



PREPARING TO BECOME THE
**BELOVED
COMMUNITY**

ADVENT-YEAR B

Preparing to Become the Beloved Community

Year B

Advent 2023, 2026, 2029

Session One: Advent 1 - Telling the Truth about Our Churches and Race

Session Two: Advent 2 - Repairing the Breach in Institutions and Society

Session Three: Advent 3 - Practicing the Way of Love in the Pattern of Jesus

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Session Five: Christmas Eve or Christmas Day – Lighting the Candle

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Learn more about Becoming the Beloved Community and The Episcopal Church

at www.episcopalchurch.org/reconciliation.

Share reflections and queries by writing to reconciliation@episcopalchurch.org or on social media using [#belovedcommunity](https://twitter.com/belovedcommunity).

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ABOUT THE ADVENT WREATH LITURGY

The Advent wreath is believed to have originated with a Lutheran pastor working among the poor in Germany in the late 1800s. Tradition states that the children would ask every day if Christmas had arrived, so he arranged candles (four large candles for the weeks and then smaller ones for the days) to help the children mark time and journey with Mary and Joseph to Bethlehem without leaving Germany. The wreath came to appear as it does today through the adoption of the practice by German Catholics, who decreased the wreath to just the candles we use today. Different traditions attribute different meanings to the candles, and even use different colors, but the purpose remains the same: to provide Christians with a way of marking time through the season of anticipation until we reach the birth of Jesus. For some, the wreath is a visual pilgrimage through Advent, similar to the idea behind the recreation of the creche in churches and homes started by St. Francis of Assisi as a way of helping the poor experience holy sites from home. For many, this Advent will be spent at home and lighting the Advent wreath will serve as a method for journeying with Mary and Joseph to Bethlehem. Our liturgy comes from a place of social justice and Becoming Beloved Community. It is our hope that the prayers throughout this document will help you journey through this time of waiting and anticipation for when Christ is born again in our hearts and in our world. This liturgy is written for a literacy level of 5th grade and up. For smaller children, you can adapt the liturgy by saying the “Reader 1” section and lighting the candles.

WELCOME

*In the wilderness prepare the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a highway for our God...
Then the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all people shall see it together. - Isaiah 40:3, 5*

Advent is a season of preparation: shopping for gifts, decorating our homes and sanctuaries. Advent is also a time to prepare our hearts and communities for the coming of Christ, the Almighty God who came among us poor and homeless, a stranger and a child. There may be no better time to reflect on how we as the Episcopal Church embrace the Holy One who continues to draw near in the neighbor, the stranger, the refugee, or the one who seems most “other” to you. It is the ideal season to commit to becoming Beloved Community and growing loving, liberating, life-giving relationships across the human family of God.

We make the journey not only as individual Christians and congregations, but as a whole church. This spring, Presiding Bishop Michael Curry and President of the House of Deputies Gay Clark Jennings and their supporting officers shared “Becoming Beloved Community,” a new vision document that lays out the Episcopal Church’s long-term commitment to racial healing, reconciliation, and justice. A second resource — “Becoming Beloved Community Where You Are” — details many ways for individuals and congregations to take concrete steps toward change and healing. Both are available at www.episcopalchurch.org/beloved-community, along with a host of resources for faithful reflection and action.

The journey is framed around the labyrinth. Why? In the ministry of racial healing and justice, none of us walks a straight line. We enter the labyrinth wherever God has provided an opening – telling the truth about our church’s story around race; discerning and proclaiming God’s dream of Beloved Community where we are; learning and practicing Jesus’ way of healing and love; and bravely working to transform systemic racial injustice. We keep moving from one quadrant to another and back. No one is ever really finished. That is the way of ongoing spiritual formation.

As you “walk” sections of this labyrinth, gather a group, and together engage the scriptures, reflections, and activities. Designate a facilitator who will carefully preview the session. Set aside at least 45 minutes for each session, and consider these **Conversation Tips**:

Speak from your own experience. Be genuinely curious about what others share. Imagine you can disagree without someone being wrong. Avoid debate and stay with the story. Seek Christ in others and seek to embody his loving, liberating, life-giving way.

You will find printer-friendly online resources and alternative activities for a variety of contexts – at www.episcopalchurch.org/beloved-community. Feel free to also explore daily offerings and ongoing conversation about Becoming Beloved Community on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram.

Presiding Bishop Michael Curry regularly welcomes us to live not just as the church but as the Episcopal branch of the Jesus Movement: the ongoing community that follows Jesus into loving, liberating, life-giving relationship with God, each other, and creation. May God bless and grow us into vibrant embodiments of the Christ we welcome and follow, this Advent and always.

Prayerfully offered,

The Episcopal Church’s Racial Reconciliation Team
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ADVENT I

Telling the Truth about Our Churches and Race

Contributors:

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Pray the Collect for This Sunday

Almighty God, give us grace to cast away the works of darkness, and put on the armor of light, now in the time of this mortal life in which your Son Jesus Christ came to visit us in great humility; that in the last day, when he shall come again in his glorious majesty to judge both the living and the dead, we may rise to the life immortal; through him who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

Read the Scripture Together: Isaiah 64:1-9

64 O that you would tear open the heavens and come down,
so that the mountains would quake at your presence—

² as when fire kindles brushwood
and the fire causes water to boil—

to make your name known to your adversaries,
so that the nations might tremble at your presence!

³ When you did awesome deeds that we did not expect,
you came down, the mountains quaked at your presence.

⁴ From ages past no one has heard,
no ear has perceived,

no eye has seen any God besides you,
who works for those who wait for him.

⁵ You meet those who gladly do right,
those who remember you in your ways.

But you were angry, and we sinned;
because you hid yourself we transgressed.

⁶ We have all become like one who is unclean,
and all our righteous deeds are like a filthy cloth.

We all fade like a leaf,
and our iniquities, like the wind, take us away.

⁷ There is no one who calls on your name,
or attempts to take hold of you;
for you have hidden your face from us,
and have delivered us into the hand of our iniquity.

⁸ Yet, O Lord, you are our Father;
we are the clay, and you are our potter;
we are all the work of your hand.

⁹ Do not be exceedingly angry, O Lord,
and do not remember iniquity forever.
Now consider, we are all your people.

Reflection: Telling the Truth about Our Churches and Race

Isaiah cries out, for God has hidden God's face from the Israelites. Because God is absent, the Israelites notice that they have sinned and are unclean. Their deeds are "like a filthy cloth." They beg God to not be angry and to not remember their iniquity.

We are not merely onlookers, for our story is like that of the Israelites. We, too, harbor filthy cloths: injustices inflicted on neighbors. Legacies of our past haunt our present. We are called to recognize these filthy cloths and "release our hold on false narratives," as the Rev. Canon Stephanie Spellers writes in "The Church Cracked Open."

The effect of telling the truth can be like the quaking of the mountains that Isaiah describes. Telling the truth is not just life-changing but world-changing. It breaks the ground open to allow new growth and the beginning of reconciliation.

Jesus comes to rock our world. He comes to shake us, cleanse us, and remold us into wholeness as a Beloved Community. How can we hear, repent, and respond so that God's vision for Beloved Community becomes reality? That vision is the hope we hold onto as we light this week's candle.

In the Labyrinth: Telling the Truth about Our Churches and Race

We cannot become what God created us to be unless we also examine who we have been and who we are today. Who are you, as a church community? What groups are included and excluded? What things have you, as a church, done and left undone? What are the prophetic voices among you saying? How does hearing the truth shake you? How does God's love cleanse you? How are you remolded to bring the hope of Beloved Community to a world sullied by injustice?

Make It Real: The Potter and the Clay

Setup: Gather in groups of two to six, or in families. Have enough clay for each participant to have a good-sized ball of moldable clay (3- to 4-inch diameter) and possible shaping tools.

Share the conversation tips and these additional ideas:

- Speak from a genuine place that comes from your heart.
- Be willing to intentionally listen to the others.
- One group, one conversation—no side conversations.
- Participate by mutual invitation—each speaker will invite the next.
- It's OK to "pass," but everyone's participation is encouraged.

Instructions: "Prepare" the clay by rolling it into a ball, taking care to smooth out any blemishes. While doing this, imagine the Potter preparing the clay that was eventually shaped to become you. Ask yourself: What has God imagined for your life? Take a minute or two for this activity.

