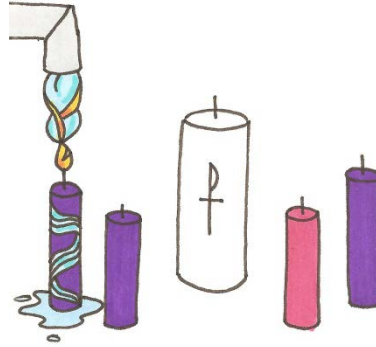


# Preparing the Way with Water to Thrive

## First Sunday of Advent – “Be Alert!”

Luke 21:34-36



### Litany

L: On this First Sunday of Advent we light one candle, reminding us to *be alert* and keep watch for Christ's presence in our world.

C: May our hearts be open to the signs of your presence.

L: As we await the arrival of the Christ Child, let us recognize the gifts God has already given us – blessings both material and spiritual.

C: May we give thanks for what we have, and be mindful of how we can share with others.

L: Grant us peace, that we may not be weighed down by worries this Advent season, but may share the good news of joy and love that comes from the ever-dwelling presence of Your spirit. In Jesus' name we pray.

C: Amen.

### Meditation

Are you on guard? Are you watching for the Messiah? The Christ Child comes to us again each year in the midst of our busy, bustling lives. Christ comes to us as we are decorating our houses with lights and blow-up Santas, as we are shopping for that perfect gift that is just a little out of our price range. He comes to us as we are studying for final exams, planning our last charitable gifts, and working out the budget for all those presents. The Messiah comes when we are sitting with loved ones who are ill, when we are inviting new neighbors into our home, and when we sing carols to those who cannot leave their houses. And Christ also comes to our friends around the world in the midst of their thirst, hunger and suffering.

In rural Africa, the water crisis that families face year round is just as dire during the holidays. Many women and children must travel 4-6 hours each day to collect water, and often the water is contaminated. The sickness it causes is dangerous and sometimes even deadly. But even in desperate circumstances, Christians in these countries still prepare for the birth of Christ, watching for signs of God's love for all people.

We are called as Christians to incarnate the Living Word of Christ, bringing the good news to all people. What will you do during this busy season to welcome the Christ Child into the world? How will you share Christ's gifts of peace and joy with others in our community and in our world?

### Prayer

God of Peace, Help us to bring your Son the Living Christ into our homes, our communities and our world, enlivening others with grace, peace and joy during this season. May we be watchful of the unexpected places where you enter the world, that together we may prepare our hearts and minds for the many gifts of your presence in our lives. **Amen.**