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Pohutukawa Promise - Advent Candle Liturgy

The hope for this service was to create an Advent candle lighting liturgy that connected us with the unique flora and fauna of Aotearoa New Zealand while still keeping with some of the traditional elements.

Along with the symbols, we also use colour. In our services we have carried on that colour to use with floral arrangements within church and also as background for the Powerpoint presentations. We used fabric with our arrangements to create four individual but connected elements of the Advent themes. We have also used photo images as a backdrop.

The themes are as follows:

Advent 1 - Hope

Symbol - Koru

Colour - Green

Green candle surrounded by fern (ladder fern works well), green cloth.

Advent 2 - Peace

Symbol - Water

Colour - Blue

Blue candle placed in a bowl of water, you may wish to add rocks and stones, blue cloth

Advent 3 - Joy

Symbol - Pohutukawa

Colour - Red

Red candle surrounded by pohutukawa foliage (and blossom if at all possible). In the South Island you may have to use another similar colour plant such as a rata and adapt the prayer or you could use a photograph as a backdrop. Red cloth

Advent 4 - Love

Symbol - Paua

Colour - Purple

Purple candle surrounded by Paua shell and purple cloth.

Christmas Day - Birth of Christ

Symbol: Christ Candle

Colour: White

White candle, in white or gold fabric.

You are welcome to use and reproduce any part of this liturgy as long as you acknowledge Angela Blundell. If you change or adapt to your context please acknowledge Angela Blundell adapted by ... and the year.

Advent 1- Hope

In the very middle of the fern, in its damp, moist belly a koru emerges reaching to the light, offering a sign of rejuvenation and birth. Even when a fern appears dead and lifeless, tiny koru can be found, offering the promise of hope and life.

As we light the green candle nestled amongst the fern we anticipate the hope of new life in the birth of Jesus Christ.

God of hope

As the koru unfurls within the centre of the fern

Give us the hope of new life found within an innocent child

Help us to carry this hope in this Advent season

Knowing that amongst our sin and weakness

**There is hope and renewal to be found in your Son
Jesus Christ, Amen**



Advent 2 - Peace

Water is a symbol of creation, refreshment and renewal. Peace can be found in the loudness of a waterfall and the softness of a gentle stream. Peace can come to us on a beach at sunset or even in a storm. We need peace. We need Peace to surround us and envelop the world.

We light this candle in water to symbolise peace and remembering the promise of peace that the Messiah was to bring into the world.

God of peace

As water sustains and nurtures us

Calm our inner turmoil in this busy time

Remind us of your promise of peace

Found in Jesus, your Son

Whose birth we long for

Amen.



Advent 3 - Joy

The Pohutukawa often clings to the most precipitous of places. It stands strong against rocks, an and water and offers shade for those at play on a beach. In spite of its precarious existence and constant fight against predators, every Christmas it erupts in a blaze of red, a sign of joy, of rejuvenation and of new life.

The Pohutukawa flowers at the beginning of summer and reminds us of the promise of joy, of light, warmth and restoration that would be brought by the Messiah. At this time of advent we light this red candle surrounded by the foliage of the Pohutukawa tree to remind us of our joy in the promise of the Messiah, the light of the world.

**God of joy
As the Pohutukawa stands strong in all weathers
And its flowers are a bright blaze of colour
Give us the joy in the promise of the Messiah
Help us to believe in times of darkness
That your Son came into the world
To bring us redemption and new life
In Jesus name, Amen**



Advent 4 - Love

Paua is a symbol of strength and beauty that provides sustenance to the body just as love is the greatest of things and provides sustenance to the spirit. Paua can withstand the tide, holding fast to the rock and as we eat of its body we see the beauty hidden within its shell. During this time of Advent we remember that Jesus was born to bring love into the world, even unto death.

We light this candle surrounded by Paua to symbolise the greatest love in the world, welcoming the extravagant love of God found in the birth of Jesus.

**God of love
In this time of stress and busyness
Remind us of your powerful love
As we come together as family, as community to your table
Give us the strength and grace to love those we come across in our daily lives
In your Son's name we pray, Amen.**



Christmas Day

We light this candle to remember the birth of Jesus.

Lord God, just as you promised you came to earth
An unexpected package - a precious baby boy.

**Help us this day to find Hope in new life,
Peace in our hearts**

**Joy in your promises,
And Love in our thoughts and actions.**

**And remind us always that your promises may be fulfilled in the most mysterious,
curious and joyous ways.**

In your Son's name we pray, Amen