

Circle of Light

the Advent Wreath

CHILDREN'S SERMONS FOR
THE SUNDAYS OF ADVENT AND
CHRISTMAS EVE/DAY



Hope • Love • Joy • Peace
Christ

Circle of Light

The First Candle Shines Hope!

A Children's Sermon about the First Advent Candle

Anna was getting excited about Christmas. She and her mom had already started baking cookies. And she was helping her mom and dad put up their decorations. "I hope it snows for Christmas," Anna said as she hung her favorite snowman ornament on their Christmas tree.

A lot of us may have a similar wish but as a "hope" it is not going to happen. Besides the fact that Anna and her family lived in Florida and it hardly ever snows there, snow is not something you can really hope for.

Funny thing about HOPE, our word for today. Hope is not about wishing. HOPE is about knowing something that is for sure. When you say "I Hope" like the hope in the Bible, you know your hope will happen.

Today as we light the first candle on our Advent wreath, we give thanks for the HOPE that God gives us. Sometimes the candle is called the Prophets' Candle. It is about God and what he promises. When God makes a promise, we can hope it will come true because it will. That's what it means to hope—we trust God that what he promises will happen.

God would send a prophet to his people to give his people hope. Sometimes we think about prophets as people who tell the future. What they really are is people that announce the will of God. They gave God's people what they needed to have, which is hope. God wanted them to be saved and by God's grace, they would be saved. God promised to send his Son, who we know is Jesus, to deliver them. They had hope and knew God would free them.

The hope God's people had way back then is the hope we have today. God made promises and we can see how they were fulfilled.

The prophet Isaiah told God's people about the Messiah's mother when he said, "A virgin shall conceive and bear a son and shall call his name Immanuel." The people had hope in that promise. And the promise was kept when Mary had Jesus.

And the prophet Micah told about the place where the Messiah would be born when he said, "But you, O Bethlehem...from you shall come forth for me one who is to be ruler in Israel." And the promise was kept when Jesus was born in Bethlehem.

Now, we see how the prophecies were fulfilled and we have hope as well. Hope that God is always with us. Hope that God loves us and forgives us. Hope that we will live with God in heaven forever. That's a hope we still look forward to.

Advent isn't just about getting ready for Christmas. It's also a season to remember that Jesus is coming again and that when he does he will take us all to heaven. We can be sure. That's what God has promised. And that is a sure hope.

Here's a little "rap" to remind us of our hope...

Light a candle. Light a candle.	(Children repeat)
Light a candle. Call it HOPE!	(Children repeat)
Hope is trust and hope is true.	(Children repeat)
Hope is faith in Christ renewed.	(Children repeat)
Light a candle. Light a candle.	(Children repeat)
Light a candle. Call it HOPE!	(Children repeat)

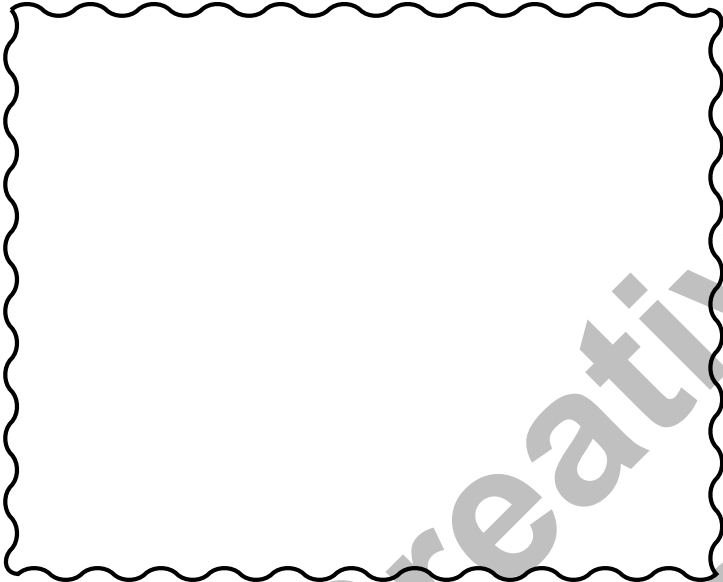
Activities for the First Sunday of Advent

The First Candle Shines Hope!

Drawing

The prophets brought God's message of HOPE.

Draw the child the prophets hoped for.



Scramble

Unscramble these happy and hope-filled words.

