



THE LIGHT OF
grace

FAMILY ADVENT WORSHIP



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By Jeremy Klaustermeier with crafts by Karin Klaustermeier. 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 series gives the purchaser the copyright release to use the material in any format for use in worship. Creative Communications is not responsible for the change or removal of any links listed from other sites.



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ABOUT THE SERIES

In this family 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, and in the lives of our families.

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. Families will make a “stars of promises” mobile.

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. Families will make a “river of kindness” collage.

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. Families will make a “joy to the world” globe decoration.

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. Families will make a “Madonna and Child” Christmas tree ornament.

Crafts

Week 1: “Stars of Promise” Mobile

Materials needed: paper plates, stars coloring page (p. 34), crayons, string, hole punch, scissors, black marker and tape

Directions:

1. Have children color the stars on the coloring page. Cut out the stars from the coloring page.
2. Use the black marker to write promises that God made to his people in the Bible and that he has made to you. You can work as a group to come up with a list.
3. Use the hole punch to punch holes at the top of the stars and around the perimeter of the paper plates. Then use the hole punch to punch two holes in the middle of the paper plate.
4. Use scissors to cut a length of string, and loop the length of string through the hole in a star and then through a hole around the perimeter of the paper plate, tying or taping ends of the string together. Repeat for each star.
5. Use scissors to cut a length of string to loop through the two holes in the middle of the paper plate, and tie or tape the edges of the string together. Hang the mobile from the ceiling or high flat surface using another piece of tape to adhere string to the surface.

Week 2: “River of Kindness” Collage

Materials needed: various shades of blue construction paper, black marker, scissors or tape

Directions:

1. Use the scissors to cut construction paper into waves to represent water.
2. Use the black marker to write kind words and examples of kindness to the wave cutouts.
3. Tape the construction paper “waves” to a wall, letting them overlap each other to make a collage.
4. Invite other groups to add their “wave” collages to yours to create a “river of kindness.”

Week 3: “Joy to the World” Globe Decoration

Materials needed: blue and green construction paper, black marker, scissors, hole punch, glue and tape

Directions:

1. Use the scissors to cut the blue construction paper into the shape of a large circle.
2. Use the scissors to cut pieces of green construction paper into various shapes to represent land.
3. Glue the land shapes to the blue circle.
4. Use a hole punch to punch a hole at the top of the blue circle.
5. Use the scissors to cut a length of string. Loop the length of string through the hole at the top of the blue circle. Bring the ends of the string together, and tape to the ceiling or other high flat surface to hang as a decoration.
6. Use the scissors to cut the green construction paper into the shape of a gift tag. Use the hole punch to punch a hole at the top of the gift tag. Use the black marker to write “JOY” on the tag. Loop string through the gift tag and blue circle holes, and tape the ends of the string together.

Week 4: “Madonna and Child” Christmas Tree Ornament

Materials needed: blue and white paper, blue and white yarn, colored pencils, hole punch, scissors and glue

Directions:

1. Use the scissors to cut out a rectangle piece of blue paper and a smaller rectangle piece of white paper. These will be the bodies of Mary and Jesus.
2. Starting at the longer sides of the blue and white pieces of paper, fold accordion-style. Bring the accordion folds of each piece of paper together, and curve each in half, creating a small loop of the top of each.
3. Glue each piece of folded paper together just below the loop and wrap short pieces of matching blue and white yarn around the gathered and glued portions of each paper to form necks.
4. Use the scissors to cut circles the sizes of the paper loops to make the heads of Mary and Jesus. Draw and color faces for Mary and Jesus onto the white circles. Use glue to attach the faces to the paper loops. Glue the Jesus figure to the Mary figure to depict Mary holding Jesus.
5. Use the scissors to cut a longer piece of blue yarn. Use the hole punch to punch a hole in top of the Mary figure’s head. String yarn through the hole, and tie ends to form a loop to hang on a Christmas tree.



