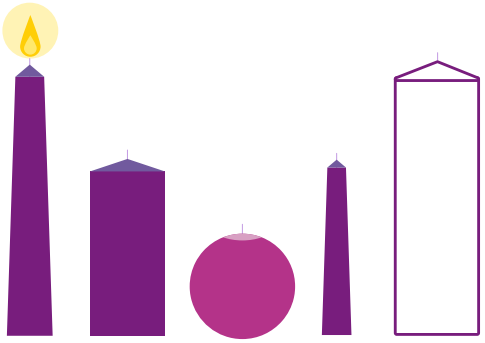
CBM

WEEK 1

Jesus: HOPE of the Nations



Hope *Peace* *Joy* *Love* *Christ*

Advent is the time of year we prepare for the birth of Jesus, which we celebrate on Christmas Day. We also reflect on and celebrate that we are part of a global family of people who love and serve Jesus.

Today we celebrate the HOPE that comes through Jesus, the birth of our Saviour.

SCRIPTURE:

Isaiah 60:1-3

REFLECTION:

We have good news of great joy for all people. This good news of hope is for all nations. Around the world, people are longing for hope — hope for peace, for basic needs, for justice, for their children, for a future, and for life.

As Canadian Baptists, we partner around the world through Canadian Baptist Ministries to share the hope of Jesus in word and deed. Today, we focus on the church in Asia, in particular. Our partners in Asia share the hope of Jesus through church planting, caring for the most vulnerable, and community development.

We can learn from them how to be people of hope in our neighbourhoods, where people also need to know Jesus and have their practical needs met.

LIGHTING THE FIRST CANDLE:

As we light this first Advent candle, we hope for the fuller brightness that is to come. We want it to remind us to watch for what God will give us, and to see what he has already given.

CANDLE LIGHTING PRAYER:

O God, we thank you for your gift of Jesus.

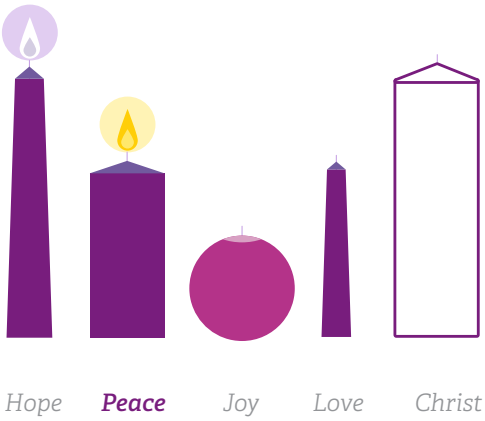
We pray our partners in Asia, who share God's love with vulnerable women and children in India, with pastors, church planters, and church leaders in Thailand and Myanmar, with children in the Philippines, and much more. May people hear the good news of Jesus. May they come to faith in him. And may practical needs be met as together we work to strengthen and transform communities in the name of Jesus.

We pray for ourselves, that we may learn from our global partners and bring your hope into our families and our community, through our words and our deeds. May we share the hope of Jesus with others through what we say and how we live, with compassion, grace, and generosity.

We pray this in the name of Jesus, the true hope of the nations. Amen.

WEEK 2

Jesus: Prince of PEACE



Advent is the time of year we prepare for the birth of Jesus. Last week we celebrated the HOPE that comes through Jesus, the birth of our Saviour.

Today we praise God. He comes as our Prince of PEACE.

SCRIPTURE:

Isaiah 9:2, 6-7

REFLECTION:

Jesus comes to bring peace. He comes to bring peace between us and God, through forgiveness of our sins. He comes to bring peace between people and nations by calling us to live by his gospel of love. And he comes to give us peace within ourselves as we know his love and forgiveness personally.

When Jesus does come, he says, "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God" (Matthew 5:9).

As Canadian Baptists, we partner around the world through Canadian Baptist Ministries to share the peace of Jesus in word and deed. Today, we focus on the church in the Middle East and North Africa, in particular. Our partners in Lebanon and Egypt teach pastors, build the church, share the good news, and care for vulnerable people in countries throughout the Arabic-speaking world.

As believers in these countries live out their faith in Jesus in often difficult situations, we can learn so much about how to live for Jesus and live out the peace of Jesus in our own communities.

LIGHTING THE SECOND CANDLE:

We light this candle to remind us of that Jesus comes to bring peace. Peace between nations. Peace between people. Peace within families. Peace within our own souls. But most of all, peace between ourselves and God, through the love of Jesus.

