

Advent 4

LOVE—Luke 1:26-38, 47-55

(please allow **more** than a slight pause for silent prayer)



On this fourth Sunday in Advent we pray for the world:

- Knowing that our love is not great enough to reach into every corner, but that your love is, O God,
- Knowing that our love is too weak to bring about your Kingdom, but that your love will, O Jesus,
- Knowing that our love may not

sustain us through fear and trial, but that the Spirit of Love can.

And now we pray, for ourselves - including the unlovely parts of ourselves and our lives. (silent prayer)
Help us to accept your great love for us, O God, and guide and heal us in that love, O Spirit. (silence)

And now we pray for those whom we love and offer their names silently in our hearts. (silent prayer)
We pray, O Creator of love, that they will accept and live in your love.
We pray that we might have the wisdom to live out of our love for them wisely and generously.
O Prince of Love, hold them close to your compassionate heart. (silence)

And now we pray for our enemies: Those whom we know by name, or those whose way in the world is harmful to us and to others. (silent prayer)
Grant to all of us, O Spirit, new eyes to see each other as your beloved children.
Show us how to love one another. (silence)

And now we pray for the world. (silent prayer)
Teach as individuals and communities, how to love and care for your creation with new committed hearts.
We especially remember today.... *(Name situations and communities)*
O Lover of our Souls, O Jesus our Christ, teach us how to love as you have loved. (silence) Amen.

The Illustrations in this publication are by Cerezo Barredo

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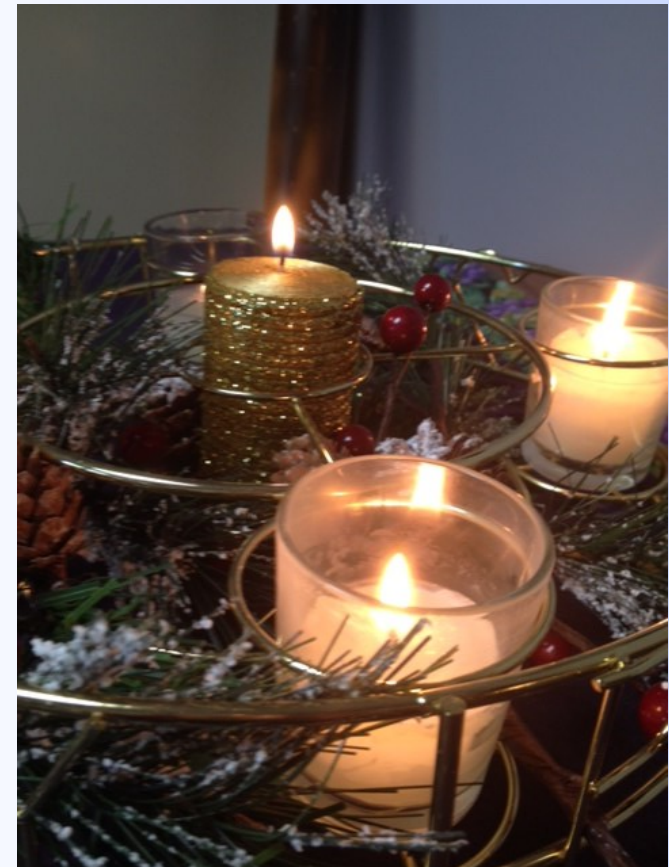
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TOWARD DARING DISCIPLESHIP

November 2014—Advent

Prayers for Advent



From the Desk of Lorna MacQueen
Conference Minister Faith Formation for
Discipleship

Advent 1

HOPE – Isaiah 64:1-9, Mark 13:24-32



ONE VOICE: O that you would tear open the heavens and come down... O God.

RESPONSE: O that you would do again the awesome deeds that we did not expect.

ONE VOICE: We cannot read well the signs of the times.

RESPONSE: Some days it seems the world is one of ravenous wolves, and we feel surrounded by disaster.

ONE VOICE: War, famine, environmental destruction, violence, corruption.

RESPONSE: All of these bring us to deep longing for your presence.

ONE VOICE: We await the coming of your Reign of Love, even though we do not know just what that means.

RESPONSE: What will it look like? What will it ask from us in this time and place?

ONE VOICE: We feel unclean ...like a filthy cloth. We have been entangled in forces that seem beyond our control, which exploit and oppress others. We do not know how to separate ourselves from the violence that profits us.

RESPONSE: We feel faded and fragile like a fallen leaf, blown by strong, cold winds.

ONE VOICE: But the Advent message of waiting and hope blazes like light into our darkness illuminating the evil and the good, and showing us a faithful path.

RESPONSE: Our longing will be answered! Those who wait upon God will find hope!

ONE VOICE: As Elizabeth and Mary are shocked by pregnancy

RESPONSE: So may we too be surprised by the new life you hold out to us!

ONE VOICE: Even as the new life they carry will change the world.

RESPONSE: So may new life quicken in your Church with the power of transformation for church and world.

ONE VOICE: Hear us, O Light in the darkness... as we bring our prayers for ourselves, our neighbours, our community, our United Church and our World...

(spoken or silent prayers)

ONE VOICE: Gather our hearts in your hope as we await your coming again, O Christ,

RESPONSE: Come, O Jesus, Come. Amen.

Advent 2

PEACE – Isaiah 40:1-11, Mark 1:1-8

(Preferably prayed meditatively by one or two voices and with good use of silence)

Comfort, comfort my people, says our God.

Comfort us, O Holy One,
Comfort us with the promise of your arrival,

Because we cannot otherwise be comforted.

Our eyes weep for the children killed in war;
Bombed, starved, shot, burned... casualties of our inhumanity.

Our eyes weep for children injured in domestic or community violence,
Beaten, broken, neglected, abused... casualties of brutality.

Our eyes weep for the mothers whose hearts are broken,
And the fathers who hold the bodies of their broken children.

Our hearts weep for all of us who have lost a child.
Our hearts weep for all of us who stand and watch.

Comfort us, O Holy One, O Prince of Peace,
And come to us with peace.

A voice says: "Shout!" and I say, "What shall I shout?"

Our love is as fragile as wildflowers that wither and fade.

But your powerful love holds up the world! I will shout this!

Your love cares for each and every life like a loving Shepherd,
You long to hold the children in your arms, hugging them as you carry them to good pasture.

Comfort us, comfort us O Holy One,
Send your True Child to us again, to lead us in the paths of peace.

Amen.



Advent 3

JOY– Isaiah 61:1-11, John 1:1-8, 19-28

We Rejoice, O God-
The Anointed One has come and is coming;
To preach good news to the poor,
To heal the heartbroken,
To announce freedom to the captives and pardon to prisoners,
... To announce the year of God's Grace.

We Rejoice, O God –
The Word made flesh has come and is coming;
The One present from the beginning,
The Word with God and of God,
The One in whom the light shines,
The One whom darkness cannot overcome is on the way!

We Rejoice, O God –
Because old ruins will give way to a new city,
Because the hungry will feast,
Because the barren soil yields new fruit,
Because we have an inheritance that cannot be taken from us,
The inheritance of Life in the presence of this Coming and Present One.

We rejoice and give thanks, O God,
For your faithfulness is for ever and ever,
Your love is greater than our imaginations,
Your purposes deeper than the deepest oceans...

...And all this is made flesh
In the one whose advent we await;
The Christmas Child, born in oppression,
The Christ Child made a refugee,
The Little One sought and found by outsiders,
The Light of the World born into the darkness.



We Rejoice, O God
In the midst of our joy
In the face of our struggles and pain,
For the gift of your Child redeems us from desolation.
Amen.