

Advent Candle Lighting Liturgy 2021



Week 1: November 28, 2021

TIME TO GO HOME

[Jeremiah 33:14-16](#) & [Luke 21:25-36](#)

Reader One: We have endured these past few years and know that there is more to face before us. We don't know if we have the strength to withstand what might be around the next corner. And we wonder who will stand with us, who will have our back, who will occupy our corner.

Reader Two: Who is with us? That is what we begin to wonder these days. Who will light our way and chart our course? Who is on our side, who will welcome us home again?

Reader One: Home. The prophet Jeremiah speaks of a branch that will be raised. Jesus spoke of a Son of Man that will descend. Both point to a hope. A hope that calls us home. Our true home, where we're welcomed and loved and included. Where there is justice and equality and peace. It's time, this Advent season, time to go home.

Reader Two: We light this candle, as a sign of our hope, our strong hope that there is a way to go home. To the home in Christ, and it starts with us, and it starts here, and it starts now. It's time to go home.

Light the first candle on the Advent wreath

Week 2: December 5, 2021

THE FEAR OF HOME

Malachi 3:1-4 & Luke 3:1-6

Reader One: For many of us, the call to head home is one of joy and of hope. We can't wait to reconnect with family, with history and tradition, with a wonderful time of freedom and loving support. We can't wait to go home.

Reader Two: There are those who fear going home, however, and there are times when going home brings back memories that are not so good, not so healing. We are reminded of when we didn't fit in, when we didn't measure up, when we weren't loved like we needed to be loved. Home can be a difficult place for some.

Reader One: The prophet Malachi tells us that even when we are in the hottest of fires, there is a presence who can make us better, who can refine and purify. John the Baptist tells us that the road home is always under construction, mountains leveled, and valleys filled in, to make smooth the path that leads us to our true destination, where we can live in peace and unity with all.

Reader Two: We light these candles, the candle of hope and the candle of peace, as a sign of our assurance that though the road is hard, we believe it is worth the journey. It is time to go home.

Light two candles of the Advent wreath.

Week 3: December 12, 2021

THE JOY OF HOME

Zephaniah 3:14-20 & Luke 3:7-18

Reader One: It's a reunion, every time we go home, every time we embrace those we love, no matter how long it has been. It feels like sunrise, like the clouds are parting and the rain has ended. It is joy, nothing less than pure joy to grab hold of those who are home for us, who make home for us. Whether we wake up to them every day, or travel many miles to see them again, it is joy to go home.

Reader Two: The prophet Zephaniah tells us to rejoice at the thought of going home. The prophet tells us to imagine being set free, being unburdened, being released to live, to fully live in the grace and wonder of life itself, surrounded by those who love us like no one else. And then to live like that was our truth even now, even here. It is joy to go home.

Reader One: John the Baptist reminds us, however, that it takes choices to live in this joy. It doesn't just happen; we choose to make life a joy by how we love others, by how we serve and give and care for others, by how we do the job we do and how we impact the world around us. We build joy as we build a home in this world and the next.

Reader Two: We light these candles, the candle of hope, and of peace, and of joy, as a sign that we are on our way home, and we walk with a skip in our step because we can see the destination, and it is pure joy. It is time to go home.

Light three candles in the Advent wreath. If using a rose or pink colored candle in the wreath, this is the time to light that one.

Week 4: December 19, 2021

THE BLESSING OF HOME

Micah 5:2-5a & Luke 1:39-45

Reader One: Sometimes when we are trying something new, or when we are facing a difficult decision, or when we want to celebrate something, or when we just feel lost and alone and uncertain about life, the universe and everything, we need a blessing. We don't always think of it that way, or word it like that. We say we need advice, or support, or companions, or someone to come along beside and lift us up again so we can see more than the tops of our shoes. We seek a blessing.

Reader Two: For many of us, we go home; we ask mom; we talk to dad, or brothers and sisters, close friends, those we grew up with, those who know us best. We want them alongside; we want to be in their presence. Somehow, we know that being there, being home, will make all things better. Maybe it won't be fixed, or solved, or wished away, but at least we won't be alone. We seek a blessing.

Reader One: Mary, faced with an incomprehensible burden and gift, ran to Cousin Elizabeth's house, looking for someone who knew a little of what she was going through, looking for a place to hide until the reality of her condition could become something real. And she received a blessing. The prophet Micah spoke of a blessing coming to an unexpected place, an unassuming town. Yet by God's grace would become the means through which God would bless the whole world. Bethlehem, the little town of blessing. We seek a blessing.

Reader Two: We light these candles, the candle of hope, of peace, of joy and of today, love, as a sign that we know blessing and we know waiting for blessing to be felt and lived. We light these candles as a sign that we still seek a blessing. It's time to go home.

Light all four candles in the Advent wreath

Christmas Eve: December 24, 2021

WELCOME HOME

Isaiah 9:2-7 and Luke 2:1-20

Reader One: This night, this night is a night to remember. A night when home broke in on us. A night when we were not forgotten or alone or abandoned. This night. This night is the night when here and there became one, when past and future combined in a breathless present. This is a night when we are home, in ourselves, in this family, in the God who loved us enough to walk beside us.

Reader Two: We gather in the night to proclaim the light. We shrug off despair and embrace hope. We set aside conflict and choose peace. We push away despair by claiming joy. We overcome hate by rising into love. Because this night we know, even in the shadows of our doubts, we know that we are loved. That's what it means to be home.

Reader One: We light these candles, hoping to become the light, hoping to radiate light by how we live. We light these candles to create a space called home in this place, in our place, in inner places. We light these candles to declare that unto us a Savior is born, who is Christ the Lord. Welcomed home by angels singing and shepherds kneeling. Welcomed home by those like us who have worshiped for thousands of years. Welcomed home again tonight, right here, right now, in us.

Reader Two: It's time to be home.

Light the Christ Candle and all candles of the wreath.