CANDLE LIGHTING PRAYER:

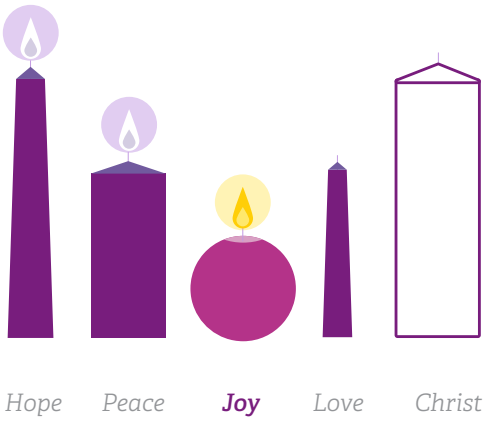
O God, we want to thank you for Jesus, the Prince of Peace. We pray for our staff and partners in Lebanon and the Middle East, and for all who share God's love in our world. We pray for peace in this region that has seen so much violence and war. We pray for those who seek to be peacemakers. We pray that people would come to know Jesus and follow him as the source of true and lasting peace.

In our own communities, families, and lives, may we know you as our Prince of Peace. As we live as followers of Jesus in a multicultural and multifaith world, help us learn from believers in the Middle East and North Africa how to be peacemakers in our own neighbourhoods and homes.

Through Jesus and the Holy Spirit, O God be our Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, and Prince of Peace. Amen.

WEEK 3

Jesus: JOY in Hard Places



Advent is the time of year we prepare for the birth of Jesus. We have reflected on the HOPE that comes through Jesus, the birth of our Saviour. We have enjoyed the PEACE that comes through knowing Jesus.

Today we celebrate the amazing JOY that Jesus' birth brings to us and to all of creation.

SCRIPTURE:

Luke 1:26-32

REFLECTION:

Mary, unmarried and alone, is confused and disturbed. But she will go on to praise God for the hope and joy he is bringing into her life and into the world.

As Canadian Baptists, we partner around the world through Canadian Baptist Ministries to share the joy of Jesus in word and deed.

Today, we focus on the church in Latin America, in particular. Our staff and partners in Bolivia, Guatemala, El Salvador, the Dominican Republic, and other nations see joy in surprising places: people come to know Jesus through ministries with prisoners and their families, through projects to prevent diseases like chagas, and through ministries that care for kids at risk.

God's good news of great joy shines even in hard places and difficult situations. Even when people struggle, they can find a deep, deep joy in Jesus.

Joy genuinely comes from knowing Jesus. We can look at our own neighbourhoods and see people finding joy in Jesus in surprising places, too.

LIGHTING THE THIRD CANDLE:

The birth of Jesus was anticipated with great joy. The long-awaited Messiah — our Saviour — was about to come. Today we rejoice in anticipation of his coming to us — Immanuel, God with us.

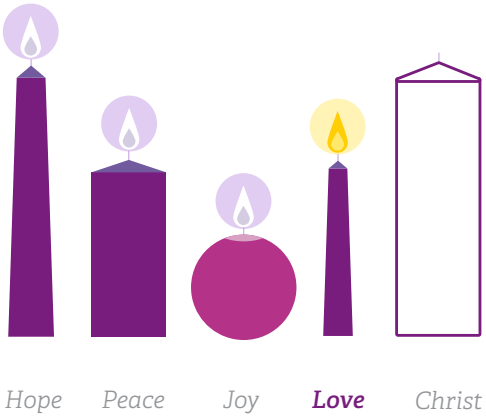
CANDLE LIGHTING PRAYER:

Eternal God, through long generations you prepared a way in our world for the coming of your Son, and by your Spirit you are still bringing the light of the gospel to darkened lives. You are still bringing the joy of new life into weary hearts.

Thank you for the joy we see through your work in Latin America. We pray that more and more people might know you and that communities might be transformed by your Spirit of hope, peace, love, and joy.

We pray that we might learn from your people in countries like Bolivia, Guatemala, El Salvador, and the Dominican Republic what true joy really looks like. When people find you, Jesus, they find real joy. Help us to learn that lesson well.

May we know your joy in our hearts. Help us to share the joy of knowing you with our family, friends, and neighbours this Advent season. In the name of Jesus, our source of true joy, we pray, Amen.



WEEK 4

Jesus: God's Gift of LOVE

Advent is the time of year we prepare for the birth of Jesus. We have reflected on the HOPE that comes through Jesus, the birth of our Saviour. We have enjoyed the PEACE that comes through knowing Jesus. We have rejoiced in the amazing JOY that Jesus' birth brings to us and to all of creation.

Today we celebrate the incredible LOVE God has for us. In Jesus, he came and lived among us, died for us, and rose again for us.

