

## Lighting of the First Advent Candle

*HOPE through Healing and Health*

Today, we begin our celebration of Advent. For these next four Sundays, we will eagerly anticipate the gift that is ours in Jesus Christ. To guide us through this Advent season, we will use the candles arranged in this wreath to help us remember that Jesus is the light of the world. The wreath itself forms a circle because life in Christ has no end.

On this first Sunday of Advent, we light the candle of hope.

**We rejoice that in Jesus Christ, God is with us, Immanuel.**

*(The first candle is lit.)*

Hope is our assurance that God is with us even in the darkest of times.

**Hope is our confidence that God's presence is felt around the world through the work of the Church. Gracious God, help each of us to bring hope into the lives of others.**

Hope is our belief that the promises of God are fulfilled in Jesus Christ.

**God is our hope today and forever! Thanks be to God for His indescribable gift!**

In the village of Ahuas, Honduras, the Moravian Medical Clinic brings hope to a region lacking in medical resources. These doctors and nurses set broken bones, do surgeries, stitch up wounds, and deliver babies.

**We thank God for the healing touch.**

The Dwelling in Winston-Salem, North Carolina, stewards a mobile shower ministry where people experiencing homelessness can be washed and renewed as a reminder of their belovedness. Healing and dignity can come with the gift of water.

**We thank God for the healing touch.**

Waconia Moravian Church in Minnesota hosts community wellness events for youth, which include wellness checks, mental health resources, and the assurance of a safe space where all youth will be welcomed, accepted, and loved.

**We thank God for the healing touch.**

In this time, our congregation celebrates the light of Hope in our community and through our shared ministry:

*(Speak aloud areas of work and ministry around healing and health.)*

And all God's children say:

**We thank God for the healing touch.**

ST. THEODULPH (151 G)

*The hope of our salvation is ours to fill our hearts.*

*Christ came to dwell among us and share our common plight.*

*The whole world's grief and suffering and earth's unspoken pain,  
your perfect hope embraces till only hope remains.*

We pray today for all God's children,

**That each one might know the hope, peace, joy, and love that comes from God to the world through the advent of the Christ Child. Amen.**

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This resource was created in 2024 as a collaboration between these Moravian agencies: The Board of World Mission, the Moravian Ministries Foundation, the Southern Province Commission on Congregational Development, and the Interprovincial Communication

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## Lighting of the Second Advent Candle

*PEACE through Housing and Shelter*

On this Second Sunday of Advent, as we anticipate the coming of the Christ Child, we light the candle of peace.

*(Two candles are lit.)*

In Paul's letter to the Ephesians, he writes that Jesus Christ is our peace. And in the letter to the Galatians, Paul says that Jesus is the Prince of Peace, and the fruit of his presence is peace.

**Christ comes to bring justice, wholeness, and harmony to all people everywhere.**

He wants to continually grant us peace in every situation.

**Jesus, we pray that you will guide our feet into the path of peace.**

Even amid the war in Ukraine, peace has been brought into the hearts of the teachers and students at the New Generation School, located in Kyiv, where the Board of World Mission supports the salaries of four teachers. One of these teachers writes this in a thank you note, "But in all this, I see God's love for me. It is so important to understand that in such periods, you are not alone, that there are people who pray for you, take care of you emotionally, and support you financially, even though they do not know me personally. This is God's grace to me."

**We thank God for those who work for peace.**

Peace of mind is granted to the residents at Moravian Open Door in New York City, where they find the security of shelter and the blessing of community.

**We thank God for those who work for peace.**

Peace of mind is granted to the families assisted by Mission Camp participants from Laurel Ridge, who provide home repair and improvements to low-income families, the elderly, and people living with disabilities.

