



First Sunday of Advent
December 2, 2012

HOPE

Today we light the first candle of the Advent wreath. This is the candle of **HOPE**. With followers of Jesus around the world, we use this light to help us prepare ourselves for the coming of God's Son, our Savior, Jesus Christ.

May we be receptive to God's truth and light as we hear the words of the prophet Isaiah:

"The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who lived in a land of deep darkness - on them light has shined."

Isaiah 9:2

From the Gospel of John:

"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning. Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made. In him was life, and that life was the light of all mankind. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it."

John 1:1-5

Congregation (family) read together:

Dear God,
As we begin this season of Advent, we ask that you make us agents of Hope. Living out Hope in the middle of our own struggles, Being so anchored in confidence, that others around us begin to wonder if they could be included in this kind of deep peace. Inviting all around us into the deep reality that there is a King and life is not out of control. When the rubber meets the road may we found to be guilty of DEEP HOPE. Amen.

Family Questions:

1. Have you ever been sad and needed a friend to encourage you or see something in a different way?
2. What would it be like if no one had come along to help you out?
3. Is there someone in your life right now that needs to be encouraged and know, through you, that God loves them?

For Adults:

1. Why might someone who is a follower of Jesus see difficult or bleak circumstances in a different way?
2. Are there times when someone has noticed that you are more peaceful in difficult times than makes sense to them?
3. Does anyone you know personify DEEP HOPE and trust? How do you think that impacts people around them?



Where the rubber meets the road...

Who can we encourage this Christmas so that they know that God loves them? What would that look like—how can we start?