SCRIPTURE:

John 3:16-17

REFLECTION:

As Canadian Baptists, we partner around the world through Canadian Baptist Ministries to share the love of Jesus in word and deed.

Today, we remind ourselves that this good news of great joy is for ALL people in ALL nations. Today we focus on the church in Africa, in particular. Our staff and partners in Togo, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Rwanda, and Kenya bring the love of God by helping build the church, encourage pastors, care for the vulnerable, help children, develop sustainable agriculture, build communities, and see genuine peace and reconciliation.

As we try to live with love in our communities, we can learn so much from people, globally, who live out the love of Jesus in word and deed. They can teach so much about practical care, unconditional love, forgiveness, mercy, and genuine reconciliation.

LIGHTING THE FOURTH CANDLE:

God loves us. We light this fourth candle, the candle of love, knowing that God is love, and all who live in love live in God, and God lives in them. And as we live in God, our love grows more perfect.

CANDLE LIGHTING PRAYER:

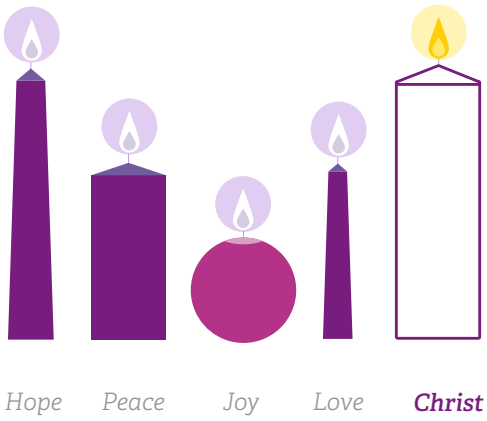
Thank you, O God that you do love us so much you have given us Jesus, that whoever believes in him shall not perish, but have everlasting life.

Be with our partners in Africa as they bring your love by sharing the good news about Jesus through education, church planting, and through helping develop sustainable agriculture, microbusinesses, and peace and reconciliation training.

In our lives and our communities, help us overcome fear with hope. Stress with peace. Despair with joy. Anger and hatred with love.

As you have loved us, help us to love one another. May we live with your unconditional love, forgiveness, and mercy. May we seek genuine reconciliation with communities and individuals.

May we clearly see the way to walk, the truth to speak, and the life to live for you, our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.



CHRISTMAS EVE

Jesus: Light for the World

Over the past few weeks we have reflected on the incredible HOPE, PEACE, JOY, and LOVE that comes through knowing Jesus.

Today/tonight we celebrate the birth of Jesus, the light of the world, because he HAS come among us. He is still here with us, through his Spirit. Only through him can we find true hope, peace, joy, and love.

SCRIPTURE:

John 1:1-5, 9-12

REFLECTION:

We celebrate today/tonight that we are part of a global family of people who love Jesus, worship Jesus, and seek to share the good news of Jesus through our words and through our deeds, from Asia, through the Middle East and Europe, to Africa, and the Americas.

Together with our partners around the world, we celebrate God's amazing love and amazing grace.

In Revelation 7, John describes seeing "a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, tribe, people and language, standing before the throne and before the Lamb … and crying out in a loud voice:
Salvation comes from our God who sits on the throne and from the Lamb! Blessing and glory and wisdom and thanksgiving and honor and power and strength belong to our God forever and ever!
Those who love him will never again be hungry or thirsty;
they will never be scorched by the heat of the sun.
For the Lamb on the throne will be their Shepherd.
He will lead them to springs of life-giving water.
And God will wipe every tear from their eyes."

We are part of this global celebration. Praise God.

LIGHTING THE CANDLE:

We light the Christ Candle celebrating that Jesus is our Good Shepherd, our Wonderful Counsellor, our Mighty God, our Everlasting Father, and our Prince of Peace.

Jesus is God's gift of love to us.

We praise God for Jesus, the hope of the nations.

We praise God for Jesus, our living hope.

CANDLE LIGHTING PRAYER:

Jesus Christ, light of the world, shine in our lives and shine through our lives.

We pray that you would shine through your people in all nations, that all might know and come to worship you in Spirit and in truth.

This Christmas, may we receive you in fresh ways.

We pray for true partnership with followers of Jesus in all nations. May we learn from them and be inspired by our global family to understand how knowing, loving, and following Jesus can help us live with new hope, deep peace, true joy, and genuine love.

We are part of an amazing worldwide family of fellow followers of Jesus. May we partner with them in worshiping together, growing together, loving together, and caring together.

In the days, months, and years to come, may we share your love and live out your love in our own communities, so our families, friends, and neighbours might know you, our Saviour, God, and King.

Amen.