



THE LIGHT OF *grace*

ADVENT



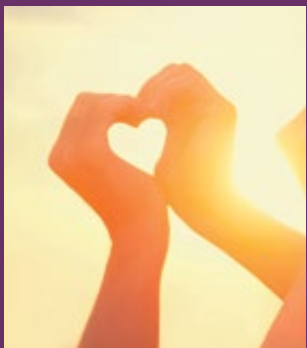
WEEK 1: HOPE
Zechariah



WEEK 2: PEACE
Isaiah



WEEK 3: JOY
Elizabeth



WEEK 4: LOVE
Mary



THE LIGHT OF *grace*

A SERIES OF SPECIAL SERVICES FOR ADVENT

INDEX

Notes/Ordering Information	5-6
Newsletter/Bulletin Notices	7-10
Week 1 (Hope)	11-32
Week 2 (Peace)	33-53
Week 3 (Joy)	54-75
Week 4 (Love).....	76-97
Music Guide	98-152

Sermons by Michael Hoy. Services by Carol Geisler. Art and design: Jamie Wyatt. © 2023 Creative Communications for the Parish, a division of Bayard, Inc., 1564 Fencorp Dr., Fenton, MO 63026. 800-325-9414. www.creativecommunications.com. All rights reserved. Printed in the USA. Purchase of this kit gives the purchaser the copyright release to use the material in any format for use in worship, including livestream. Creative Communications is not responsible for the change or removal of any links listed from other sites.



THE LIGHT OF *grace*

A SERIES OF SPECIAL SERVICES FOR ADVENT

ABOUT “THE LIGHT OF GRACE”

In this worship series for Advent, issued in honor of the 250th anniversary of the hymn “Amazing Grace,” we celebrate that Jesus is the Light of the World who shines on us with his amazing grace. Through Scripture, song and reflections, we are reminded that Jesus makes his grace known through the undeserved gifts of hope, peace, joy and love—gifts revealed in special ways in the lives of Zechariah, Isaiah, Elizabeth and Mary.

Week 1: Hope: Zechariah (Psalm 39:7): In his old age, after years of waiting and not giving up hope, Zechariah is blessed with a son, John the Baptist, who prepared the way for the Light of Grace, Jesus.

Week 2: Peace: Isaiah (Isaiah 9:6): Isaiah announces to an unsettled people that relief is coming soon through the Prince of Peace, the Son of God, the Light of Grace.

Week 3: Joy: Elizabeth (Philippians 4:4): The boy in Elizabeth’s womb leaps for joy and so does she when Mary arrives, carrying the little Lord Jesus inside her. The Light of Grace is soon to come.

Week 4: Love: Mary (Isaiah 54:10): The mother of the Light of Grace sings a love song to the Lord for his undeserved favor toward her and toward all the world.

Each service includes: order of service • sermon • children’s sermon • prayers • music for the accompanist



THE LIGHT OF *grace*

A SERIES OF SPECIAL SERVICES FOR ADVENT

WEEK 1:
THE LIGHT OF GRACE
HOPE: ZECHARIAH

COMPLETE SCRIPT FOR WORSHIP LEADERS

- If desired, an **Environmental Projection** is shown on a screen or on the walls of your worship space to set the tone for the service before the service begins or throughout the service at various points:

[shutterstock.com/image-photo/celestial-world-concept-sunset-sunrise-clouds-1173249946](https://www.shutterstock.com/image-photo/celestial-world-concept-sunset-sunrise-clouds-1173249946)

- This **Theme Verse** is read aloud by the pastor at the start of the service or is read silently by the congregation before the service begins:

And now, O Lord, for what do I wait? My hope is in you. Psalm 39:7

- The **Opening Hymn** is sung by the congregation to the tune Chesterfield CM, or a selection from the contemporary music song suggestions list at the end of the music guide for this service can be sung instead:

Hark the glad sound! The Savior comes,
 The Savior promised long;
 Let ev'ry heart prepare a throne
 And ev'ry voice a song.

He comes the pris'ners to release,
 In Satan's bondage held.
 The gates of brass before him burst,
 The iron fetters yield.

