



Advent and Grief: A 4 - Week Calendar of Hope

A gentle, weekly guide for those carrying grief through the season of Advent.
Presented by the Care Ministry of Providence Church

How to use this: Light a candle each Sunday. Read slowly.
Choose one or two practices to carry into the week. Hold what you
cannot do with compassion. God is not in a hurry.



Week 1 — HOPE (Candle of Hope)



Scripture: Isaiah 9.2; Psalm 130.5–6; Romans 15.13

Breath Prayer: *Inhale:* “You are near.” *Exhale:* “Hold me in hope.”

Short Reflection: Hope in grief is not optimism; it is a quiet trust that light finds us—even here. We do not demand a miracle; we take the next small faithful step.

Simple Ritual

- Light the first candle and name what feels lost this year.

Ways to practice compassion and self care

Scripture Pause (5 min/day): Read Psalm 27.13–14 each morning. Whisper, “I will see Your goodness.”

- **Gentle Walk (10–15 min):** Notice one sign of life: a bird, a leaf, a kind face. Say, “Hope is still possible.”
- **Reach Out:** Text one safe person: “This week is tender. Would you check in on me Wednesday?”

Journal Prompt

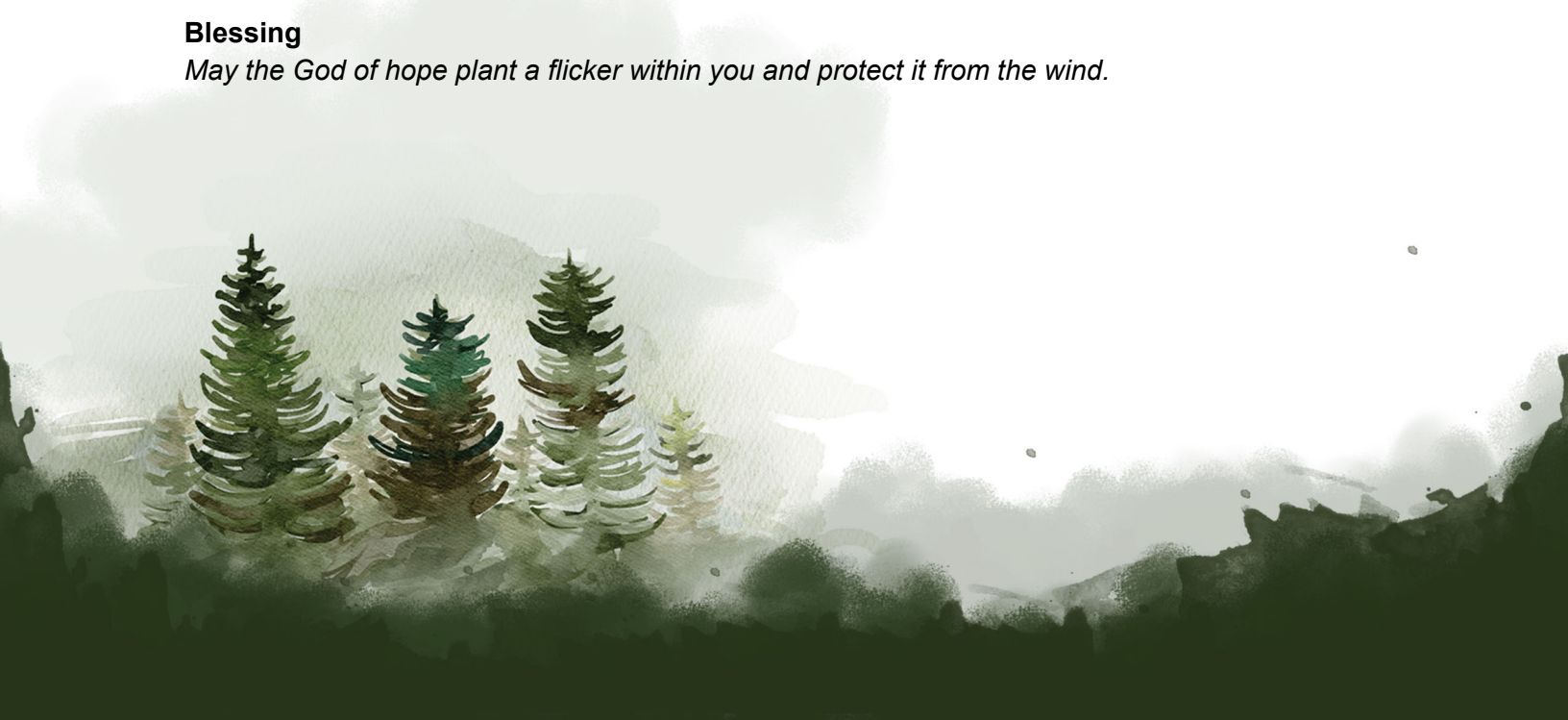
- Where have I seen a small light in the darkness? What might be my *one next step* toward the light?
- **Gratitude-without-pretending:** Write one “true good” each day that does *not* deny sorrow. (e.g., “Coffee with a friend, while missing Dad.”)

