

Advent Week Three

Day 15, Sunday, December 12th

Each year, many Christians celebrate Advent by lighting an Advent wreath. Each week a different candle is lit until we arrive at Christmas Eve when we light the center candle which is the Christ candle. The candles around the wreath each represent a different gift that came to us in Jesus. The traditional focuses are hope, peace, joy, and love. For each Sunday of our Advent devotion, we will rename these focuses to encourage us to embody these traditional aspects of our faith in new ways this advent season.

The focuses will be:

Spaciousness - helping us to embody hope

Contemplation - helping us to embody peace

Commitment - helping us to embody joy

Imagination - helping us to embody love

This week we light the candle of Commitment. Commitment represents our willingness to participate in the unfolding grace all around us. When we commit we say: "I will run the race with perseverance." (Light three candles)

While grace is always God's gift to us, God then invites us to participate in a life of grace when we commit ourselves to Christ. Everyday there are opportunities for us to intentionally commit ourselves to participate in the grace of God that surrounds us. Our actions embody grace when we give of ourselves to others, work for justice in the world, or seek to love the forgotten. The fruit of this commitment is joy. Just as Jesus endured the cross "for the joy set before him," we too will experience joy when we work to unfold grace in the lives of others.

REFLECT: Consider this week where you can participate in the unfolding grace of God that is all around us. Where will you respond to the invitation from Jesus and say: "I will run the race with perseverance?"

PRAYER: Gracious God, may we celebrate who we are as we celebrate who you are this Advent season. The acts of grace that surround us are all your gifts to us. Encourage our hearts to participate in the unfolding of this grace as we seek to run with perseverance the race you set before us. May we commit ourselves to participate in your love and may your living Spirit guide us in joy as we do. Amen.