

Advent Prayers for a Household *by PJ Hobbs***Why is this faith practice important?**

Advent helps us to wait, anticipate, and prepare for the many ways Christ comes into the world, including at Christmas.

These prayers are intended for use in homes, regardless of the size and form of the household (e.g. singles, friends, couples, children, teens and parents).

Advent Prayers may be used once a week, or several times a week. This prayer guide can be used as is, or expanded with other resources and improvisation. Folks are encouraged to add readings, activities, discussion topics that are meaningful to those in their household.

**Materials Needed**

An Advent wreath with candles can serve as a focal point for the household, but it is not completely necessary.

How to do it

A Time to Come Together: Gather the household using the opening sentences on the following page. Then read a suggested passage from the Bible, or choose your own.

A Time to Be Together: After the Bible reading, the household will be together in its own way. Consider the following suggestions:

- Share a meal at table.
- Enter into silence, for as little as one minute, or as much 30 minutes. Silence may be marked by stillness, pondering the Bible passage, or gazing on the Advent candles or an icon. Alternatively, silence may be combined with a household task or Christmas preparation. After silence, bring the household back together, perhaps with a bell.
- Have a discussion, either during the meal or in a different setting. Consider the questions on the following page.

A Time to Pray Together: Pray silently or aloud, and/or use the litany on the following page.

A Time to Go into the World Together: It is important that the household acknowledges its vocation within the wider world. Use the final lines of the liturgy to close your time together.

Resources for this practice

Come Together *If using a wreath and/or candles:*

Leader We light these candles in hope and expectation.

All Jesus is the light of the World.

Leader We wait joyfully for the coming of Jesus.

All Into the world, into the Church, into our home Come, Lord Jesus, quickly come!

Bible Verses for Each Week

Week of Advent I Therefore you also must be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an unexpected hour. (Matthew 24:44)

Week of Advent II May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit. (Romans 15:13)

Week of Advent III You also must be patient. Strengthen your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is near. (James 5:8)

Week of Advent IV Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign. Look, the young woman is with child and shall bear a son, and shall name him Immanuel. (Isaiah 7:14)

Be Together *Meal, activity, silence, or discussion: Consider the following discussion questions:*

- What happened today that reminded you how much God loves the world?
- Was there a time today when you felt particularly close to Jesus?
- What might we do this Advent and Christmas as an act of loving service?

Pray Together *Offer prayers, silently or aloud. The following litany may be used.*

Leader That the Church will be a place of hope and a sign of the goodness of God.

All Hear us, Lord of Glory, for you we wait.

Leader That all people will serve the needs of others and care for creation.

All Hear us, Lord of Glory, for you we wait.

Leader That this home will be a place of welcome, patience, truth, safety, and love.

All Hear us, Lord of Glory, for you we wait.

All say the Lord's Prayer.

Go into the World Together

Leader Peace be upon us and within this house,

All And in all the world.

Leader Let us live Good News wherever we may be.

All Amen, Amen!

About the author

Peter John Hobbs (PJ) is the Director of Mission for the Anglican Diocese of Ottawa (Canada) and an Instructor in D.Min Studies at Virginia Theological Seminary. PJ and Diane are raising and/or launching three daughters: Hannah, Mary Grace, and Rachel.

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