"Mold" the clay into any image. This could be a person's likeness; your own, maybe. It could be an animal shape, a mountain, a tree, or anything that stirs your imagination. While shaping the clay, imagine the hands of the Potter shaping the world. You may use your fingers or shaping tools as desired and available. Take about 10 minutes on this activity.

When everyone in your group is done, take turns describing what the Potter's hands created, and what moved you to create this image. Take about a minute for each person.

"Tear open" the piece you have created to reveal the truth that lives inside. Spend about 15 minutes on this part.

- What is your truth about your role in creation?

- What is your truth about how you were shaped to be a part of the Beloved Community?
- How is your understanding of Beloved Community revealed and touched by your truth?

Finally, press each person's clay into one clay mass and roll out a perfect ball with no blemishes. What will the Potter do with this new collection of the whole?

"We are the clay, and you are the potter, we are the work of your hand."

How has this exercise given you a new perspective of what Beloved Community is, and your role in it?

Lighting the Candle

Readings can be said by one or two different people depending on the needs of your family or congregation.

All: Light of the world, in grace and beauty,
mirror of God's eternal face,
transparent flame of love's free duty,
You bring salvation to our human race.¹

Reader 1: Creator of all people and all cultures, we light the first candle of Advent as the light of hope, which brings truth out of the darkness.

The first candle is lit.

Reader 2: May hope continue to grow as the fire kindles truth-telling and burns down all walls of exclusiveness.

All: Creator of all tongues and races, may we be willing to be broken off from the past, become aware of the hurts and pain we have caused others, and turn toward you. Guide us by this light of hope and love to bring forth your promised dream of a Beloved Community. Amen.²

¹ Throughout the liturgy, the prayer said at the beginning is slightly adapted from the Phos Hilaron on page 23 of *Enriching Our Worship 1*, the word "human" was added before "race".

² Throughout the liturgy the prayers said by Reader 2 and at the end have been adapted from the Liturgy for Lighting Advent Candles from the United Church of Christ: https://www.ucc.org/worship_worship-ways_year-a_ace_advent-liturgy-for

ADVENT II

Repairing the Breach in Institutions and Society

Contributors:

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Ruth Willerth, lay minister in the Episcopal Dioceses of Western New York and Northwestern Pennsylvania

The Rev. Nancy Searby, deacon in the Episcopal Diocese of Virginia

The Rev. Elvira Beracochea, deacon in the Episcopal Diocese of Virginia

Pray the Collect for this Sunday

Merciful God, who sent your messengers the prophets to preach repentance and prepare the way for our salvation: Give us grace to heed their warnings and forsake our sins, that we may greet with joy the coming of Jesus Christ our Redeemer; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.

Read the Scripture Together: Mark 1:1-8

1 The beginning of the good news of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

² As it is written in the prophet Isaiah,
“See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you,
who will prepare your way;

³ the voice of one crying out in the wilderness:
‘Prepare the way of the Lord,
make his paths straight.’”

⁴ John the baptizer appeared in the wilderness, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. ⁵ And people from the whole Judean countryside and all the people of Jerusalem were going out to him, and were baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins. ⁶ Now John was clothed with camel’s hair, with a leather belt around his waist, and he ate locusts and wild honey. ⁷ He proclaimed, “The one who is more powerful than I is coming after me; I am not worthy to stoop down and untie the thong of his sandals. ⁸ I have baptized you with water; but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit.”

Reflection: Repairing the Breach in Institutions and Society

As John the Baptist offered the baptism of repentance to all in the countryside and the city, we, too, need to hear the call and repent. Thus we will be able to truly praise God, give thanks, love our neighbor, pray for justice, and do God’s will. In this spirit, we share the following prayer:

Lord, come into our brokenness and into our lives with your love that heals all. Transform our pride and replace it with humility and vulnerability. Allow us to make space for your correction and redemption. Allow us to bow down with humble hearts, hearts of repentance. Bind us together in true unity and restoration.

In the Labyrinth: Repairing the Breach in Institutions and Society

Christ heals our hurts. His love manifests in how we live our baptismal vows and address injustice in our institutions and systems. What institutions and systems are broken? How will we participate in repairing, restoring, and healing people, institutions, and systems?

Make It Real: Respecting the Dignity of Every Person

Prior to Activity: A week prior, invite participants to record a meaningful image of something in their neighborhood that shows one of the following: what is broken; a symbol of how someone’s dignity is being

respected; or a symbol of someone respecting the dignity of others. This recording could be a memory, a written description, a drawing, or a photo with a camera or cell phone.

