

Family Advent Liturgy 2017



First Sunday in Advent

Candle: The first blue or purple candle of Prophecy or Hope.

Sing: “**O Come Divine Messiah**” or you can choose another hymn you like.

Reader: Today is special because it is the beginning of a new season. We call this season “Advent.” What do you think “Advent” means? (elicit – preparation, to come)

Reader: “Advent” is a word that means “to come.” It is a time when we get ready, preparing ourselves for the coming again of Jesus.

What are some things that we might be doing to get ready? (elicit – thinking about Jesus, about how we can become those who hope in Him and His return.)

Reader: What we are doing right now around our Advent wreath is a way of preparing for Christmas and also expecting Jesus to come again. What are some ways we can prepare our hearts?

Child: (Lights the first candle.) I light this candle on the first Sunday in Advent to remind us that we must prepare our hearts for the coming of the Christ Child.

Read Scripture: Mark 13: 24-37 (ERV)

When Jesus, the Son of Man, Comes Again

24 “During the days following that time of trouble,
‘The sun will become dark,
and the moon will not give light.

25 The stars will fall from the sky,
and everything in the sky will be changed.’

26 “Then people will see the Son of Man coming in the clouds with great power and glory.

27 He will send his angels all around the earth. They will gather his chosen people from every part of the earth.

28 “The fig tree teaches us a lesson: When its branches become green and soft, and new leaves begin to grow, then you know that summer is very near. **29** In the same way, when you see all these things happening, you will know that the time is very near, already present. **30** I assure you that all these things will happen while some of the people of this time are still living. **31** The whole world, earth and sky, will be destroyed, but my words will last forever.

32 “No one knows when that day or time will be. The Son and the angels in heaven don’t know when that day or time will be. Only the Father knows. **33** Be careful! Always be ready. You don’t know when that time will be.

34 “It’s like a man who goes on a trip and leaves his house in the care of his servants. He gives each one a special job to do He tells the servant guarding the door to always be ready. And this is what I am telling you now.

35 You must always be ready. You don't know when the owner of the house will come back. He might come in the afternoon, or at midnight, or in the early morning, or when the sun rises.

36 If you are always ready, he will not find you sleeping, even if he comes back earlier than expected.

37 I tell you this, and I say it to everyone: 'Be ready!'"

(Read Scripture the first time, then ask:)

What word or sentence stands out to you?

(allow responses)

(Read Scripture a second time, then ask:)

What do you hear Jesus/God saying to you in this story? *(allow responses)*

(Read Scripture a third time, then ask:)

What do you think the Holy Spirit is asking you/us to do in this story? *(allow responses)*

Reader: Our first candle is symbolic of the long years of waiting and hoping. The prophets, inspired by God, kept reminding the people to look forward to the coming of Messiah who was to redeem people from their sins. The Hebrew word for Jesus means "salvation." Before Jesus left this earth to return to His home in heaven, He told us we should watch and wait for His return.

Prayer time: (Ask God to help us make room for Jesus in our hearts and in our home as we wait for His coming again.)