He comes the broken heart to bind,
 The bleeding soul to cure,
 And with the treasures of his grace
 To enrich the humble poor.

Our glad hosannas, Prince of Peace,
 Thy welcome shall proclaim,
 And heav'n's eternal arches ring
 With thy belovèd name.

- The **Invocation and Lighting of the Advent Wreath** are spoken responsively by the pastor and the congregation:

P In the name of the Father and of the + Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C Amen.

(One purple candle is lit on the Advent wreath.)

P Today we light the first of our Advent candles, the candle of hope.

C "O Lord, for what do I wait? My hope is in you." (Psalm 39:7)

P Across the centuries, the people of God waited in hope for the promised Messiah, the Savior. As the time came near for the promise to be fulfilled, the Lord sent an angel to tell the priest Zechariah that Zechariah and his wife would have a son. That son, to be named John, would announce the coming of the Messiah and prepare Israel to welcome the Savior.

C "O Lord, for what do I wait? My hope is in you."

P John would proclaim the dawn of hope for Israel. He would baptize people as a sign of repentance, preparing them for the Savior, the Lamb of God, who was coming to take their sins away. When the right time came, God’s promise was fulfilled in the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ.

C “O Lord, for what do I wait? My hope is in you.”

P We have seen the promise fulfilled. The Savior has come! He has died and risen to set us free. Now we wait in hope for his return on the Last Day. Jesus has promised, “Surely I am coming soon!”

C “O Lord, for what do I wait? My hope is in you.” Amen! Come, Lord Jesus!

- The **Confession and Absolution** is spoken responsively by the pastor and the congregation:

P Let us confess our sins to God, trusting in his mercy for the sake of Jesus our Lord.

C Almighty God, you have called us to a living hope in Jesus. Yet so often we do not reflect that hope in our lives. We turn away from the promises of your Word. We walk in our own selfish ways instead of following in Jesus’ footsteps. We do not love others as we should, and we are not always willing to share our hope with the people around us. Have mercy on us and forgive us.

P God has had mercy on us. He sent his Son to be our Savior and for his sake forgives our sins. I announce to you that your sins are forgiven in the name of the Father and of the + Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

C “O Lord, for what do I wait? My hope is in you.”

- The **Hymn of Response** is sung by the congregation to the tune New Britain CM, or a selection from the contemporary music song suggestions list at the end of the music guide for this service can be sung instead:

Amazing grace! How sweet the sound
That saved a wretch like me!
I once was lost, but now am found;
Was blind, but now I see.

’Twas grace that taught my heart to fear,
And grace my fears relieved;
How precious did that grace appear
The hour I first believed!

Through many dangers, toils, and snares
I have already come:
'Tis grace has brought me safe thus far,
And grace will lead me home.

- The **Prayer of the Day** is spoken by the pastor or other worship leader:

Ⓟ Almighty God, Advent is a time of hope and waiting. For centuries your people waited in hope for the Messiah to come. Speaking through the prophets, you reminded them of your promise to send the Savior. Finally, when the right time came, Jesus the Messiah was born in Bethlehem. We have seen that hope fulfilled in Jesus' birth, in his saving death and triumphant resurrection. Yet now we too wait in hope. During this Advent season, we prepare to celebrate Jesus' birth, but we also look forward to his Second Advent, his return on the Last Day. Lead us to live in hope and to share that hope with others so that they too may come to worship Jesus as Lord. Hear our prayer and accept our praise in Jesus' name. Amen.

- The **Hymn** is sung by the congregation to the tune Jefferson 87 87 D, or a selection from the contemporary music song suggestions list at the end of the music guide for this service can be sung instead:

Come, thou long-expected Jesus,
Born to set thy people free;
From our fears and sins release us;
Let us find our rest in thee.
Israel's strength and consolation,
Hope of all the earth thou art,
Dear desire of ev'ry nation,
Joy of ev'ry longing heart.

- The **Children's Sermon** is delivered by the pastor or other worship leader:

Ⓟ To be hopeful means that you want something to happen. You may not know for sure, but you really want it—whatever it is—to happen. You hope for all kinds of things. You might hope for a special vacation trip with your family. Maybe you hope for a special birthday party with your favorite cake and ice cream! How many of you hope to get a lot of Christmas presents?

