

# CELEBRATING THE FIRST WEEK of ADVENT

Come, let us walk in the light of the Lord!

Coming together as Advent people,  
people waiting and hoping for the Lord,  
we remember that our  
God is always with us.  
Lord, we are the people  
who long to see Your face.



The service opens with four people walking from East, West, South and North carrying a small lit candle. When they arrive at the Advent wreath, each candle bearer in turn says: “I come from the East”, “I come from the North” etc.

Then they together light the first Advent wreath candle saying:

*The nations are gathered together.*

And the all respond:

**The nations are gathered together in hope and expectation.**

**Leader:**

In Isaiah’s vision all the nations stream to God’s house, where they will learn God’s ways, ways of peace and justice.

We ask the Lord to help us to walk down the right path and to make the right decisions to walk in His light and not in the darkness of sin and ignorance.

But sometimes we get distracted; we start to live as though we do not believe in the coming of Christ. We get on with our everyday lives – shopping, working, cooking, dancing and drinking and working some more – we think this is reality, but actually we are numbing ourselves to the real truth. Christ is coming – this belief could change our lives completely.

Are we ready to meet this challenge?

**Leader:** All the nations stream to the house of the Lord.

**All:** Loving God, teach us your ways.

**Leader:** We will walk in the path of the Lord.

**All:** We will walk in the light of Christ.

**Leader:** God will show us the ways of peace and of justice.

**All:** We will walk in the light of Christ

## **Prayer**

Generous loving God,

as we begin this season of preparation and hope,  
teach us how to live in love.

Show us how to walk in your ways,  
ready to learn and ready to change.

Help us always to hold in our hearts and minds  
all those including ourselves who are hungry for Your word and Your grace.

Give us the courage and compassion,  
tenderness and strength

to work for an end to the scandal of the darkness of sin, ignorance  
and poverty and a general disregard for Your ways,  
and to fight for the light of love, of peace and of justice  
as we await Your coming among us.

Come, Lord Jesus, and do not delay.

### **Leader:**

You know the time has come; the moment is here for you to stop sleeping  
and wake up, because by now our salvation is nearer than when we first  
began to believe.

### **All:**

The night is nearly over, daylight is on the way; so let us throw off everything  
that belongs to the darkness and equip ourselves for the light.

*Romans 13:11- 12*

### **Hymn     *City of God***

Awake from your slumber! Arise from your sleep!

A new day is dawning for all those who weep.

The people in darkness have seen a great light.

The Lord of our longing has conquered the night.

Refrain: Let us build the city of God.

May our tears be turned into dancing.

For the Lord our light and our love has turned the night into day.

We are sons of the morning; we are daughters of day.

The One who has loved us has brightened our way.

The Lord of all kindness has called us to be  
a light for all people to set their hearts free.

God is light; in God there is no darkness.

Let us walk in the light. God's children one and all.

O comfort my people make gentle your words,  
proclaim to my city the day of her birth.

O city of gladness now lift up your voice,  
proclaim the good tidings that all may rejoice

– Dan Schutte

**Leader:** The night is nearly over, daylight is on the way; so let us throw off everything that belongs to the darkness and equip ourselves for the light.

**All:** Stay awake and stand ready

**Leader:** Send out your light and your truth;  
They shall be our guide,  
To lead us to Your holy mountain  
To the place where You dwell.

**All:** The night is nearly over. Stay awake and stand ready.

**Leader:** A new day is coming. Throw off the deeds of darkness and put on a mantle of light. Walk in the way of the Lord.

**All:** Daylight is on the way. Stay awake and stand ready.

**Leader:** We come from the East, the North, the South and the West.  
We are your people, God of hope. Loving God, teach us your ways.

**All:** We will walk in the path of the Lord  
We will walk in the light of Christ.

### ***1 Thessalonians 5: 2–10***

For you know perfectly, that the day of the Lord shall so come, as a thief in the night. For when they shall say, peace and security; then shall sudden destruction come upon them, as the pains upon her that is with child, and they shall not escape. But you, brothers and sisters, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief. For all you are the children of light, and children of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness. Therefore, let us not sleep, as others do; but let us watch, and be sober. For they that sleep, sleep in the night; and they that are drunk, are drunk in the night. But let us, who are of the day, be sober, having on the breastplate of faith and charity, and for a helmet the hope of salvation. For God hath not appointed us unto wrath, but unto the purchasing of salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ, Who died for us; that, whether we watch or sleep, we may live together with Him.

### **Reflection Questions for the first week of Advent:**

How is Jesus light for you?

What is the darkness in your life?

How does believing in the coming of the Lord affect your life?

What specifically are you doing to alleviate darkness in our world?

What are your specific Advent preparations this year?

***Matthew 5:14–16***

**You are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hidden. Neither do people light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candle stand where it gives light to all that are in the house.**

**Let your light so shine before others, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father Who is in heaven.**

**Response: *Isaiah 51: 4–7***

**Listen to Me, O My people,  
and give ear to Me,**

**for a law shall go forth from Me,**

**and My judgment shall be a light to the nations.**

**My Just One is near at hand, My Savior is gone forth,**

**and My arms shall judge the people:**

**the people shall look for Me, and shall patiently wait for Me.**

**Lift up your eyes to heaven, and look down to the earth beneath:**

**for the heavens shall vanish like smoke,**

**and the earth shall be worn away like a garment,**

**and the inhabitants shall perish in like manner:**

**but My salvation shall be for ever,**

**and My justice shall not fail.**

**Listen to Me, you that know what is just,**

**My people who have My law in your heart.**

**Prayer**

**Lord Jesus Christ, the world's True Sun,**

**ever rising, never setting,**

**Whose life giving warmth engenders,**

**preserves, nourishes**

**and gladdens all things in heaven and on earth;**

**shine in our souls, we pray.**

**Scatter the night of sin, and the clouds of error.**

**Blaze within us that we may go our ways**

**without stumbling,**

**taking no part in the shameful deeds**

**of those who wander in the dark,**

**but living all our lives as people native to the light.**

## **Hymn**

**Alma Redemptoris Mater, quae pervia caeli  
porta manes, et stella maris, succurre cadenti,  
surgere qui curat, populo: tu quae genuisti,  
natura mirante, tuum sanctum Genitorem,  
Virgo prius ac posterius, Gabrielis ab ore,  
sumens illud Ave, peccatorum miserere.**

**Loving mother of the Redeemer,  
gate of heaven, star of the sea,  
assist your people who have fallen yet strive to rise again.  
To the wonderment of nature you bore your Creator,  
Yet remained a virgin after as before.  
You who received Gabriel's joyful greeting,  
have pity on us poor sinners.**

**Saint John Baptist de La Salle  
and all you holy Brothers who have gone before us,  
help us to follow the star of faith this Advent.**

**Live Jesus in our hearts. Forever!**