Song Suggestions

- *O Come, O Come, Emmanuel* • *Yet Not I but Through Christ in Me* • *Seasons*

Blessing

May the God of hope plant a flicker within you and protect it from the wind.





Week 2 — PEACE (Candle of Peace)

Scripture: Isaiah 26.3; John 14.27; Philippians 4.6–7

Breath Prayer: *Inhale:* “Jesus, my peace.” *Exhale:* “Guard my mind and heart.”

Short Reflection: Peace is not the absence of sorrow but the presence of Christ within it. We borrow His steadiness when ours is gone.

Simple Ritual

- Light two candles. Hold your hand over your heart. Name the anxieties that keep visiting.

Ways to practice compassion and self care

- **Comfort Corner:** Create a small space with a blanket, mug, Scripture, and photo of someone you love. Sit here once a day for 5 minutes of quiet.
- **Peace Prayer for Others:** Each evening, bless a friend or estranged family member by name: “Christ, give them peace tonight.”

Journal Prompt

- What does peace feel like in my body? Where do I notice tension releasing when I sit with Jesus?

Song Suggestions

- *Be Still My Soul* • *The Blessing* • *Prince of Peace*

Blessing

May the peace of Christ settle like warm light over the cold places within you.



Week 3 — JOY (Candle of Joy)



Scripture: Luke 1.46–55; Nehemiah 8.10; John 16.22

Breath Prayer: *Inhale:* “You are with me.” *Exhale:* “Restore my joy.”

Short Reflection: Joy in grief is not forced cheer. It is the quiet arrival of goodness that coexists with tears—like sunlight through rain.

Simple Ritual

- Light three candles. Name three joys that you have experienced recently.

Ways to practice compassion and self care

- **One Joy a Day:** Note one small delight: a song, a laugh, a kind memory.
- **Honor the Absent:** Cook their favorite dish or play their favorite song. Say aloud what you miss and what you loved.

Journal Prompt

- Where is joy asking to sit beside my sorrow—not to replace it, but to accompany it?

Song Suggestions

- *Joy to the World* (Simple Hymn) • *Goodness of God* • *Magnificat*

Blessing

May joy find you without pressure, and linger without guilt.



Week 4 — LOVE (Candle of Love)



Scripture: 1 John 4.9–12; Psalm 23; John 1.14

Breath Prayer: *Inhale:* “Love has come.” *Exhale:* “Love will hold.”

Short Reflection: Love arrives in fragile places—God with us, not above us. Love keeps company with the brokenhearted and calls them beloved.

Simple Ritual

- Light four candles. Hold a hand over your heart/pulse: “Beloved.”

Ways to practice compassion and self care

- **Tell the Story:** Share one treasured memory with a trusted person, or record a voice memo for yourself.
- **Scripture Soak (10 min):** Read Psalm 23 slowly. Picture Christ beside you on each line.

Journal Prompt

- How is Love asking me to be tender with myself and bold in asking for what I need?

Song Suggestions

- *O Love That Will Not Let Me Go* • *O Little Town of Bethlehem* • *Emmanuel*

Blessing

May the Love that entered this weary world make a home in you—steady, kind, enduring.





Christmas Eve/Day

- Light the Christ candle. Read Luke 2.1–20. Sit in silence for one minute. Whisper, “You are here.”

Notes for Families

- **With Kids:** Invite them to place a sticker, leaf, or drawing by the candles each week. Say one sentence prayer together: “Jesus, be our light.”

Providence Church | Care Ministry

Finding Hope, Healing, and Wholeness in Jesus Christ.