Instructions: The assembled group is divided into groups of not more than four to five people. Each person shares their image with the group. Next, each person tells the group why the image is important to them. As one person explains, the rest of the group tries to understand why it matters to them—no need to agree, but seek to understand and empathize.

Leave 10 minutes at the end to discuss:

- What stands out for you?
- What surprised you?
- What challenged you?
- What parallels do you see between our call to repair the breach and our community?
- What next steps do you have for building Beloved Community in your neighborhood?

Lighting the Candle

Readings can be said by one or two different people depending on the needs of your family or congregation.

The first candle is lit.

All: Light of the world, in grace and beauty,
mirror of God's eternal face,
transparent flame of love's free duty,
You bring salvation to our human race.³

Reader 1: Beloved Creator, we light the second candle of Advent for peace and justice.

The second candle is lit.

Reader 2: Kindle the fire within us. Prepare our hearts to be transformed by the birth of your Son.

All: Beloved Creator, You love us so much. Give us faith and courage to shower the world with your love. Help us to love each other as you love us, and in doing so, work to repair the breach created through injustice and oppression. Help us to heal ourselves, your land, and your people. This Advent, teach us to be your Beloved Community. Amen.⁴

³ Throughout the liturgy, the prayer said at the beginning is slightly adapted from the Phos Hilaron on page 23 of *Enriching Our Worship 1*, the word "human" was added before "race".

⁴ Throughout the liturgy the prayers said by Reader 2 and at the end have been adapted from the Liturgy for Lighting Advent Candles from the United Church of Christ: https://www.ucc.org/worship_worship-ways_year-a_ace_advent-liturgy-for

ADVENT III

Practicing the Way of Love in the Pattern of Jesus

Contributors:

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Pray the Collect for This Sunday

Stir up your power, O Lord, and with great might come among us; and, because we are sorely hindered by our sins, let your bountiful grace and mercy speedily help and deliver us; through Jesus Christ our Lord, to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit, be honor and glory, now and for ever. Amen.

Read the Scripture Together: I Thessalonians 5:16-24

¹⁶ Rejoice always, ¹⁷ pray without ceasing, ¹⁸ give thanks in all circumstances, for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you. ¹⁹ Do not quench the Spirit. ²⁰ Do not despise prophecies, ²¹ but test everything; hold fast to what is good; ²² abstain from every form of evil.

²³ May the God of peace himself sanctify you entirely, and may your spirit and soul and body be kept sound and blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. ²⁴ The one who calls you is faithful, and he will do this.

Reflection: Practicing the Way of Love in the Pattern of Jesus

In reflecting upon the Scripture reading from I Thessalonians, we recognize that, as busy, tired, and distracted people, we sometimes want a playbook or manual for how to live our lives. In many ways, Paul gives us exactly that in the first three verses: “Rejoice always, pray continually, give thanks in all circumstances...”

How might we live our lives differently if we followed the playbook of rejoice, pray, and be thankful?

In the Labyrinth: Practicing the Way of Love in the Pattern of Jesus

Loving our neighbor takes formation, practice, and commitment. How might we reject the evil of unforgiveness toward others? How might we develop a practice of looking for the good in others, to kindle the flame of God’s loving presence in and among us?

Make It Real: Praying for Others

Prologue: In the third week of Advent, we light the candle of joy, remembering Paul’s instruction to the church that practicing the way of love begins with “rejoice always.” We can understand, therefore, that God calls us to love one another with joy, and to receive joy in the process. Paul tells the Thessalonians (and us!) exactly how to do this: by praying without ceasing, and giving thanks in all circumstances. This week’s “Make it Real” activity is designed to do both.

Instructions: Read the reflection on I Thessalonians for this week. After hearing the reflection, invite participants to take a few moments of quiet meditation and prayer to think about people in the community for whom they are thankful or whom they want to especially name in prayer. These people may be first responders, teachers, volunteers, sanitation workers, day laborers, people who have been marginalized, first inhabitants of the land they are praying on, and others.

After a few moments of individual reflection, invite the participants to share the people for whom they thought to pray. On a large sheet of paper, as participants are sharing, make a list of those to be prayed for. Divide the participants into groups of three to five people and give each group a section of the list. Invite each

small group to take their portion of the prayer list and write a prayer. This should take about five to 10 minutes.

When the prayers have been written, invite the group to come back together and share the written prayers as a way of giving thanks and holding joy for the whole community.

Additional options: As an extension of this activity, the prayers could be collected and printed into a small booklet and made available for the group, and others, to carry with them or keep in their homes or cars. Individuals could add their own community prayers and walk or drive through the community, stopping at the various places and praying the prayers. Booklets could also be taken out into the community as well, and more prayers could be written by the community, such as at a food pantry, another church, or a community group such as a knitting club.

Lighting the Candle

Readings can be said by one or two different people depending on the needs of your family or congregation.

The first and second candles are lit.

All: Light of the world, in grace and beauty,
mirror of God's eternal face,
transparent flame of love's free duty,
You bring salvation to our human race.⁵

Reader 1: Sacred Mystery, we light the third candle of Advent for joy and grace.

The third candle is lit.

Reader 2: We kindle it with joy. We hear the joy in rejoicing, praying, and giving thanks. We strive, through building Beloved Community, to answer the call to love our neighbor. We recall the times we have struggled to practice your Way of Love and yet said "yes" to continuing on your journey.

All: Sacred Mystery, visit us and fill us with your Spirit. Bring your good news to life within us. Give us courage to walk in the way of the beloved community, that you set before us. Amen.⁶

⁵ Throughout the liturgy, the prayer said at the beginning is slightly adapted from the Phos Hilaron on page 23 of *Enriching Our Worship 1*, the word "human" was added before "race".

⁶ Throughout the liturgy the prayers said by Reader 2 and at the end have been adapted from the Liturgy for Lighting Advent Candles from the United Church of Christ: https://www.ucc.org/worship_worship-ways_year-a_ace_advent-liturgy-for

ADVENT IV

Proclaiming the Dream of Beloved Community

Contributors:

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Marc Gutierrez

The Rev. Thom Sinclair, deacon

Pray the Collect for This Sunday

Purify our conscience, Almighty God, by your daily visitation, that your Son Jesus Christ, at his coming, may find in us a mansion prepared for himself; who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.

Read the Scripture Together: 2 Samuel 7:1-11,16

7 Now when the king was settled in his house, and the Lord had given him rest from all his enemies around him, ² the king said to the prophet Nathan, “See now, I am living in a house of cedar, but the ark of God stays in a tent.” ³ Nathan said to the king, “Go, do all that you have in mind; for the Lord is with you.”

⁴ But that same night the word of the Lord came to Nathan: ⁵ Go and tell my servant David: Thus says the Lord: Are you the one to build me a house to live in? ⁶ I have not lived in a house since the day I brought up the people of Israel from Egypt to this day, but I have been moving about in a tent and a tabernacle. ⁷ Wherever I have moved about among all the people of Israel, did I ever speak a word with any of the tribal leaders of Israel, whom I commanded to shepherd my people Israel, saying, “Why have you not built me a house of cedar?” ⁸ Now therefore thus you shall say to my servant David: Thus says the Lord of hosts: I took you from the pasture, from following the sheep to be prince over my people Israel; ⁹ and I have been with you wherever you went, and have cut off all your enemies from before you; and I will make for you a great name, like the name of the great ones of the earth. ¹⁰ And I will appoint a place for my people Israel and will plant them, so that they may live in their own place, and be disturbed no more; and evildoers shall afflict them no more, as formerly, ¹¹ from the time that I appointed judges over my people Israel; and I will give you rest from all your enemies. Moreover the Lord declares to you that the Lord will make you a house. ¹⁶ Your house and your kingdom shall be made sure forever before me; your throne shall be established forever.

Reflection: Proclaiming the Dream of Beloved Community

In 2 Samuel, we learn that God made a covenant with David. God promised to give David's people their own place, a place where they will be protected forever. David had offered to build God a house, but God does not reside within walls. God moves about among and through the people.

In this house that God will provide, God's people will not be disturbed or afflicted. It will be a place where they can rest—a place where they will be safe for eternity.

