

ADVENT 2020 - WEEK 4

LOVE

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 4 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 love".

LEADER: It can be tempting to give in to apathy. ALL: We wait in love.

LEADER: There are lots of ways disinterest shows up. ALL: We wait in love.

LEADER: Indifference can be a sign of needing help. ALL: We wait in love.

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

Light all four Advent Wreath candles.

Let everyone focus on the candles 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: "Love".

CLOSING

Conclude your time repeating the song from the Gathering.

DAILY PRACTICES, READINGS, AND ACTIVITIES

SUNDAY

Sunday's order is slightly different: the wreath-building activity precedes lighting the wreath.

Materials Needed

+ cut ribbons in gold, white, green and/or red¹

Build your wreath

Weave the ribbons through the evergreens

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 colors and textures; what's there and what's missing

Reflection Questions

Where do you see love? What love is God offering through this symbol?

MONDAY

Materials Needed

+ Bible or reading

Spiritual Practice

Read the text and discuss, using Reflection Questions

Focus Text: Matthew 1:18-25 ([NRSV](#) or [The Message](#))

Reflection Questions

Where did you hear indifference or love?

¹ Learn the liturgical/symbolic meaning of different colors here (<http://www.crivoice.org/symbols/colorsmeaning.html>)

Who is indifferent - why, how so, or about what? Who finds love - how so? If this were your story, about what would you be indifferent and where would you find love?

TUESDAY

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: Matthew 1:20-23 ([NRSV](#) or [The Message](#))

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.

WEDNESDAY

Materials Needed

+ 1.5" - 2" strips of blue paper + 1.5" - 2" strips of white paper + blue writing utensils + gold, yellow or other

Spiritual Practice: BLUE & WHITE REFLECTIONS

Listen for indifference and love as you read the text.

Focus Text: Matthew 1:18-25 ([NRSV](#) or [The Message](#))

Write where you feel indifferent on blue paper strips and what inspires your love on white paper strips.

Reflection Questions:

Have each person name their areas of indifference out loud, then fold their Blue Reflection and [tuck them into gaps in the Advent Wreath](#).

Invite each person to name who or what they love out loud. Gather all White Reflections; keep them in your materials box for later.

THURSDAY

Spiritual Practice

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

Reflection Questions

Who are people that you find hard to love?

How does God want us to show love to each other?

How does God want us to show love to people outside our family?

FRIDAY

Spiritual Practice:

Focus on your breath.

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

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

Repeat for as long as you like.

Reflection Questions

What kinds of different love are there?

How can we develop love, even when we feel like we don't care?

How might God lead us toward loving others like God loves us?

SATURDAY

Spiritual Practice

Hold hands with each other.

Focus on the person to your left.

Breathe in: imagine them being filled with love.

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.