

WEEK 5: THE CANDLE OF *Light*

Advent is a time of waiting, of hope and expectation, but also a time of not knowing. Isaiah was called to prophesy of the great Deliverer, who would save his people from their sins. The people of Israel were living in a state of deep darkness. But Isaiah spoke of a coming Messiah, who would not only bring light with him but would be the Light of lights. He would be the Light of the world to the people who walked in darkness. The people of Israel could not see or imagine how this could be. They were in darkness, not knowing what was ahead.

We too seem to be in dark times not able to see the path ahead or know what each day or week or year will bring. We are waiting in darkness as an invisible enemy, as a global pandemic rages.

There is loss of work, businesses closing, empty church buildings, closed borders, families and friends cut off from each other. People are confused, angry and feel despair. There is famine, sickness, death and fear. Life has changed profoundly. No country is untouched. We have lost our bearings, we are disoriented, and we wait for the unknown to be revealed. The sands in our world are shifting and we do not know where to place our feet. So many of us are stumbling in the darkness, floundering, hoping to get through it. But we have this promise from Isaiah of light and of hope.

You cannot talk about light without talking about darkness.

In Genesis, “God saw that the light was good, and he separated the light from the darkness.” (Genesis 1:4)

It is by light that the wonder of God’s creation is revealed.

Light guides, points the way, scatters the darkness, shows us danger, it gives us warmth and guides our feet and shows us where to walk. It is contagious. One tiny candle can be the impetus of a thousand points of light.

Light is most magnificent when there is darkness. We see this in the stars, moon, lightning, sunrise and sunset all gloriously displayed on a backdrop of darkness. The abstract painting by Mike Moyer depicts the brilliance of the Light of the World and the shattering of the darkness. Darkness cannot fracture light, but light fractures darkness. The smallest candlelight will pierce the darkness, but darkness will never overcome light. God’s light is generous, abundant and given to all of us.

In these pandemic times, we have seen evidence of the small lights we can offer; breaking into the darkness. Local churches distributing food and sanitizer in India, loving and caring for frontline workers in the Philippines, housing for the homeless and restoration in Lebanon. God’s people are breaking down the darkness with small beacons of light. We are called to be a Christlike presence in the world. We are called to be a light in the darkness.

God’s light shines in all of his creations, from the Star of Bethlehem, to the angel proclaiming Christ’s birth, to the Son of God himself—the light of the world. Isaiah’s light of Christmas shines into our darkness - bringing us new life. Through this light, he illuminates darkness, eliminates fear, gives us guidance, and shows us how to love one another as we share the Light of the World at Christmas. He is... Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty One, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

Prayer:

Everlasting Father, I celebrate the overwhelming gift of your son, the Light of the world. Thank you that in him, is the light of the glorious gospel of grace, that has overcome the darkness. Keep me ever mindful of the hope, peace, joy and love which your light reveals, the promise of new life and the command to share that light. May I be a contagious disciple, and a shining light into the world’s dark corners wherever I find them. Open my eyes Lord, that I might see you. Amen.