

SEEDS  HOPE
OF
in a time of waiting

*An Advent liturgy for church and home by Bishop Sandra Steiner Ball,
West Virginia Conference of The United Methodist Church*

Christmas Eve or Christmas Day – The Adoration

All: Jesus said, “I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.”

Sing or read verse 1 : #206 The United Methodist Hymnal

I want to walk as a child of the light. I want to follow Jesus. God set the stars to give light to the world. The star of my life is Jesus. In him there is no darkness at all. The night and the day are both alike. The lamb is the light of the city of God. Shine in my heart, Lord Jesus.

One Voice: As the shepherds came to the manger, they were thankful to be the first persons to actually see the fulfillment of the age-old prophecy. They expressed their gratitude by going and telling everyone they met the “good news” of the birth of Jesus. May we not be content to only worship God for God’s great gift on this special day, but may we also tell others about Christ and God’s love and may we shine light on where God and Christ are active in our world today.

A Reading: Luke 2: 15 - 18 – The Adoration

“When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, “Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us.” So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger. When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child; and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them.” (NRSV)

Light the four Advent candles and the White Christ Candle

THE CAROL: “SILENT NIGHT”

Silent night, holy night!

All is calm, all is bright,

Round yon Virgin Mother and Child!

Holy infant, so tender and mild,

Sleep in heavenly peace,

Sleep in heavenly peace.

One Voice: Jesus was sent into the world by God to be our light, the light of life. Today, we thank God once again for Jesus, God’s gift of love and God’s gift of life. So what shall we give in return for this gift? God sent God’s Love and Light into the world through his Son. Jesus has now shared that love and light with us and Jesus commissioned us to go and to do the things that he did. So what gift can we bring on this birthday celebration? We can bring ourselves – we can spread kindness, give hope, share love, forgive others, be joy filled, and bring peace.

Prayer: Dear Jesus, your birthday celebration is a day of joy. We thank you for giving yourself to us. Now we give ourselves to you. Please help us to walk in your love and to be your light. Guide us that we may express our gratitude by the action of sharing the “good news” of Your love and Your Word to everyone, in your Holy name we pray. Amen.

A seed for reflection: How are you sharing Christ’s Good News and bringing God’s light and love to the world?