In Bible times, the people of God were hopeful. God had promised to send them a Savior. They did not know when the Savior would come, but they hoped he would come soon! A priest named Zechariah and his wife Elizabeth were hopeful too. They wanted God to send the Savior. They also wanted a child of their own, but maybe they had stopped hoping for that. Both Zechariah and Elizabeth were old, and Elizabeth had never had any children.

One day God sent the angel Gabriel to Zechariah. The angel told Zechariah that he and Elizabeth would have a son. They were to name their son John. John would grow up to be God's special messenger. It was time for the promised Savior to come, and John would help the people get ready to welcome him. Just like Zechariah and Elizabeth, the people of Israel were hoping for the Savior. They wanted him to come! John told the people to be sorry for their sins because they needed the Savior who was coming to take their sins away. When the right time came, God kept his promise. Jesus the Savior was born in Bethlehem. Everyone's hope came true!

Jesus came to bring us hope too. We believe in Jesus as our Savior. He died on the cross to take away our sins. He rose from the dead, and because Jesus lives, we have the hope of eternal life. Sometimes the things we hope for don't happen—we may not go on that special vacation or maybe we don't get quite all of the presents we hope for at Christmas. But the hope we have in Jesus will never disappoint us. In Jesus, we have forgiveness for our sins and the hope of living forever with him. And those hopes will come true!

Let's pray: Jesus, through faith in you we have hope. As we look forward to celebrating your birthday at Christmas, fill us with hope and joy. Amen.

- The **Hymn** is sung by the congregation to the tune Jefferson 87 87 D, or a selection from the contemporary music song suggestions list at the end of the music guide for this service can be sung instead:

Born thy people to deliver,
Born a child and yet a king!
Born to reign in us forever,
Now thy gracious kingdom bring.
By thine own eternal Spirit
Rule in all our hearts alone;
By thine all-sufficient merit
Raise us to thy glorious throne.

- The **Old Testament Reading**, Isaiah 51:1-5, is spoken by the pastor or other worship leader:

☐ Listen to me, you who pursue righteousness, you who seek the LORD: look to the rock from which you were hewn, and to the quarry from which you were dug. Look to Abraham your father and to Sarah who bore you; for he was but one when I called him, that I might bless him and multiply him. For the LORD comforts Zion; he comforts all her waste places and makes her wilderness like Eden, her desert like the garden of the LORD; joy and gladness will be found in her, thanksgiving and the voice of song. Give attention to me, my people, and give

ear to me, my nation; for a law will go out from me, and I will set my justice for a light to the peoples. My righteousness draws near, my salvation has gone out, and my arms will judge the peoples; the coastlands hope for me, and for my arm they wait.

- The **Epistle Reading**, Romans 5:1-5, is spoken by the pastor or other worship leader:

¶ Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. Through him we have also obtained access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and we rejoice in hope of the glory of God. Not only that, but we rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, and hope does not put us to shame, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us.

- The **Gospel Reading**, Luke 1:67-79, is spoken by the pastor or other worship leader:

¶ And his father Zechariah was filled with the Holy Spirit and prophesied, saying, "Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, for he has visited and redeemed his people and has raised up a horn of salvation for us in the house of his servant David, as he spoke by the mouth of his holy prophets from of old, that we should be saved from our enemies and from the hand of all who hate us; to show the mercy promised to our fathers and to remember his holy covenant, the oath that he swore to our father Abraham, to grant us that we, being delivered from the hand of our enemies, might serve him without fear, in holiness and righteousness before him all our days. And you, child, will be called the prophet of the Most High; for you will go before the Lord to prepare his ways, to give knowledge of salvation to his people in the forgiveness of their sins, because of the tender mercy of our God, whereby the sunrise shall visit us from on high to give light to those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace."

- The **Sermon Hymn** is sung by the congregation to the tune Nun Komm, Der Heiden Heiland 77 77, or a selection from the contemporary music song suggestions list at the end of the music guide for this service can be sung instead:

Let the earth now praise the Lord,
Who has truly kept his word
And at last to us did send
Christ, the sinner's help and friend.