATH TO HOPE.

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Hymn suggestion to follow the reading:

“Come, O Long-Expected Jesus”