

An Advent Wreath Litany

Opening prayer

(You may choose to read this each week or abbreviate it to the last paragraph for weeks 2-4)

We come to know you, Holy One, as Wisdom Incarnate, as Flickering Flame, as Spirit of Life, as Hope, Peace, Joy, and Love, Enfleshed. You come to us as the Stranger, and the Strange. Often we do not recognize you. Often we turn away from your gifts and your demands. Yet you come to us in Wilderness, in the Impossible Made Possible, in Silence and Singing and Sighs Too Deep for Words. You abhor dominance, mastery, fear, and control. You are made known to us in Vulnerability, and Courage, and Divesting from the Powers of Empire. We come to you this Advent in need, with longing, in pain, captive to fear, desiring a more just world, a more livable life for all of us, for the earth, for every living thing caught and held in this inescapable network of mutual interdependence we call this one wild and precious Life. We long for you. We long for healing. We long for liberation. We long for different systems and patterns of relating.

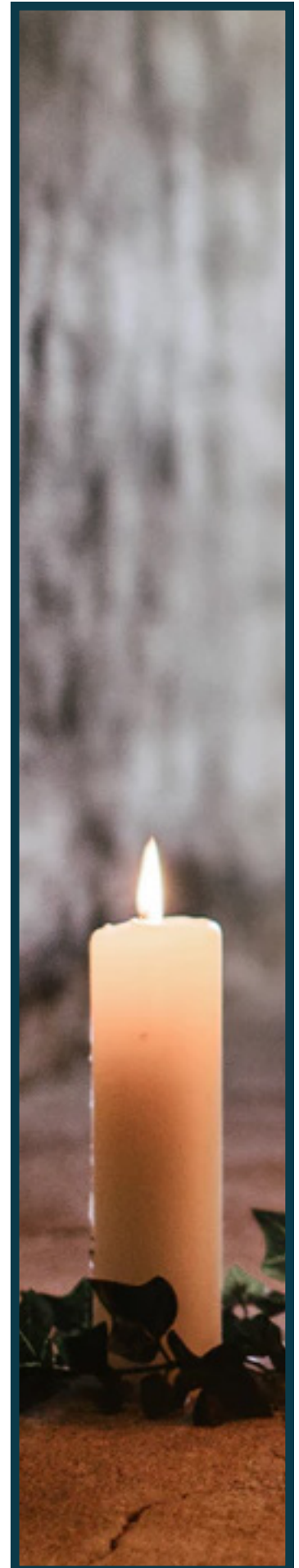
And so, this Advent, we pause. We breathe. We pray. We dig deep. We reach out. We rise up. We remember. We vision. We sit with the pain. We stay with the trouble. We wait, expectant. We light candles. We labor. We open to You, and to one another, and to the Sacred Mystery that is Emmanuel, God-With-Us, Love Incarnate, Divinity Enfleshed.

Advent 1 - Hope

The Hope of God-With-Us does not come as guaranteed outcome, or predetermined plan, or promise of a happy ending. Hope cannot be imposed from on high. Hope cannot be commanded. The Hope of God-With-Us is courageous, risky, unfolding, indeterminate. The Hope of God-With-Us is collective, liberating us from deadly complacency. Hope is gestating in darkness; it comes unexpectedly. Hope invites our expectation, and demands our participation. Prepare the way, for hope with courage. May Hope be birthed among, within, and through us, this Advent. O Come, O Come, Emmanuel...

Advent 2 - Peace

The Peace of God-With-Us does not come as law and order, or enforcement and control. Peace cannot be imposed from on high. Peace cannot be commanded. The Peace of God-With-Us is chaotic, wild, unruly, unpredictable. The Peace of God-With-Us is collective, liberating us from deadly complicity. Peace is gestating in darkness; it comes unexpectedly. Peace invites our expectation, and demands our participation. Prepare the way, for peace with



justice. May Peace be birthed among, within, and through us, this Advent. O Come, O Come, Emmanuel...

Advent 3 - Joy

The Joy of God-With-Us does not come as naïve optimism, or surface level feel-good-ness. Joy cannot be imposed from on high. Joy cannot be commanded. The Joy of God-With-Us is mingled with grief, exists side by side with mourning, knows that pain and death are all too real, but do not have the final word. This joy tends tenderly to beauty, and softness, and the gladness that comes from paying attention to what matters. The Joy of God-With-Us is collective, liberating us from deadly despair. Joy is gestating in darkness; it comes unexpectedly. Joy invites our expectation, and demands our participation. Prepare the way, for joy with sorrow. May Joy be birthed among, within, and through us, this Advent. O Come, O Come, Emmanuel...

Advent 4 - Love

The Love of God-With-Us does not come as mere feeling, or sentimental fluff. Love cannot be imposed from on high. Love is our greatest commandment—tending tenderly to God, to other, and to self. The Love of God-With-Us is love in action, radical love practices: redistribution of resources and risks, solidarity with those most exposed to threat, hospitality to caravans, refugees, migrants, and sojourners, caring for those we've been taught to despise, or fear. This love is fierce, and tender. It defies unjust rules and flattens hierarchies of value. The Love of God-With-Us is collective, liberating us from deadly alienation. Love is gestating in darkness; it comes unexpectedly. Love invites our expectation, and demands our participation. Prepare the way, for Love enfleshed. May Love be birthed among, within, and through us, this Advent. O Come, O Come, Emmanuel...

Rev. Anna Blaedel
Theologian-in-Residence
enfleshed
www.enfleshed.com



Permission is granted to download, copy, adapt, edit, and reprint for home or local church worship with the inclusion of the copyright citation:

© enfleshed 2018, Rev. Anna Blaedel.

