

ADVENT CANDLE PRAYERS

The leader says the plain text or whole text.

Traditionally, the wreath is made of five candles, four in a circle, and one in the middle, in a circle of evergreens. Three candles are blue or violet, one is rose, and the middle one is white; however, the tradition varies widely! Yet, any combination of candle colors can be used. Some people pray with this wreath each night, some once a week. In the Episcopal traditions, the rose candle is lit on the 3rd week.

Light the number of candles each week equal to whatever week it is (1 week 1, 2 week 2...), then begin.

Let us pray to God Almighty.

Among the poor, among the proud, **Christ is coming to make all things new.**

With gentleness and burning love, **Christ is coming to make all things new.**

Leader will ask another reader to read one of these, each week of Advent. Be sure everyone is invited to share their responses.

1: When the world was night, and the people were hurting each other with war and hate, he came. Christ is coming, **in him we will be made new.**

This week of Advent is about the Prophets: people who heard God's voice in the darkness and dared to point the way. Prophets hear God's word and declare that God will do something bold, something new, because we are caught in destructive ways. When a prophet speaks, he or she tells us how we are doing harm, and how we should be living in God's lifegiving ways. What are some different kinds of doing harm? How can we know God's way, and what needs to change so that we can live as God desires?

2: When the world was night, and people were lost, he came.

Christ is coming, **in him we will be made new.**

This week of Advent is about the Holy Family, traveling to the city of Bethlehem. Joseph was with Mary, who was ready to give birth to the Christ Child. The city was crowded, not everyone could find a home for the night. Joseph and Mary took care of each other and reached out to strangers for help. Could this be the bold new way that the prophets spoke of? Can you offer thanks and praise for the ways that family and friends and strangers have cared for each other this year?

3: When the world was night, and the fields were quiet, he came.

Christ is coming, **in him we will be made new.**

This week of Advent is about Shepherds. Shepherds had a dirty, hard job: shepherds were not fancy people. Most shepherds cared for precious sheep that they did not own. Caring for a herd and moving a herd of animals isn't easy; however it is very important. The sheep that shepherds cared for provided wool, milk, and meat. Will you can pray for people and places that are considered to be the last and the least?

4: When the world was night, and the sky was covered in bright stars, he came.

Christ is coming, **in him we will be made new.**

This week of Advent is about the Wise Men, who are on the way but not there yet. Sometimes we call them the Maji, or Sages, or Kings. We do not know much about them, we do not even know how many there were or where they came from. We do trust that they studied books and scrolls, stars and the news. Then they packed their bags and went out to find this new king. They brought symbolic gifts for a mature king: gold, frankincense and myrrh. Recall a time when you went on a journey and the result was wonderful but also a surprise. Tell that story.

Christmas: When the world is like night, he comes.

Christ has come, **in him we will be and are made new.**

The Christ Child enters our lives to shows us the way to God's kingdom: through simplicity, mercy, and steadfast love: as much as we are loved by God. This is the most precious gift and invitation of all. Where have you known mercy, simplicity, and deep love?

After the reading you may want to wonder about the prompt of each week. You may also want to look around your home and bring something that connects from your life to the focus of the week.

Jesus, lover of the last, least, and the lost: come among us.

Christ, food for the hungry, come among us. Christ, health of the sick, come among us. Christ, savior of the world, come among us.

Jesus, hope of us all, come among us.

You may offer your own prayers at this time.

Blessed are you, Christ, Light of the world; you step into our lostness and lift us into the realms of grace. May the Father who has shown his love for us be with us. May the Son who has come to be among us, reshape us. May the Spirit, who fills the whole world, empower us.

May the One God of Love be our Morning Star forever and evermore. **Amen.**