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WEEK ONE:
HOPE: ZECHARIAH

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FAMILY ADVENT WORSHIP

WEEK ONE: HOPE: ZECHARIAH

ORDER OF SERVICE

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

Opening Song The Advent of Our King

The advent of our King our prayers must now employ,
And we must hymns of welcome sing in strains of holy joy.

The everlasting Son incarnate deigns to be,
Himself a servant's form puts on to set his servants free.

O Zion's Daughter, rise to meet thy lowly King,
Nor let thy faithless heart despise the peace he comes to bring.

As Judge, on clouds of light, he soon will come again
And his true members all unite with him in heav'n to reign.

Before the dawning day let sin's dark deeds be gone,
The sinful self be put away, the new self now put on.

All glory to the Son, who comes to set us free,
With Father, Spirit, ever One, through all eternity.

Invocation

- P** In the name of the Father,
C **who created us,** (*Put hands in the air*)
P and of the Son,
C **who redeemed us,** (*Make a cross with your arms*)
P and of the Holy Spirit,
C **who makes and keeps us holy.** (*Give yourself a hug*)

Lighting of the Advent Wreath

- P** Jesus Christ is the Light of the World,
C **The Light no darkness can overcome!**

Confession and Absolution

- P** Let us confess our sins to God our Father.
- C** **Lord, even though you give us amazing grace, sometimes it feels like we have no hope. Even though you remind us time and time again that our hope is in you, we forget about it. In this dark world, it is often hard for us to see the light of your truth. We forget that you are the one who created us. You are the one who redeemed us. You are the one who gives us hope. Forgive us for our unbelief. Forgive us for our forgetfulness. Amen.**
- P** When you forget your hope, the Lord is right there to remind you. When you are weak, he is strong. Your sin is forgiven! Therefore, I, as a called and ordained servant of the Word, announce God's grace to all of you, and as God's servant and at his command, I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.
- C** **Amen. Thanks be to God!**

Prayer of the Day

Sentences for Children (words with motions that capture the theme)

P Lord, you are the Hope of the World. (*Make a heart with your hands*)

C **Fill us with hope.**

P You are the Light of the World. (*Hold up one finger as a light*)

C **Fill us with your light!**

P You are our Lord and God!

C **Thank you, Father, for loving us!** (*Put your hands on your heart*)

Song Amazing Grace

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!

Old Testament Reading Genesis 12:1-9

(God's promise of hope to Abraham)

Epistle Reading Ephesians 1:11-14

(Jesus is our hope)

Gospel Reading Luke 1:67-79

(Zechariah's song)

Song for Children Father Abraham

Father Abraham had many sons, and many sons had father Abraham.
I am one of them and so are you, so let's all praise the Lord. Right arm.
(Swing your right arm back and forth)

Father Abraham had many sons, and many sons had father Abraham.
I am one of them and so are you, so let's all praise the Lord. Right arm. Left arm.
(Swing both arms)

Father Abraham had many sons, and many sons had father Abraham.

I am one of them and so are you, so let's all praise the Lord.

Right arm. Left arm. Right foot.

(Swing both arms, and move your right foot up and down in a marching motion)

Father Abraham had many sons, and many sons had father Abraham.

I am one of them and so are you, so let's all praise the Lord.

Right arm. Left arm. Right foot. Left foot.

(Swing both arms, and march with both feet)

Father Abraham had many sons, and many sons had father Abraham.

I am one of them and so are you, so let's all praise the Lord.

Right arm. Left arm. Right foot. Left foot. Chin up.

(Swing both arms, and march with both feet as you raise your chin up)

Father Abraham had many sons, and many sons had father Abraham.

I am one of them and so are you, so let's all praise the Lord.

Right arm. Left arm. Right foot. Left foot. Chin up. Turn around.

(Swing both arms, and march with both feet as you raise your chin up and turn around in a circle)

Father Abraham had many sons, and many sons had father Abraham.

I am one of them and so are you, so let's all praise the Lord.

Right arm. Left arm. Right foot. Left foot. Chin up. Turn around. Sit down.

