

On the traditional land of the Semiabmoo

the Parish of St. Mark

O C E A N  P A R K

Family Prayers for Advent, Christmas & the Epiphany

Advent, Christmas and the Epiphany are three of the most dramatic seasons in the Christian calendar. Some of the most recognisable stories about Jesus take place at this time.

This booklet is meant to be used at home around the **ADVENT WREATH**. Advent wreaths are special prayer centres used at this time of year. To find out more about their history you can go to wikipedia.org and type in 'Advent Wreath'.

It is good to **PRAY TOGETHER** as a family and with friends. These prayers follow a simple 'repeat-after-me' method.

REPETITION is a good way to internalise the stories of Jesus. The Scripture readings are meant to be read aloud three times. This follows loosely the practice of *lectio divina* which is a practice that encourages a prayerful reading of the Bible. (For more information on this practice type 'lectio divina' in Wikipedia.) After each reading have a few moments of silence or reflection on what the words mean for you at that moment.

A very prayerful Advent, happy Christmas and enlightening Epiphany.



the Reverend David Taylor

ADVENT I

This is the Christian New Year. The traditional theme for this week is HOPE. What a good theme to begin a year with! We, as Christians, have HOPE that God will continue to take care of the world.

One Goodness is stronger than evil!

***All* Goodness is stronger than evil!**

One Light is stronger than darkness!

***All* Light is stronger than darkness!**

One God will bring us new life!

***All* God will bring us new life!**

The reading is to be read three times.

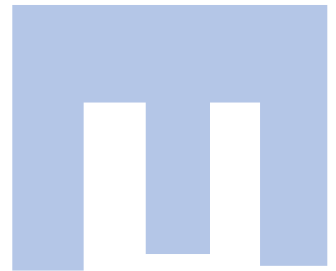
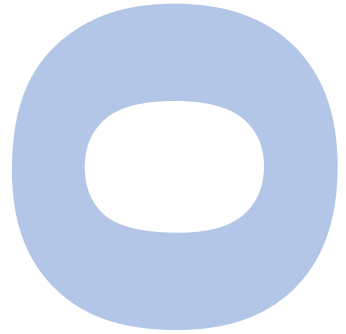
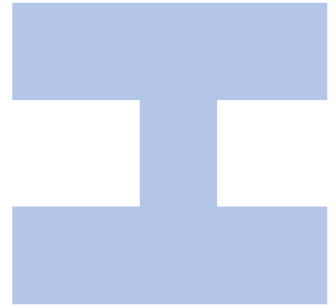
A reading from Isaiah (9:2).

The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light. They lived in a land of shadows, but now light is shining on them.

The first blue candle is lit.

Prayer (repeat-after-me style)

Loving God,
you are always with us.
Give us the courage
to walk in your light,
and bring HOPE to this world
through Jesus Christ,
our friend and helper.
Amen.



ADVENT II

The traditional theme for this week is PEACE. At Jesus' birth the angels sang, "Glory to God in the highest, and PEACE to all those on whom God's favour rests". Christians are PEACE makers.

One God's peace be with you!

All God's peace be with you!

One Lift up your hearts!

All Lift up your hearts!

One Let us give thanks and praise!

All Let us give thanks and praise!

The reading is to be read three times.

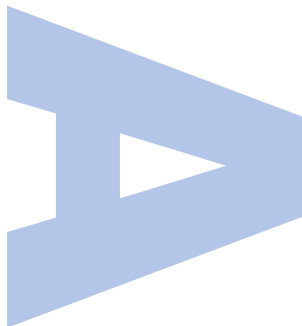
A reading from Matthew (5:7. 9).

Blessed are the merciful, for they will receive mercy. Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.

The second blue candle is lit.

Prayer (repeat-after-me style)

Loving God,
Jesus taught us how
to have peace in our hearts.
Give us the courage
to share this peace
with everyone we meet,
through Jesus Christ
our friend and helper. Amen.



ADVENT III

The traditional theme for this week is JOY. In the middle of our preparation for Christmas, while we keep working hard for God's kingdom, God offers us a time for JOY and celebration. Pink is the colour of JOY!

One God's kingdom is justice!

All God's kingdom is justice!

One God's kingdom is peace!

All God's kingdom is peace!

One God's kingdom is joy!

All God's kingdom is joy!

The reading is to be read three times.

