

## ADVENT 2020 - WEEK 1

### HOPE

*Each day of the week you can follow the ritual provided below. For more content and depth, see each day for additional ideas.*

#### GATHERING

*Gather in your sacred space around your Advent Wreath.  
Sing and/or listen to a verse of a favorite Advent song or verse 1 of [Light One Candle](#).*

#### CENTERING

*Transition from busyness to stillness. Invite everyone to take a deep breath: in and out. Simply breathe until each person enters a space of (relative) calm.*

#### WREATH LIGHTING LITANY

*Invite folks to respond to each phrase with, "We wait in hope".*

**LEADER:** It can be tempting to give in to worry. **ALL:** We wait in hope.

**LEADER:** There are lots of ways anxiety shows up. **ALL:** We wait in hope.

**LEADER:** Fear can be a sign of needing help. **ALL:** We wait in hope.

**LEADER:** Christ comes to all who are in need. **ALL:** We wait in hope.

*Light the first Advent Wreath candle.*

*Let everyone focus on the candle for a moment.*

#### SPIRITUAL PRACTICE/ACTIVITY

*Enjoy the daily activity found on the opposite and following pages.*

#### REFLECTION

*Integrate the experience with daily questions. Encourage each person to share at least a word or two. Then, hold hands and invite everyone to take a deep breath, in and out.*

*Say out loud, together: "Hope".*

#### CLOSING

*Conclude your time repeating the song from the Gathering.*

## DAILY PRACTICES, READINGS, AND ACTIVITIES

#### Materials needed for Week 1 Daily Practices/Activities:

large tray or platter + four blue or three purple and one pink candle  
+ bible or print out of readings + blue and white paper cut into 2"  
strips + blue and gold/yellow writing utensils

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### SUNDAY Nov 29

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*Sunday's order is slightly different: the spiritual practice/activity precedes lighting the wreath each Sunday of Advent.*

#### Materials Needed

+ large tray or platter + four candles

#### Build your wreath

Place the four candles in a circle around the center of the tray

Leave room in the center for the Christ Candle (to be added later)

#### Spiritual Practice

Share the Wreath Lighting Litany

Sit in silence and observe the wreath

Notice what's there and what's missing

#### Reflection Questions

*Where do you see hope? What hope is God inviting us to notice through the symbol of the wreath/candles?*

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### MONDAY Nov 30

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**Materials Needed:** Bible or reading

#### Spiritual Practice

Read the following text and discuss, using Reflection Questions

**Focus Text:** Luke 1:5-24 ([NRSV](#) or [The Message](#))

#### Reflection Questions

*Where did you hear fear and/or hope? Who is fearful - and why?*

*Who finds hope - and how? If this were your story, where would you experience fear and where would you find hope?*

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## TUESDAY Dec 1

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### Spiritual Practice

Read the focus text through three times, with a silence between each reading.

As you read, listen for a word or phrase that seems special.

During the silence, focus on that special word or phrase.

### Focus Text: Luke 1:8ff

*8 Once when Zechariah was serving as priest ...there appeared ...an angel... <sup>12</sup>When Zechariah saw [the angel], he was terrified; and fear overwhelmed him. <sup>13</sup>But the angel said to him, 'Do not be afraid, Zechariah, for your prayer has been heard. Your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you will name him John. <sup>14</sup>You will have joy and gladness, and many will rejoice at his birth, <sup>15</sup>for he will be great in the sight of God...*

*24 After those days... Elizabeth conceived, and for five months she remained in seclusion.*

### Reflection Questions

*Invite each person to share the word(s) or phrase(s) they heard with each reading. They might also share what significance these words had, if any.*

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## WEDNESDAY Dec 2

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**Materials Needed:** blue/white paper strips + writing utensils

### Spiritual Practice: BLUE & WHITE REFLECTIONS<sup>1</sup>

*Write fears on blue paper strips and hopes on white paper strips.*

*Have each person state their fear out loud, then fold their Blue Reflection and [place it on the Advent Wreath tray](#). Invite each person to name their hopes or what gives them hope out loud. Gather all White Reflections; keep them in your materials box for later.*

**Bonus content:** [Audio guide to Friday's litany](#)

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<sup>1</sup> See

[https://docs.google.com/document/d/1j3MHm\\_itqt5IIW8z7pvfe39WNBhxW3ejOMqUGkYb\\_wA/edit?usp=sharing](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1j3MHm_itqt5IIW8z7pvfe39WNBhxW3ejOMqUGkYb_wA/edit?usp=sharing) or visit [uccmn.org](http://uccmn.org) for Week 1 Audio

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## THURSDAY Dec 3

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### Spiritual Practice

Spend time wondering together about your day using the following questions and/or some of your own questions.

### Reflection Questions

*Has there ever been an event that you have both looked forward to and feared? Who can you talk to when you are afraid? How does God feel when we are afraid? How does God feel when we have hope?*

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## FRIDAY Dec 4

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### Spiritual Practice

Focus on your breath.

As you breathe in, repeat to yourself: Hope within me.

As you breathe out, repeat to yourself: Hope for the world.

Repeat for as long as you like.

### Reflection Questions

*What did you notice in your body as you slowly breathed and repeated the words of hope? How did pausing to breathe make you feel? What are some of the hopes you feel within you? What are some of the hopes you have for the world?*

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## SATURDAY Dec 5

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### Spiritual Practice

Hold hands with each other.

Focus on the person to your left.

Breathe in: imagine them being filled with hope.

Breathe out: think of gratitude for that person.

Repeat for the person on your right.

### Reflection Questions

*Invite each person to share why they are grateful for the person to their left and to their right.*