(Swing both arms, and march with both feet as you raise your chin up and turn around in a circle, and then sit down cross legged on the ground)

Message

Family Advent Craft: "Stars of Promises" Mobile

Family Advent Conversation

Offering

Offering Prayer

SongStanding on the Promises of God

Standing on the promises of Christ my King;

Through eternal ages let his praises ring,

Glory in the highest, I will shout and sing;

Standing on the promises of God.

Standing on the promises, standing on the promises,
Standing on the promises of God, my Savior;
Standing on the promises, standing on the promises,
Standing on the promises of God.

Standing on the promises that cannot fail;
When the howling storms of doubt and fear assail,
By the living Word of God I shall prevail;
Standing on the promises of God.

Standing on the promises, standing on the promises,
Standing on the promises of God, my Savior;
Standing on the promises, standing on the promises,
Standing on the promises of God.

Standing on the promises of Christ, the Lord,
Bound to him eternally by love's strong cord.
Overcoming daily with the Spirit's sword,
Standing on the promises of God.

Standing on the promises, standing on the promises,
Standing on the promises of God, my Savior;
Standing on the promises, standing on the promises,
Standing on the promises of God.

Standing on the promises I cannot fall,
List'ning ev'ry moment to the Spirit's call,
Resting in my Savior, as my all in all,
Standing on the promises of God.

Standing on the promises, standing on the promises,
Standing on the promises of God, my Savior;
Standing on the promises, standing on the promises,
Standing on the promises of God.

Closing Prayer

Benediction

P The Lord bless you and keep you.

C **Our hope is in Jesus.**

P The Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you.

C **Our hope is in Jesus.**

P The Lord lift up his countenance upon you and give you his peace.

C **He truly gives us amazing grace. Amen.**

Closing SongMy Hope Is Built

My hope is built on nothing less
Than Jesus' blood and righteousness;
No merit of my own I claim
But wholly lean on Jesus' name.
On Christ, the solid Rock, I stand;
All other ground is sinking sand.

When darkness veils his lovely face,
I rest on his unchanging grace;
In ev'ry high and stormy gale,
My anchor holds within the veil.
On Christ, the solid Rock, I stand;
All other ground is sinking sand.

His oath, his covenant and blood
Support me in the raging flood;
When ev'ry earthly prop gives way,
He then is all my hope and stay.
On Christ, the solid Rock, I stand;
All other ground is sinking sand.

When he shall come with trumpet sound,
O may I then in him be found,
Clothed in his righteousness alone,
Redeemed to stand before his throne.
On Christ, the solid Rock, I stand;
All other ground is sinking sand.



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WEEK ONE:
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 Song** is sung by the congregation to the tune St. Thomas SM, or a selection from the contemporary music song suggestions list at the end of the music guide for this service can be sung instead:

The advent of our King our prayers must now employ,
And we must hymns of welcome sing in strains of holy joy.

The everlasting Son incarnate deigns to be,
Himself a servant's form puts on to set his servants free.

O Zion's Daughter, rise to meet thy lowly King,
Nor let thy faithless heart despise the peace he comes to bring.

As Judge, on clouds of light, he soon will come again
And his true members all unite with him in heav'n to reign.

Before the dawning day let sin's dark deeds be gone,
The sinful self be put away, the new self now put on.

All glory to the Son, who comes to set us free,
With Father, Spirit, ever One, through all eternity.

- The **Invocation** is spoken responsively and the congregation with motions as indicated:

P In the name of the Father,

C **who created us,** (*Put hands in the air*)

P and of the Son,

C **who redeemed us,** (*Make a cross with your arms*)

P and of the Holy Spirit,

C **who makes and keeps us holy.** (*Give yourself a hug*)

- The **Lighting of the Advent Wreath** is spoken responsively by the pastor and the congregation and includes the lighting of the first blue or purple candle of the Advent wreath:

(The first blue or purple candle is lit)

P Jesus Christ is the Light of the World,

C **The Light no darkness can overcome!**

- The **Confession and Absolution** is spoken responsively by the pastor and the congregation with motions as indicated:

P Let us confess our sins to God our Father.

