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**Reader Six:**

For the birth of our king, Jesus, who showers us,  
his cherished children, with love.

**All:** May we keep the Lord near in LOVE.

**Reader Seven:**

Let us answer God's call to love one another.  
Let us love others courageously, wholeheartedly  
and without reserve.

**All:** May we keep the Lord near in LOVE.

**Reader Eight:**

Let us show respect and caring to our  
neighbors and strangers, love to our families  
and friends, and devotion to our God.

**All:** May we keep the Lord near in LOVE.

**Reader Nine:**

Let us look to the child Jesus with loving hearts.  
May we share in the anticipation of this Advent  
season as we look to the birth of our king and  
Savior, Jesus Christ. **Amen.**



Closing Prayer:

**All:**

Loving God,  
We await the birth of your Son with love.  
May we always praise you with adoration.  
May you lead us to love others in your service.  
We ask this through your Son, Jesus Christ.  
Amen.

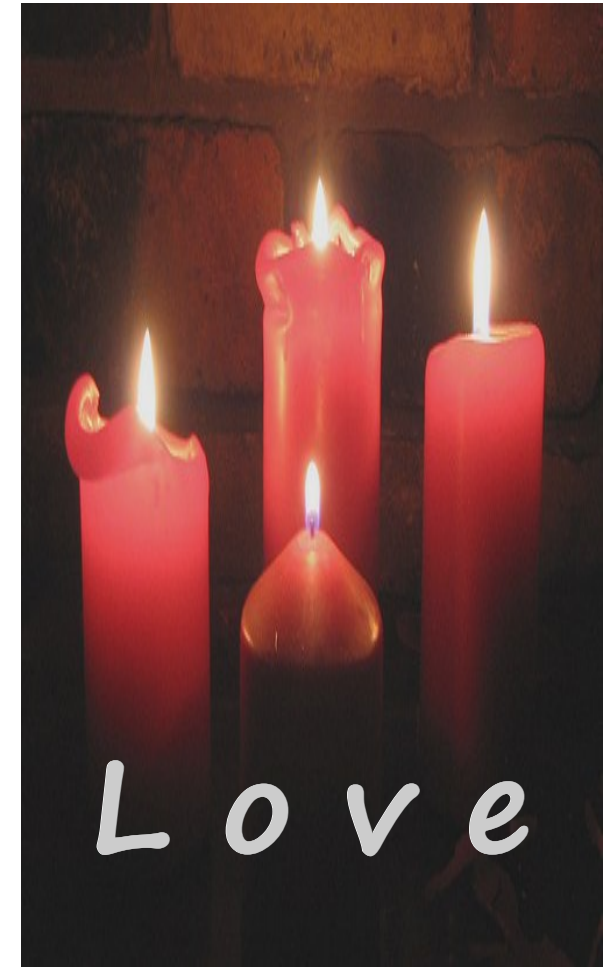
*... this Christmas*

The brightness that is brought by friends, the  
love that's given in truth,  
So warms the heart, and eases the pain  
That's brought by worldly wares.  
for if you can, by word or deed,  
Bring love and light and truth,  
Then with all your heart and soul give back  
To those that have blessed you.



**The Lord is near...  
in Love**

**December - 4th week of Advent**



# The Lord is near... in LOVE

## Introduction

### **Reader One:**

The patience of having Jesus arrive as visitor into our hearts and home is very near! Our preparations are almost complete. Now it is time to examine our hearts and to quietly listen to the voice of God. It is in the still moments that we can hear God's words most clearly. We are called to find moments of peace to praise God with love during this last week of Advent.

### **Preparation**

Prepare an Advent wreath with three purple (for the 1st, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4th week of Advent) and one pink candle (for 3rd week of Advent). While the fourth Advent candle is being lit, read the following prayer.

## Opening Prayer

### **Reader Two:**

As we light the fourth Advent candle, we can feel the light of God's love from the past, brightly shining in our present and warming our future.  
Let us follow God's light of hope, faith, joy and love. **Amen.**

## Scripture reading:

Luke 1: 39-45 Mary visits Elizabeth

### **Reader Three:**

A reading from the Gospel of Luke: In those days Mary set out and went with haste to a Judean town in the hill country, where she entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth. When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the child leaped in her womb. And Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit and exclaimed with a loud cry, "Blessed are you among women, blessed is the fruit of your womb. And why has this happened to me that the mother of my Lord comes to me? For as soon as I heard the sound of your greeting, the child in my womb leaped for joy. And blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfillment of what was spoken to her by the Lord."

**Reader Three:** The word of the Lord.

**All:** Thanks to be God.

## Symbolic Action & Prayer:

Prepare beforehand 'an offering by the students'... a



gift to Jesus through their sharing with others. For example an offering may be an article food for the local Food Bank that will depict a sharing of LOVE into the world. Other examples - an article of clothing for the Salvation Army thrift Store; a baked good for the local extended care for the aged; etc.... after each stanza is read, a student or students would announce their gift to the charity of their choice. If available this would be placed near the Advent Wreath.

**Litany:** LOVE

**All:** May we keep the Lord near in LOVE.

### **Reader Four:**

For a time to come when all around the world share the knowledge that we are the cherished children of God.

**All:** May we keep the Lord near in LOVE.

### **Reader Five:**

For a future that is free from hatred, envy and greed is filled instead with goodwill, generosity and abundant love.

**All:** May we keep the Lord near in LOVE.