

## **Prayer of Confession**

It's starting already, Lord. It is only the first Sunday in Advent, and we are caught up in the pressures and stresses of the holiday season. Pursued by the temptation to spend our funds, our energy, our spirits, we feel that there is no peace or rest in the world. Lord of light and peace, shine on us this day. Forgive us when we have so easily succumbed to the anxieties and fears and temptations of the season. Slow us down. Calm our spirits. Give us an awareness that this is the season of waiting and of preparation. Pour peace into our lives and help us to be bearers of peace to others. For we ask this in Jesus' precious Name. AMEN.

## Hope against Hope Advent Prayer

God who hears us:

as advent begins, we are already filled up with waiting.

Waiting to hear the next report of bad news;  
another mass shooting, another refugee crisis,  
another famine, another environmental disaster,  
another deadly virus outbreak, another war.

The news is a litany of things to fear  
that fills our heads with dread.

We wait for your help.

Remind us of Mary and Joseph,  
ordinary people living in a country  
under the boot of an oppressive regime,  
who believed in your salvation,  
holding on to hope against hope.

We hold on to you, believing in your ability  
to be born again even in times like these.

Give us eyes to see your arriving,  
as we do the hard work of being decent  
in the rough and tumble of family life,

Give us ears to see your arriving  
as we hear prophets proclaim good news  
that the powerful will be brought down  
and those who live in poverty will rejoice.

We long to touch the hem of your garment  
so that those we know who are sick  
could be healed,

those who are grieving could be comforted.

We long to taste your good news!  
In this season of growing darkness,  
keep our eyes fixed on the pinpoints of light,  
that shine and shine

because nothing can put them out.

In the name of Jesus, our hope, we pray, Amen

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