Advent Week One: Hope

Waiting with trust and loving action

Ages about 7-11 | Video 2:52 | Group lesson about 25-35 minutes

Central truth Christian hope trusts God's faithful love while we wait and take loving action today.

Learning goals Recall Israel's remembered promises and Isaiah's light image; name Advent's focus on Christ's coming; practice active, patient hope.

Gather Video access, one handout per child, pencils or crayons, and a Bible.

Watch online Open this video on Servus Dei

Before watching | 2 minutes

Ask what makes waiting hard and what care can help. Explain that hope does not require pretending a difficult situation feels good.

Watch and notice

Notice Abraham, Moses, and David remembered in Israel's story; Isaiah's light image; and Jesus' birth, presence today, and coming in glory.

Talk together | 6-8 minutes

1. What sustained the waiting people?
They remembered God's promises and prayed with hope. The reflection recalls Israel's long relationship with God.

2. What does Isaiah's light image express?
Deliverance, joy, and hope amid hardship. Christians hear this promise in relation to Jesus; darkness is a spiritual image, not a skin-color comparison.

3. Which comings of Jesus does Advent recall?
His birth at Bethlehem, his presence among us today, especially in the Eucharist, and his future coming in glory.

4. What can hopeful waiting include?
Prayer, a kind action, patience, and asking for practical help. Hope does not promise every wish on our timetable.

Then respond and pray Allow 6-8 minutes for a handout or the activity on page 2; finish with the closing prayer.

Lead the response

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Short family lesson Watch the video, choose one recall question and one application question, then pray. About 12-18 minutes; the handout is optional.

Choose a handout

Draw & Tell Use light and path imagery; invite a general hope rather than requiring personal disclosure.

Read & Write Recall remembered promises, identify Christ's coming, and plan active hope.

Adapt by readiness

Ages 7-8: draw a paper flame and dictate one caring action.

Ages 9-11: distinguish hope from predicting an outcome and explain light as an image.

A path of active hope | Optional 4 minutes

Draw four stepping stones for Advent. On the first add a prayer, a caring action, and a trusted helper. Choose one action this week, such as encouraging someone waiting for news. Use a paper flame rather than lighting a candle alone.

Look for understanding Look for trust paired with action and support. A child does not have to feel cheerful or solve another person's suffering to practice hope.

Closing prayer Faithful God, be near us while we wait. Help us remember your love, seek wise help, and bring hope through kind actions. Come, Lord Jesus. Amen.

At home With an adult, read a short part of Isaiah 9. Share one hope, offer a prayer, and choose a practical action for the week.

Handout answer notes Promises: Abraham, Moses, David, prophets and God's faithfulness. Advent: Bethlehem, presence today, future glory. Responses: prayer, caring action, practical trusted help; no guaranteed timeline.

Teach with care

The reflection mentions darkness, suffering, and unanswered prayers. Explain that sadness and questions are welcome, and children should seek help for real worries. This is a poetic Advent reflection rather than one verbatim Bible episode. Israel's history and David's reign are simplified; David was not without serious failures. God's covenant with the Jewish people should be honored, not treated as worthless waiting. Christ's birth in us is spiritual imagery, not another physical birth. Hope never replaces practical help or medical care.

Words to explain Advent: the season preparing for Christ's coming. Messiah: God's Anointed One; Christians recognize Jesus as the Messiah. Hope: trusting God's promises and help.

Sources for the leader

Story source: Servus Dei video and English transcript

Scripture: Isaiah 9: light and promised deliverance

Advent teaching: Benedict XVI: Angelus, December 2, 2012