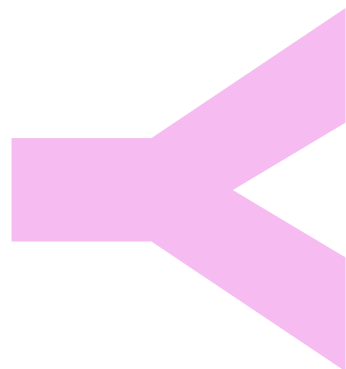
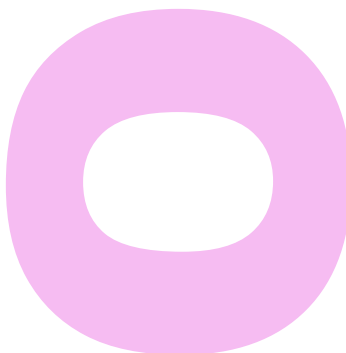
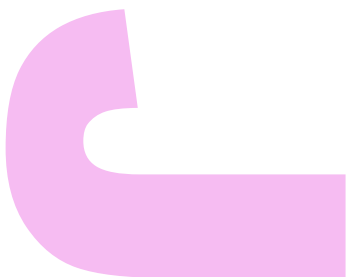
A reading from Romans (14:17).

For the kingdom of God is not about eating or drinking but justice, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.

The pink candle is lit.

Prayer (repeat-after-me style)

Loving God,
you give us joy when we are sad.
Give us the courage
to share your joy
with everyone we meet
through Jesus Christ
our friend and helper.
Amen.



ADVENT IV

The traditional theme for this week is LOVE. The Bible says that God is LOVE, and that LOVE drives away fear. As Christians, let us learn to breathe in the LOVE of God, and to breathe out fear.

- One* God is the one who loves us!
All **God is the one who loves us!**
One There is no fear in love!
All **There is no fear in love!**
One Perfect love drives out fear!
All **Perfect love drives out fear!**

The reading is to be read three times.

A reading from First John (4:9).

God's love was revealed among us in this way: God sent Jesus into the world so that we might live through him.

The final blue candle is lit.

Prayer (repeat-after-me style)

Loving God,
your love shines in our hearts
removing our fear.
Give us the courage
to share your love
with everyone we meet
through Jesus Christ,
our friend and helper.
Amen



CHRISTMAS

- One* Jesus is born in Bethlehem!
All **Jesus is born in Bethlehem!**
One Alleluia! Alleluia!
All **Alleluia! Alleluia!**
One Jesus is born in our hearts!
All **Jesus is born in our hearts!**

The reading is to be read three times.

A reading from Matthew (1:21).

Mary will bear a child, and his name will be Jesus, for he will save us from our sins.

The white or gold candle is lit.

Prayer (repeat-after-me style)
Loving God,
you gave us Jesus
to shine in our hearts
so that we don't have to be afraid.
Give us courage
to help others know
that you love the whole world,
through Jesus Christ,
our friend and helper.
Amen.

- One* Happy Christmas!
All **Happy Christmas!**
One Peace to all the world!
All **Peace to all the world!**



NEW YEAR

While not a date in the Christian Calendar (the Christian New Year is on the First Sunday of Advent), New Years is a great time for families to celebrate together.

One God has given us a new year!

All God has given us a new year!

One Alleluia! Alleluia!

All Alleluia! Alleluia!

One A new start! A new heart!

All A new start! A new heart!

The reading is to be read three times

A reading from Matthew (6:11-12).

Pray like this: Give us the food we need each day. And forgive us when we do harm, as we forgive those who harm us.

Light a candle.

Prayer (repeat-after-me style)

Loving God,
you give us new years
to remind us that your love
forgives all that is past.
Give us the courage
to forgive those who hurt us,
through Jesus Christ,
our friend and helper.
Amen.

FORGIVE

EPIPHANY

We celebrate the day when the Magi (the prophets and seers of other societies and cultures) visit Jesus because it shows that the love of God in Jesus is for the entire world.

One God loves the whole world!

***All* God loves the whole world!**

One Alleluia! Alleluia!

***All* Alleluia! Alleluia!**

One Let's spread God's love to all!

***All* Let's spread God's love to all!**

The reading is to be read three times

A reading from Mark (16:15).

Jesus said, "Go into the all the world and talk about the good news to the whole creation.

Light a candle.

Prayer (repeat-after-me style)

Loving God,
your love is for everyone.
Give us the courage
to spread your love
wherever we go,
and show us Jesus
our friend and helper.
Amen.

COURAGE