Just as God cannot be confined to a house of cedar, God cannot be confined to a church building. God, as Beloved Community, as the true church, where we can rest and be truly safe, will reveal Godself within our buildings and out among people, wherever God's people can be found. This Beloved Community is a manifestation of God's love. It is not something we can create single-handedly, but is only something that God can create through us. On this fourth Sunday of Advent, we celebrate this God of love and the emergence of Beloved Community; wherever it may be found.

In the Labyrinth: Proclaiming the Dream of Beloved Community

Healing, reconciliation, and justice begins with our stories, shared history, and deepest longings. It begins with truth-telling. It begins with acknowledging things done and left undone. If you listened closely to your church, your neighbors, and civic partners, what might you hear in their experiences around race, ethnicity, and culture? What experiences do you hear where ‘walls’ were created that try to limit/disregard God’s justice (God’s love), from entering? Is there a shared vision of Beloved Community? What acts of reconciliation can you commit to that break down those barriers and foster Beloved Community?

Make It Real: Sharing God with the Beloved Community

Setup: Prior to the event, write down the conversation tips and focus questions on large format paper and place on a wall or easel for folks to see during the activity. Depending on the group size, you may want to break into smaller groups. Aim for no more than five to seven people for each group.

Share the **Conversation Tips**.

Silent Reflection: Invite participants to sit in silent reflection as you read the focus questions, and for a few minutes afterward.

- In what ways do we unintentionally (or intentionally?) keep God and the Good News in a box or locked up in the church?
- Where do you feel safe and planted/grounded/restful/peaceful? How can we share that experience with others?
- How can we take God out of the church and help others find a home in God and God find a home in them?

Responding to the Spirit: Invite participants to spend one to two minutes sharing their responses/reflections to the focus questions.

Invite someone to monitor the time and keep each reflection under two minutes. Ensure everyone who wants to speak has the opportunity. If there is time, you can do a second round.

Wrap up: Invite participants to offer short, one-minute responses to the following prompt:

Is there anything this group can take forward, individually or collectively, that would enable us to share God’s love and proclaim the dream of Beloved Community with others?

Lighting the Candle

Readings can be said by one or two different people depending on the needs of your family or congregation.

The first, second, and third candles are lit.

All: Light of the world, in grace and beauty,
 mirror of God’s eternal face,
 transparent flame of love’s free duty,
 You bring salvation to our human race.⁷

Reader 1: Sacred mystery, we light the fourth candle of Advent for love and compassion.

The fourth candle is lit.

⁷ Throughout the liturgy, the prayer said at the beginning is slightly adapted from the Phos Hilaron on page 23 of *Enriching Our Worship 1*, the word “human” was added before “race”.

Reader 2: We kindle it with love. We welcome divine love; whether it breaks through in the form of a holy infant or settles unexpectedly within our own open and thirsty hearts.

All: Sacred Mystery, may we be channels of your divine love that knits us into your Beloved Community, a community that respects, heals, empowers, serves, celebrates, and glorifies you. Amen.⁸

⁸ Throughout the liturgy the prayers said by Reader 2 and at the end have been adapted from the Liturgy for Lighting Advent Candles from the United Church of Christ: https://www.ucc.org/worship_worship-ways_year-a_ace_advent-liturgy-for

CHRISTMAS EVE OR CHRISTMAS DAY

Lighting the Candle

Readings can be said by one or two different people depending on the needs of your family or congregation.

The first, second, third, and fourth candles are lit.

All: Light of the world, in grace and beauty,
mirror of God's eternal face,
transparent flame of love's free duty,
You bring salvation to our human race.⁹

Reader 1: Rejoice, people of God. The Light has come into the world. Sacred Mystery, we now light the candle of your nativity.

The Christ candle is lit.

Reader 2: With the company of heaven and with sounds of great joy, you come to us. Now is the time of celebration and joy.

All: Blessed Jesus, our Life and Light, thank you for coming this night (day) to us. Fill us with joy at your coming, and make us instruments of your love. Help us to love those you loved, the least, the last, and the lost. Amen.¹⁰

⁹ Throughout the liturgy, the prayer said at the beginning is slightly adapted from the Phos Hilaron on page 23 of *Enriching Our Worship 1*, the word "human" was added before "race".

¹⁰ Throughout the liturgy the prayers said by Reader 2 and at the end have been adapted from the Liturgy for Lighting Advent Candles from the United Church of Christ: https://www.ucc.org/worship_worship-ways_year-a_ace_advent-liturgy-for