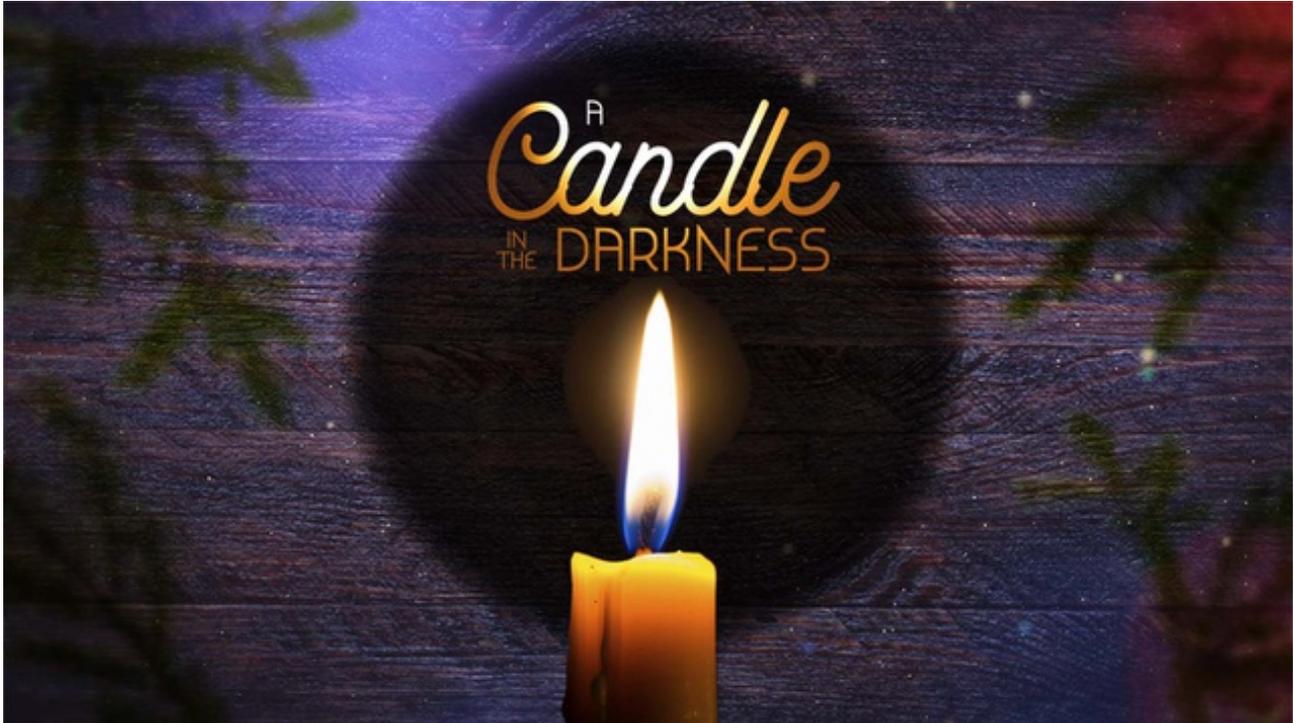


A Candle in the Darkness: Preparing and Hoping :: YouVersion Event

 bible.com/events/320447



A Candle in the Darkness is a four-week sermon series that will harken back to the tradition of Advent. Each week we will pair Old Testament and New Testament reading related to Christmas. We will also speak to some of the Old Testament prophecies about the coming Messiah, and the hope of His coming to restore all things once again.

For more information about events, ministries, or the eFree church in general, follow the link to our website.

<http://kearneyefree.com/>

Advent is the season to **prepare yourself** to welcome The **Savior-King** into your home.

Matthew 1:23 ESV

23 "Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall call his name Immanuel" (which means, God with us).

Micah 5:2-3 ESV

2 But you, O Bethlehem Ephrathah, who are too little to be among the clans of Judah, from you shall come forth for me one who is to be ruler in Israel, whose coming forth is from of old, from ancient days. 3 Therefore he shall give them up until the time when she who is in labor has given birth; then the rest of his brothers shall return to the people of Israel.

Micah 5:4-5 ESV

4 And he shall stand and shepherd his flock in the strength of the Lord, in the majesty of the name of the Lord his

God. And they shall dwell secure, for now he shall be great to the ends of the earth. 5 And he shall be their peace. When the Assyrian comes into our land and treads in our palaces, then we will raise against him seven shepherds and eight princes of men;

Advent is the season to **hope** in the Savior-King's victory over **darkness**.

Matthew 1:18-19 ESV

18 Now the birth of Jesus Christ took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been betrothed to Joseph, before they came together she was found to be with child from the Holy Spirit. 19 And her husband Joseph, being a just man and unwilling to put her to shame, resolved to divorce her quietly.

Matthew 1:21-23 ESV

21 She will bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins." 22 All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet: 23 "Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall call his name Immanuel" (which means, God with us).

"The line separating good and evil passes not through states, nor between classes, nor between political parties either -- but right through every human heart." -- Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn

What is your hope and your prayer as you prepare for Christmas?

LifeGroup Discussion Questions

1) What most encouraged you, challenged you, or gave you hope from today's message?

2) What comes to your mind when you think of Advent?

3) Read Micah 5:2-5. What is the big idea? How would this be especially good news and bring hope to the original hearers experiencing exile and living under foreign rule?

4) Read Matthew 1:18-25. What is the big idea? What is Joseph's chief disappointment? What might be his hope? As much as possible, try to answer these two questions while putting yourself in Joseph's shoes. Can you think of any other Scriptures that help you focus on hope when you are facing disappointment?

5) Reflect upon repeated expressions of hope in Lamentations 3:21-29, words uttered by the prophet Jeremiah during a most awful time in his life. Hope is also a repeated theme found in 1 Peter 1. List some reasons for the apostle Peter's hope.

6) What is your hope this Christmas? If you feel comfortable, take turns sharing what you wrote down as we concluded Sunday's message. What will you do, and how will you pray, as you anticipate Christ's victory for the next 21 days? Commit to praying for each other along these lines.