

FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT

As usual, it's hard to believe it's the first Sunday of Advent already.

But that's the very reason we have Advent. Christians way back in the 4th Century realized they needed time to prepare for Christmas, otherwise they would be unprepared for Jesus' birthday.

This morning, let's remember that when Jesus was born, God's people had been waiting a long time for the promised Savior to come. They were waiting in hope for God's glory to come upon them.

The words of that familiar hymn express the long-awaited hope of God's people: O come, O come, Emmanuel and ransom captive Israel, that mourns in lonely exile here until the Son of God appear.

Let's have this first candle represent **HOPE**. We are a people of hope because He IS our hope. In our dark streets, His light shines in the darkness and the hopes and fears of all the years are met in Him

[LIGHT ONE PURPLE CANDLE]

Let's all pray. Dear God, thank you for this time to prepare to celebrate Christmas in our hearts. If our lives have gotten off course with you somehow, use this Advent to correct us and to restore our life with you. We thank you for the light which came in Christ. Help that light to grow in our hearts so that we can be part of what you're doing in the world, and bring glory to you, through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen