

## Advent 1 – Nov 28, 2021

### Story

#### **God Is Near** Based on Jeremiah 33:14– 16

A long time ago, the Hebrew people were very afraid and sad. There was much fighting and trouble in their land.

“What will happen to us?” the people cried. “Will we have to leave our homes? Where will we live?”

Sometimes the people began to wonder if God had forgotten them, and they felt scared and lonely. “Has God left us all alone?” they whispered to each other.

But God had not left the people alone. When the time was right, God gave a message to Jeremiah. “Jeremiah, tell my people not to give up. Tell them I am near. I am sending someone special to you. Someone who will share my love with everyone.”

Jeremiah was very happy to hear God’s message. “God is near! God has a plan! This is good news!” So Jeremiah shouted out the good news to everyone.

God is with us; God is near.

When the people heard the message they too, were very happy. “God is with us!” they said to one another. The message was passed from one person to another. At first it sounded like a quiet whisper in the land.

God is with us; God is near.

But slowly, more and more people heard the good news and the message became louder and louder.

God is with us; God is near.

Whenever they heard about the troubles in the land, or whenever they were scared and lonely, the people would remind each other of God’s wonderful promise.

God is with us; God is near.

God’s promise moved through the land and it helped the people not to be afraid, now they knew for sure that God was always with them.

## Questions to think about (teens and adults)

Sometimes, growth is so slow that it can feel like nothing will ever change.

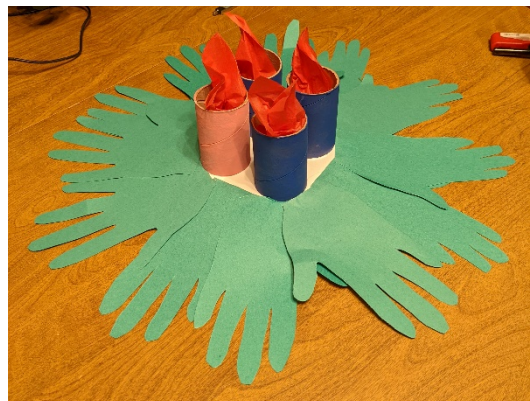
- What is it like for you to hope for growth that you may not see?
- Where in the world do you see justice and righteousness beginning to spring forth?
- How would it change your life if you lived in a state of expectation and hope for God's reign, even when the signs are not yet visible?
- What does it mean to work for God's justice and righteousness even while we wait?
- What decluttering is needed to make way for new growth (individually and as the church)?

## Things to Make and Do

### Advent Wreath

God is with us in the Advent waiting time. A wreath can remind us that God loves and cares for us always.

You need green construction paper; orange, and yellow tissue paper squares, 1 paper plate; 4 paper tubes; paint, markers or crayons; glue; scissors



### Instructions

1. Have a grownup cut 4 holes in the paper plate the size of the paper tubes.
2. If you wish paint your paper tubes. Advent candles are usually 3 blue and 1 white.
3. Make at least 12 handprints from the green construction paper. (Tip: stack two or three sheets of paper together and cut through all thicknesses).
4. Turn the paper plate over and glue paper hand shapes around the outer rim of the plate.
5. Insert four paper tubes into the prepared holes.
6. Twist several squares of orange, and yellow tissue paper together to create four flames and gently insert each "flame" down inside each paper tube "candle."
7. Each week, gently pull up the tissue paper flames to "light" the required number of candles. (Advent 3 is the pink one)

## Godly Play Advent 1 Candle lighting

<https://youtu.be/VKR91z5uaiY>

### A Prophetic Calendar

#### The practice of recognizing ourselves as prophets

Some people use Advent calendars to help count down the days until Christmas. As we read from several prophets during this season – Jeremiah, Isaiah, Mary, to name a few – we are reminded that we, too, are called to be prophets. We are all called to share the good news of God’s love.

#### Directions

1. Take the calendar page, and on some of the dates write down some ways you can share good news for Advent. Examples might be: send a card to someone, sing a carol with your family at dinner time, make a decoration, make a gift for someone.
2. You do not have to put something on every day – try and come up with one or two suggestions for each week.