

Advent Candle Lighting 2018—Year C

The first candle: Holy Signs

In the season of Advent, we are actively watching and waiting for signs of Christ's return in our world. As we prepare for Christmas, we are preparing for God to enter our world and our lives in a new way. Look all around for the signs that God is doing something new in our world. Look all around to see what God is doing new in your life. Seek the signs of God's reign around us.

Light the first candle

Signs of light and wonder, signs of hope, may we treasure what we have heard and seen, and ponder them in our hearts this Advent. Amen.

The second candle: Holy Traditions

In the season of Advent, we sing the familiar songs and melodies, we put up our Christmas trees, we send out cards and participate in all sorts of traditions. As we prepare for Christmas, we practice and participate in traditions far older than our churches. We are reminded that we belong to something ancient and wonderful; and we are waiting for God to do something new.

Light the second candle

Carols and wreaths, trees and trimming, may we remember the stories of old by participating in the traditions of the coming season, and remember that God is doing something new. Amen.

The third candle: Holy Interruptions

In the season of Advent, we can get caught up in the busy-ness of the world around us and feel we have no time. For Elizabeth and Mary, the news of a baby interrupted their lives, in unexpected, fearful, and wonderful ways. As we prepare for Christmas, may we be blessed with God's unexpected interruptions, by helping those in need around us, by visiting those who are sick and elderly, by spending time with those who are lonely. For God is interrupting our lives to do something wonderfully new.

Light the third candle

In the busy-ness of the season, may we experience interruption as an opportunity. May we enjoy the beauty and wonder of the season instead of to-do lists and tasks. May we light candles and sit in darkness, and remember that God interrupted the world with the birth of the Only Son. Amen.

The fourth candle: Holy Witnesses

As we near Christmas, we remember the birth of Jesus, his mother Mary, his earthly father Joseph. We remember that shepherds were in the fields working the night shift, and there were travelers from afar. But who else was there? Some animals among the hay. Perhaps the innkeeper who had to tell them there was no room. Maybe even other families who were turned away. Who are the ones in the background of our lives today? Who are the people who witness our actions? Who are the people on the streets around us who have no place to stay? Who are the people who are turned away? Who are the witnesses of our story?

Light the fourth candle

May we be challenged by the story of Christ's birth to remember all those who sleep outside, who do not have enough food to eat, who feel lost and lonely. May we be challenged by God's story to become witnesses of God's love and mercy in this world. May we be challenged to show hospitality and kindness, for God came to us as vulnerable as one of us. Amen.