

For Children

PRAY

Dear Jesus, our friend and our Savior, every time we see a Christmas light or a candle flame, remind us that you are the warmest, brightest light of all. You light our way in the dark, and your light will triumph over the darkness when you return. We love you and thank you for being with us every day. AMEN.

WATCH WORD

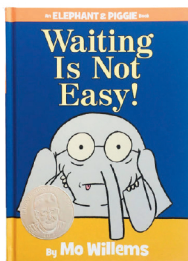
LIGHT

Count how many times you hear the word LIGHT in next week's worship service!

TALLY HERE

READ

"Waiting Is Not Easy!"
Mo Willems



DISCUSS

- Do you remember a time when you had to wait, maybe for a birthday party or a trip that you were excited for?
- How did it feel?
- Did it go by quickly or did it seem like a long time?
- What did you do or think about while you waited?

Advent Week 1 WAITING

"Wait for the LORD; be strong and take heart and wait for the LORD." - Psalm 27:14



Artwork by Sadie Mae W. (Age 8)

Our hearts were made to long for good things. Of course, we have fallen prey to countless twisted desires since the sin of Adam and Eve, but at our core we long for God himself. We long for healing, for love, for justice, for children—for Jesus to return and set it all right like he said he would. And there is real pain and grief in the experience of hope deferred. Waiting is exhausting. We know that things are not as they should be, but here we are, wandering in the wilderness, waiting to be led to the promised land. And yet, even in the wilderness, there is a pillar of light. Even in the stillness, there is movement. Waiting on the Lord is active. It cannot be passive when all our hopes hang on the waiting leading to something real. Waiting is an active rhythm of offering our longings to God and crying out to him because we know he hears us. And while it is tiring, and frustrating, and can feel hopeless, we are promised that it ends in something truly concrete—the return of Jesus Christ, our deliverer.

PRAY

Father of our LORD Jesus Christ,
ever faithful to your promises and ever present with us by your Spirit,
we rejoice in hope at your coming.
You, LORD, are our light and our salvation; whom shall we fear?
Remove all that hinders us from worshiping you in spirit and truth this season,
and make us ready for your return.
You, LORD, are our stronghold; of whom shall we be afraid?
Give us a glimpse now, during this season,
of the glory that we will someday see in full when all will be made new through
Christ, our LORD and our Light.
We believe that we shall see your goodness, O LORD, in the land of the living.
We wait for you; give us strength, and fill us with courage as we wait for you!
AMEN.

(adapted from *The Worship Sourcebook* and Psalm 27)

LOOK



*“The Israelites Passing through the Wilderness,
Preceded by the Pillar of Light”*

William West, 1845
Oil on Canvas

READ

“Advent”

Christina Rossetti

This Advent moon shines cold and clear,
These Advent nights are long;
Our lamps have burned year after year,
And still their flame is strong.
“Watchman, what of the night?” we cry,
Heart-sick with hope deferred:
“No speaking signs are in the sky,”
Is still the watchman’s word.

The Porter watches at the gate,
The servants watch within;
The watch is long betimes and late,
The prize is slow to win.
“Watchman, what of the night?” but still
His answer sounds the same:
“No daybreak tops the utmost hill,
Nor pale our lamps of flame.”

One to another hear them speak,
The patient virgins wise:
“Surely He is not far to seek,”—
“All night we watch and rise.”
“The days are evil looking back,
The coming days are dim;
Yet count we not His promise slack,
But watch and wait for Him.”

One with another, soul with soul,
They kindle fire from fire:
“Friends watch us who have touched the goal.”
“They urge us, come up higher.”
“With them shall rest our waysore feet,
With them is built our home,
With Christ.”—“They sweet, but He most sweet,
Sweeter than honeycomb.”

There no more parting, no more pain,
The distant ones brought near,
The lost so long are found again,
Long lost but longer dear:
Eye hath not seen, ear hath not heard,
Nor heart conceived that rest,
With them our good things long deferred,
With Jesus Christ our Best.

We weep because the night is long,
We laugh, for day shall rise,
We sing a slow contented song
And knock at Paradise.
Weeping we hold Him fast, Who wept
For us, we hold Him fast;
And will not let Him go except
He bless us first or last.

Weeping we hold Him fast tonight;
We will not let Him go
Till daybreak smite our wearied sight,
And summer smite the snow:
Then figs shall bud, and dove with dove
Shall coo the livelong day;
Then He shall say, “Arise, My love,
My fair one, come away.”

LISTEN

“Come Light Our Hearts”

Sandra McCracken



“I Wonder as I Wander”

arr. Kyle Pederson