**We thank God for those who work for peace.**

In this time, our congregation celebrates the light of Peace in our community and through our shared ministry:

*(Speak aloud areas of work and ministry around housing and shelter.)*

And all God's children say:

**We thank God for those who work for peace.**

ST. THEODULPH (151 G)

*The peace of our salvation is ours to fill our hearts.*

*Christ came to dwell among us and share our common plight.*

*The whole world's grief and suffering and earth's unspoken pain,  
your perfect hope embraces till only hope remains.*

We pray today for all God's children,

**That each one might know the hope, peace, joy, and love  
that comes from God to the world through the advent of the  
Christ Child. Amen.**

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## Lighting of the Third Advent Candle

*JOY through Environmental Stewardship*

On this third Sunday of Advent, as we anticipate the coming Christ Child, we light the candle of joy.

**We rejoice that in Jesus Christ, God is with us, Immanuel.**

*(Three candles are lit.)*

When Christ comes into our lives,

**He brings the fullness of joy.**

In Luke's Gospel, we read that when Jesus was born, the angels said his coming was good news and great joy for all people.

**Because Christ has come to us, we can live every day in the joy of the Lord.**

Climate change has brought repeated flooding to areas of Central America, including areas where our Moravian siblings in Nicaragua and Honduras reside. These floods have destroyed the important crops of beans and rice. While this has brought great hardship to them, they have found great joy in shipments of seeds, medicines, and food provided through the Board of World Mission.

**We thank God for those who care for the environment.**

In North Carolina, the Clemmons and Macedonia Moravian congregations are tending native pollinator gardens to boost bee populations.

**We thank God for those who care for the environment.**

The Ephraim Moravian Congregation in Wisconsin and the Union Cross Congregation in North Carolina have installed solar panels to reduce their carbon footprint.

**We thank God for those who care for the environment.**

In this time, our congregation celebrates the light of Joy in our community and through our shared ministry:

*(Speak aloud areas of work and ministry around environmental stewardship.)*

And all God's children say:

**We thank God for those who care for the environment.**

ST. THEODULPH (151 G)

*The joy of our salvation is ours to fill our hearts.*

*Christ came to dwell among us and share our common plight.*

*The whole world's grief and suffering and earth's unspoken pain,  
your perfect hope embraces till only hope remains.*

We pray today for all God's children,

**That each one might know the hope, peace, joy, and love that comes from God to the world through the advent of the Christ Child. Amen.**

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## Lighting of the Fourth Advent Candle

*LOVE through Hunger and Thirst*

On this fourth Sunday of Advent, as we anticipate the coming Christ Child, we light the candle of love.

**We rejoice that in Jesus Christ, God is with us, Immanuel.**

*(Four candles are lit.)*

John 3:16 tells us that God loved the world so much that he send his Son into the world that we might be saved.

**Great is the love God has lavished on us!**

This is how God shared love with the world:

**Jesus was sent into the world so that we might love through Him.**

Jesus said, "A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another."

**If we have love for each other, all people will know that we are Jesus' disciples.**

Contaminated water continues to cause persistent illness in many parts of the developing world. Today, families in the La Moskitia region of Honduras know of God's love because they are receiving water filters that will provide clean water for up to ten years.

**We thank God for tangible expressions of love.**

Tricklebee Café in Milwaukee, Wisconsin and Essentials Café in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania are Pay-as-You-Can eateries that foster community across all socio-economic levels. They create safe, inclusive, and welcoming spaces that provide physical nourishment in the form of a great meal and emotional and spiritual wellness.

**We thank God for tangible expressions of love.**

In Winston-Salem, North Carolina, the Fairview, Bethabara, and Friedberg Congregations are working with Sunnyside Ministries to operate a mobile food pantry that distributes food and essential household items in underserved neighborhoods.

**We thank God for tangible expressions of love.**

In this time, our congregation celebrates the light of Love in our community and through our shared ministry:

*(Speak aloud areas of work and ministry around hunger and thirst.)*

And all God's children say,

**We thank God for tangible expressions of love.**

ST. THEODULPH (151 G)

*Great love alone compelled you to leave eternal light,*

*To come to dwell among us and share our common plight.*

*The whole world's grief and suffering and earth's unspoken pain,  
your perfect hope embraces till only hope remains.*

We pray today for all God's children,

**That each one might know the hope, peace, joy, and love  
that comes from God to the world through the advent of the  
Christ Child. Amen.**

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