TRHPEPO _____

LIMNAMUE _____

EOHP _____

ENDACL _____

EPRMSIO _____

Prophet, Immanuel, Hope, Candle, Promise

Crossword Puzzle

Across

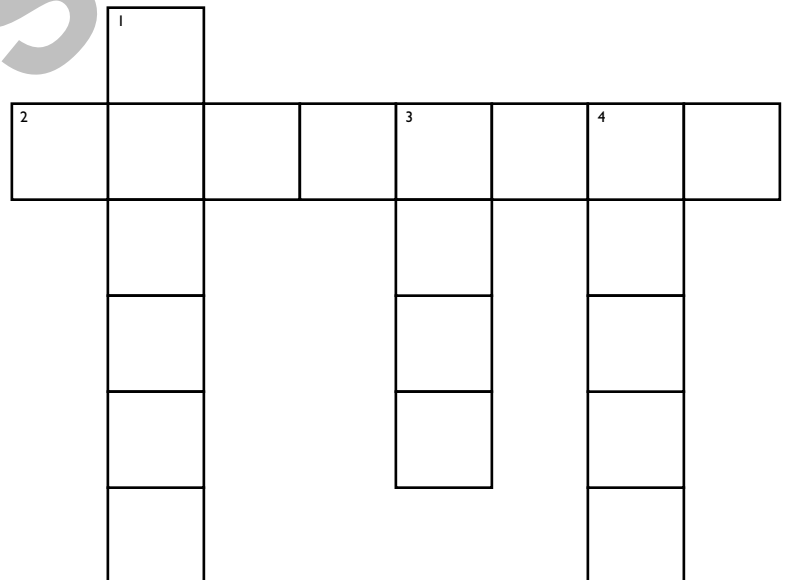
2. The first Advent candle is called the _____ candle.

Down

1. We light candles on an Advent _____.

3. The first candle shines a message of _____.

4. _____ the Lord with all your heart. Proverbs 3:5



Word Search

Find the words related to the first Advent candle.



Hope • Messiah • Faith • Promises • Trust
Prophet • Wreath • Isaiah • Micah

Coloring Sheet for the First Sunday of Advent

The First Candle Shines Hope!

The prophets wrote down
God's promises. They shared
the hopeful news that the
Lord is coming!

I watch in hope for the LORD,
I wait for God my Savior.
Micah 7:7



Circle of Light

The Second Candle Shines Love!

A Children's Sermon for the Second Week of Advent

Four-year-old Henry spied his dad sitting on the living room rug trying to untangle the Christmas lights they were going to hang on their Christmas tree. Dad was too great a target and little Henry took off, running up behind his dad, wrapping his arms around his dad's neck and shouting, "I LOVE YOU, DADDY!" And with that, they fell over in a pile of laughing dad and son.

So, who remembers last week's word? (Allow kids time to fill in the answer.) It was HOPE, right. And HOPE means that we can trust that the promises God makes to his people will come to be.

The promises God makes come to be because of God's gift for us. What is that gift? We have Hope because God LOVES us. That is God's greatest promise—to love us for eternity and he's going to make sure that happens.

It reminds me of a Bible passage a lot of us have memorized. Do you know John 3:16? "For God so loved the world that he gave his only-begotten Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life."

LOVE is what Christmas is about. And that love isn't silly. It isn't sentimental. It's not about sweet things.

LOVE is about God's amazing great love for us, people who often mess up. God's love is strong. It is patient, true and giving, indeed generous. It is selfless and forgiving.

It is LOVE so deep, so profound, so awesome. God would do whatever it took to make sure we would be with Him forever, eternally. The Psalmist wrote: "The Lord is good; his steadfast LOVE endures (lasts) forever" (Ps. 100:5). And what God was willing to do was have his son, Jesus, die for our sins. That's LOVE.

So, today the candle shines a message of LOVE. Sometimes the second candle is called the Bethlehem Candle. It shines to remind us of the time that Mary and Joseph began their journey to Bethlehem where God's LOVE would be born. The birth of God's LOVE is about to be born. In three weeks we will greet God's LOVE born as a baby. When Jesus comes next we will greet God's LOVE come to receive God's people into heaven.

Here's a little rap to remember today's word...

Light a candle. Light a candle.	(Children repeat)
Light a candle. Call it love.	(Children repeat)
Love is God's amazing grace.	(Children repeat)
We see God's love face to face.	(Children repeat)
Light a candle. Light a candle.	(Children repeat)
Light a candle. Call it LOVE!	(Children repeat)

Coloring Sheet for Christmas Eve or Day

The Christ Candle!

CHRIST

Christ comes with God's
bright message of HOPE,
LOVE, JOY and PEACE.
Celebrate the birth of the
Light of God!