C **Lord, even though you give us amazing grace, sometimes it feels like we have no hope. Even though you remind us time and time again that our hope is in you, we forget about it. In this dark world, it is often hard for us to see the light of your truth. We forget that you are the one who created us. You are the one who redeemed us. You are the one who gives us hope. Forgive us for our unbelief. Forgive us for our forgetfulness. Amen.**

P When you forget your hope, the Lord is right there to remind you. When you are weak, he is strong. Your sin is forgiven! Therefore, I, as a called and ordained servant of the Word, announce God's grace to all of you, and as God's servant and at his command, I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

C **Amen. Thanks be to God!**

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

P Lord God, heavenly Father, you are indeed our light and our salvation. Your grace is amazing to us and fills us with joy! Fill us with the hope that only your Son can bring. Remind us of your love through your Word. Make us to rejoice in the coming of your Son, our Savior, Jesus to be the Light of the World. Amen.

- **Sentences for Children** are words spoken by adults and children with motions that capture the service's theme:

P Lord, you are the Hope of the World. *(Make a heart with your hands)*

C **Fill us with hope.**

P You are the Light of the World. *(Hold up one finger as a light)*

C Fill us with your light!

P You are our Lord and God!

C Thank you, Father, for loving us! (*Put your hands on your heart*)

- A **Song** 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!

- The **Old Testament Reading**, Genesis 12:1-9, is spoken by the pastor or other worship leader:

P Now the LORD said to Abram, “Go from your country and your kindred and your father's house to the land that I will show you. And I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, and him who dishonors you I will curse, and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.” So Abram went, as the LORD had told him, and Lot went with him. Abram was seventy-five years old when he departed from Haran. And Abram took Sarai his wife, and Lot his brother's son, and all their possessions that they had gathered, and the people that they had acquired in Haran, and they set out to go to the land of Canaan. When they came to the land of Canaan, Abram passed through the land to the place at Shechem, to the oak of Moreh. At that time the Canaanites were in the land. Then the LORD appeared to Abram and said, “To your offspring I will give this land.” So he built there an altar to the LORD, who had appeared to him. From there he moved to the hill country on the east of Bethel and pitched his tent, with Bethel on the west and Ai on the east. And there he built an altar to the LORD and called upon the name of the LORD. And Abram journeyed on, still going toward the Negeb.

- The **Epistle Reading**, Ephesians 1:11-14, is spoken by the pastor or other worship leader:

Ⓟ In him we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to the purpose of him who works all things according to the counsel of his will, so that we who were the first to hope in Christ might be to the praise of his glory. In him you also, when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and believed in him, were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit, who is the guarantee of our inheritance until we acquire possession of it, to the praise of his glory.

- 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.”

- A **Song for Children** is sung by the children to the tune Father Abraham, or a selection from the contemporary music song suggestions list at the end of the music guide for this service can be sung instead:

Father Abraham had many sons, and many sons had father Abraham.
I am one of them and so are you, so let’s all praise the Lord. Right arm.
(Swing your right arm back and forth)

Father Abraham had many sons, and many sons had father Abraham.
I am one of them and so are you, so let’s all praise the Lord. Right arm. Left arm.
(Swing both arms)

Father Abraham had many sons, and many sons had father Abraham.
I am one of them and so are you, so let’s all praise the Lord.
Right arm. Left arm. Right foot.
(Swing both arms, and move your right foot up and down in a marching motion)

Father Abraham had many sons, and many sons had father Abraham.

I am one of them and so are you, so let's all praise the Lord.

Right arm. Left arm. Right foot. Left foot.

(Swing both arms, and march with both feet)

Father Abraham had many sons, and many sons had father Abraham.

I am one of them and so are you, so let's all praise the Lord.

Right arm. Left arm. Right foot. Left foot. Chin up.

(Swing both arms, and march with both feet as you raise your chin up)

Father Abraham had many sons, and many sons had father Abraham.

