

## **C5706 The Wonder of Christmas Litany**

### **First Sunday –The Wonder of the Season**

#### *Responsive Litany*

L: Advent is a time to remember the wonders of our faith.

**P: God has done wonderful things, things planned long ago.**

L: Advent is a time to be amazed at God's wondrous love.

**P: God has done wonderful things, things planned long ago.**

L: Advent is a time to retrace our past, and to reclaim the hope of our future.

**P: God has done wonderful things, things planned long ago.**

L: Advent is a time to be awed by God's unfolding plan for creation.

**P: God has done wonderful things, things planned long ago.**

Today we light the **first candle**. The first candle reminds us that the season of Advent is a time of unspeakable wonder. As we begin our Advent journey, let us stand amazed at the promise God has fulfilled, the love God has shown, and the joy God has given through the birth of Christ.

### **Closing prayer (First Sunday)**

God in Heaven, as we begin this season of Advent, re-ignite our sense of wonder. Help us move beyond what is familiar to your indescribable glory. Allow us to be still, in the midst of what our minds cannot fully grasp, and what our lips cannot fully explain. Fill our hearts this Advent with restored amazement for what you have done, the love you have shown, and the gift you have given, in Christ's name. Amen.

### **Second Sunday – The Wonder of the Promise**

#### *Responsive Litany*

L: During Advent we recall God's promises spoken through the prophets.

**P: The Word of the Lord is steadfast and true.**

L: To the hurting, God promises unshakable hope.

**P: The Word of the Lord is steadfast and true.**

L: To the forsaken, God promises unconditional love.

**P: The Word of the Lord is steadfast and true.**

L: To the broken, God promises unmerited grace.

**P: The Word of the Lord is steadfast and true.**

L: To the heavy hearted, God promises unbridled joy.

**P: The Word of the Lord is steadfast and true.**

Today we light two candles. The **first candle** reminds us to recapture the wonder of the season. In a world that seldom slows, Advent is an opportunity to still our hearts and open our eyes to the wonder and majesty of our Savior. As we light the **second candle**, we call to mind God's promise to restore, redeem, and reconcile a broken world, spoken through the prophets and fulfilled through Christ.

### **Closing prayer (Second Sunday)**

Gracious God, we pray for your continued guidance throughout this Advent season. As we prepare to once again celebrate the greatest gift offered to the world, we pray for our hearts to be filled with wonder, for our steps to be guided by faith, and for our hope to be anchored in the certainty of your Word. We pray this in the name of Christ, our Lord. Amen.

### **Third Sunday – The Wonder of the Message**

#### *Responsive Litany*

L: During Advent we listen for the wonder of God's Word.

**P: Speak to us, O Lord, for our hearts are open.**

L: During Advent we reach beyond the noise and distractions of this world.

**P: Speak to us, O Lord, for our hearts are open.**

L: During Advent we ponder the good news that is our great joy.

**P: Speak to us, O Lord, for our hearts are open.**

L: During Advent we speak words of hope to those engaged in life's struggles.

**P: Speak to us, O Lord, for our hearts are open.**

L: During Advent we offer words of peace to those overcome by life's fears.

**P: Speak to us, O Lord, for our hearts are open.**

Today we light three candles. The **first candle** calls us to behold the wonder of the season in a fresh way. In a world where too often the familiar becomes commonplace, Advent is a time to ponder the meaning and mystery God's amazing love. The **second candle** invites us to hear again the ancient prophecies that, like flames in the darkness, illuminate our world, inspire our faith, and guide our journey. As we light the **third candle**, we affirm that Advent is a time to hear again the still small voice calling us to behold God's promise, and embrace the gift of a Savior who is Christ our Lord.

### **Closing prayer (Third Sunday)**

Gracious God, as we continue our Advent journey we pray that we would be guided by grace, strengthened in faith, and encouraged by Christ. With the many distractions surrounding us daily, keep our eyes focused on your glory and our ears attentive to your Word. We pray this through Christ, our Lord. Amen.

## Fourth Sunday – The Wonder of Hope

### *Responsive Litany*

L: During Advent, we ignite the wonder of expectation.

**P: Open our eyes, O Lord, to behold your glory.**

L: During Advent, we look for the light that shines in the darkness.

**P: Open our eyes, O Lord, to behold your glory.**

L: During Advent, we embrace the hope that enlivens the soul.

**P: Open our eyes, O Lord, to behold your glory.**

L: During Advent, we welcome the Savior who beckons the world.

**P: Open our eyes, O Lord, to behold your glory.**

L: During Advent, we rejoice in the One who has reclaimed the lost.

**P: Open our eyes, O Lord, to behold your glory.**

Today we light four candles. The **first candle** calls us to behold the glory of the season with renewed wonder. Advent is a time to be awed by God's redeeming love for the lost and broken. The **second candle** calls us to reclaim the promises of God spoken in ages past. As the light fills this room, so the Word of God fills our world with hope for the hurting, peace to the restless, and joy for the heavy hearted. The **third candle** is an invitation to wait patiently upon the Lord. In a world where we often lack for patience, Advent reminds us to rest in God's timing and trust God's plan. The **fourth candle** challenges us to grow in faithful expectation. As people whose faith often becomes tamed to the miraculous, Advent is a time to remember afresh a God in whom all things are possible.

### **Closing prayer (Fourth Sunday)**

Gracious Lord, open our eyes to the wonders you have done, open our ears to the promises you have spoken, and open our hearts that we might become the people you have called us to be. We pray this in the name of Christ, our Lord. Amen.

## Christmas Eve – The Wonder of Christmas

### *Responsive Litany*

L: During Advent, we have journeyed in faith toward God's wondrous gift.

**P: O come, let us adore him.**

L: During Advent, we stood in awe of God's saving grace.

**P: O come, let us adore him.**

L: During Advent, we recalled the promise of God's spoken word.

**P: O come, let us adore him.**

L: During Advent, we waited for the time of God's glorious arrival.

**P: O come, let us adore him.**

L: Tonight our waiting is over, our eyes our open, and the gift is given.

**P: O come, let us adore him.**

Tonight we light all the candles. The **first candle** reminds us to recapture the wonder of the season. In the midst of repeated refrains and familiar stories, Advent is a time to be awed by the God who came to restore our world. The **second candle** calls us to remember the promises of old, that from the dawn of creation all things have unfolded according to God's redemptive plan. The **third candle** calls us to listen to the God who still speaks today. Advent is a time to hear afresh the joy of God's reconciling love that beckons us homeward. The **fourth candle** calls us to reawaken our sense of expectation and behold the miraculous in our day and time. Tonight we light the **Christ candle**, rejoicing in the Good News of the holy birth, the hope of humanity and the light of the world.

### **Closing prayer (Christmas Eve)**

Gracious God, thank you for guiding us throughout this season of wonder. We stand amazed at the promise now fulfilled and awed by your humble birth. Help us receive, again, the joy and wonder the greatest gift offered to the world. We pray this is the name Jesus Christ, our newborn King. Amen.