



**VIA CHURCH**  
C O M O X V A L L E Y

### **The Season of Advent Weekly devotions for Via Comox**

The arrival of Advent marks the beginning of the church year. The Christian liturgical season of Advent begins on the fourth Sunday before Christmas Day. This is a season of anticipation and expectation, a time of waiting and inward preparation for the celebration of the birth of Jesus.

.Advent (from the Latin 'adventus' - coming) concerns three ways Christ comes to us: long ago, as God incarnate in the newborn Jesus in Bethlehem; today, in our lives and our hearts, to awaken us to Life; and one day, as Christ triumphant, redeeming the entire world and bringing history to a close.

Advent is a call to reflection and repentance- a time to stop and quiet ourselves and our children and ponder on the coming of Christ into our world and to consider what that coming will require of us. It is an opportunity to rethink our priorities, to realign our lives with God's desires for us, to seek forgiveness and to start anew... a time to refresh our weary souls. Along with the prayer guide, here are some scriptures and ideas that your family is welcome to use as part of this Advent season.

These devotions are not exhaustive and leave lots of room for your own ideas and creativity. Our prayer for you and your family is that in this season you will

experience great anticipation, joy, peace and excitement as we prepare our hearts for the celebration of Christ's birth.

We have provided a devotion for your whole family for each week of Advent to take you on a journey of welcoming the King into your hearts, lives and families. May this serve you well as we continue to pursue Him to make a home in us.

## **Week 1: Wait- candle of HOPE**

**Psalm 130:5-6** I wait for the Lord, my soul waits, and in his word, I hope; my soul waits for the Lord more than those who watch for the morning, more than those who watch for the morning. Each of the four Sundays of Advent has a watchword, the word for the first Sunday is 'wait'. Our Advent waiting occurs on two different levels. We wait for Christmas and the celebration of Christ's birth but ultimately, we wait for the second Advent, the risen Christ to come again. In Hebrew, the word for **wait** is also the word for **hope**.

**Hebrews 6:19-20a** - Jesus, our sure and steadfast anchor of the soul. We have this as a sure and steadfast anchor of the soul, a hope that enters into the inner place behind the curtain, where Jesus has gone as a forerunner on our behalf.

**Family/ Community Application:** Spend some time as a family or friends talking about how waiting and hope are connected. Why do we hope that Jesus is coming back? Afterwards watch the song 'I'm chasing you' covered by Sarah Reeves on You Tube together.

**Activity:** Play 'hide and seek' around the house... creating expectation for the kids to find you... talk about the 'hope to be found' and the 'hope to find someone'...and/ or 'waiting to be found'.

**Closing Prayer:** Jesus, I would love to know the day and time that you return. Help me to wait for you and give me a watchful heart full of excitement and wonder. I bind unto myself today my hope found in Jesus. I pray for strength to conquer today's obstacles. Fill me with the greater hope this Advent season that in Christ's love I'm on my way to a new life. I pray you will reveal more of yourself to me. In Jesus name, Amen.

**More Ideas for time:** A Hot tub with glow sticks and talk about Jesus being the light in the darkness.

## Week 2: Prepare- candle of **PEACE**

**Colossians 3:15** Let the peace that comes from Christ rule in your hearts. The watchword for the second Sunday of Advent is 'prepare'. As we prepare for the celebration of Christmas by preparing/ decorating our homes, let's prepare our hearts as well for Christ to come into our midst and to remember that we live in expectation of Christ's return.

**Luke 3:4** The voice of one crying in the wilderness: Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight. Every valley shall be filled, and every mountain and hill shall be made low, and the crooked shall become straight, and the rough places shall become level ways, and all flesh shall see the salvation of God.

**John 14:27** Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. Not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid.

### **Authentic Community Application:**

Watch the song "Prince of Peace" by Hillsong United on You Tube. Talk about what fears and challenges you need Jesus, the Prince of Peace to meet you in. Peace is the power to destroy chaos. You have access to Jesus' peace, love and

approval, which releases you of all fears, concerns and worries of daily life. Rest is a gift freely given to you out of God's love for you.

**Activity:** Ask Jesus to show you who of your friends, teachers, neighbors needs peace in this season. Make some Christmas cards together, pray over them and give them away.

**Closing Prayer:** I bind unto myself today Jesus Christ as my refuge. Lord, help me to seek peace and pursue it. In peace I will both lie down and sleep, for you make me to dwell in the safety of your presence. Prepare my heart to love you and receive you. In Jesus name, Amen.

**More Ideas for connection time:** Bake heart shaped cookies and talk about preparing our hearts for Jesus.

### Week 3: Rejoice- Candle of **JOY**

**Isaiah 51:3** Joy and gladness will be found in her, thanksgiving and the sound of singing. The watchword for the third Sunday of Advent is 'rejoice'. It is a reminder that this time of waiting and preparation is a joyful time and that we can know joy because 'God has done great things for us.'

**Philippians 4: 4-6** Rejoice in the Lord always, again I will say, rejoice. Let your reasonableness be known to everyone. The Lord is at hand; do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God.

**Community Application & Activity:** Jesus fills our hearts with joy, His power is unending, He is the giver of good gifts and creator of life. Have a family P-A-R-T-Y!! Decorate your living room with balloons and streamers. Turn the music up and D-A-N-C-E!! Dads: Ask your daughters to dance with you!! Song suggestions: Bethel Music Kids "This is what you do (come alive)" on You Tube.

Finish the night with a movie and popcorn... how about Inside Out or Breakthrough?!!

**Closing Prayer:** I bind unto myself today a heart filled with JOY! I thank you, God, for the gift of Jesus and I praise you for all your good gifts. Thank you for hearing me when I call you. Help me to give you glory in everything I do. In Jesus name, Amen.

**More Ideas for community time:** - Assemble the nativity scene craft or play with an existing nativity scene and talk about the joy that was experienced by Mary and Joseph, the shepherds, etc. - Go for a "twinkle tour" to enjoy the lights around your neighbourhood

## Week 4: Love - Candle of **LOVE**

**Romans 8: 31-39** If God is for us, who can be against us? He who did not spare his own son but gave him up for us all, how will he not also with him graciously give us all things? ... Who shall separate us from the love of Christ... For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers nor height, nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

The word for the fourth and final Sunday of Advent is 'love' and it is associated with Joseph. When God's angel told him in a dream not to be afraid to marry Mary, Joseph loved his fiancée enough to make her his wife (in spite of raised eyebrows because of her illegitimate pregnancy). He loved Jesus like his own son. Like Joseph, let us see one another as the God-bearers we are and support and love one another as we attempt to bring to birth the new life that God has planted within us. As we embody this love, we participate in God's saving

work in the world: we become the face and voice and hands and feet of Jesus as we wait for him to come again.

**Authentic Community Application** Read 1. Corinthians 13 together and discuss the questions: How do we love each other? How do you show love? How do you know someone loves you? Remember: Love is.... What is important to you is important to me. Finish by listening to "One thing remains" by Bethel Music Kids on You Tube.

**Activity:** Bless a neighbor with an act of random kindness... (shovel their driveway, bring Xmas baking or write a word of encouragement without telling it was from you).

**Closing Prayer:** I bind unto myself today Jesus' heart of love. Lord, make me a vessel of your love giving value to everyone I see today. I ask for you to speak through my words, to move through my body, to filter what I see and hear with compassion and love. I pray others will receive all your goodness. In Jesus name, Amen.

**More Ideas for community time;** - Make angels for your Christmas tree