I am one of them and so are you, so let's all praise the Lord.

Right arm. Left arm. Right foot. Left foot. Chin up. Turn around.

(Swing both arms, and march with both feet as you raise your chin up and turn around in a circle)

Father Abraham had many sons, and many sons had father Abraham.

I am one of them and so are you, so let's all praise the Lord.

Right arm. Left arm. Right foot. Left foot. Chin up. Turn around. Sit down.

(Swing both arms, and march with both feet as you raise your chin up and turn around in a circle, and then sit down cross legged on the ground)

- **The Message** is delivered by the pastor or other worship leader:

Before the service, have volunteers hand out to parents and children pens with sheets of paper that say at the top: "I hope that ..." (See p. 32.)

- **P** Grace, mercy, peace and hope to you today and throughout this Advent season! Amen.

I sure hope Christmas gets here soon. I really don't want to wait anymore. I sure hope it comes fast. I hope it starts tomorrow! I hope I get all my gifts this weekend. And I hope that I get to have Christmas dinner this Sunday.

As you heard me say that, you were probably thinking to yourself, or maybe even out loud, I don't think pastor knows what day it is. He thinks Christmas is going to come this weekend. It's only the start of Advent. We have many days left, before Christmas comes. What is he thinking? Has he gone bonkers? He must be losing it in his old age.

You're right. Christmas isn't coming tomorrow. It is still almost a month away. The hope that I expressed is a wrong hope, isn't it? It isn't based in reality. It isn't going to come true no matter how much I may want it to. It isn't a good hope. It isn't a hope I should really have because I will only be disappointed.

Many people have this kind of hope without even realizing it because when they hope that they will go to heaven when they die apart from Jesus, they are going to be deeply disappointed. Yet, that's what a lot of people think. They think that they can earn their own way to heaven by being a good person, or by doing enough good stuff, or even just by being better than most other people. What does the Bible say though?

In our Old Testament, we see that God spoke directly to Abraham to tell him that he was going to be the father of many nations. He promised a lot of wonderful things including that in him all the nations of the earth would be blessed. It was God's promises to Abraham that gave him the hope that he had. Unlike my hope that I expressed earlier, which was based on nothing but my own wishful thinking, Abraham's hope was based on something real and sure. His hope was based on the sure promises of God.

We still have those same promises today. While we don't audibly hear God's voice speaking directly to us and to no one else, we do hear him speak to all of us through his Word, which was written down ages ago in the Bible. The Bible is his letter to us. It is full of some wonderful accounts of him dealing with his people, sometimes in some not-so-happy ways that were necessary to save mankind from itself, such as the Flood or the plagues in Egypt. Other times the stories are wonderful portrayals of how God saved his people in miraculous ways, such as the crossing of the Red Sea or the time he defeated an army of thousands with just 300 men who were armed with clay pots.

All of those accounts are there to remind us that God keeps his Word. He doesn't falter or fail. He doesn't take it back. He keeps his promises. At times, he does say that he is going to destroy someone, but then he relents from bringing disaster upon them because they repent—they turn from their sin and turn to God for forgiveness. But the thing is that he promised to do that too. He always keeps his promises, especially his promises of love, forgiveness and salvation.

Our hope for salvation is based on the fact that God always keeps his promises. That is a sure and certain hope. It is just the opposite of the hope that I expressed earlier because our hope is based on God's promise to save us from ourselves.

We don't really even have to say, "I hope I will go to heaven". We can say "I know I will go to heaven." What we can say about hope is that our hope is in Jesus, which means that our hope is in who Jesus is and what Jesus has already done for us.

In our Gospel reading, Zechariah had the same thing happen to him that Abraham did, but this time it was through an angel. The angel told him that he was going to have a son, just like God told Abraham. This time, though, Zechariah wasn't so sure. I'm not sure I would have reacted any differently given his age and his and Elizabeth's inability to have children. But since Zechariah didn't believe, God gave him a sign that was so clear that there was no way he would mistake it for anything else. He took away his ability to speak until his son, John, was born.