

HOPE: THE FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT

LEADER: O that you would tear open the heavens and come down! We are the clay, and you are the potter; we are all the work of your hand.

RESPONSE: Restore us, O God. Let your face shine upon us, and we shall be saved.

LEADER: "Keep awake," says Jesus, "for you do not know when the master of the house will come: in the evening, or at midnight, or at cockcrow, or at dawn."

RESPONSE: Wake us, O God, that we may watch and work until you come.

LEADER: God is faithful. The One who called us will keep us strong to the end, and as we wait, we lack no gift.

RESPONSE: Our God is faithful, and our hope is on the way.

Light one purple candle.

ALL: We light a candle of hope today, a hope that keeps awake. We refuse to sleep through the promise or to settle for a world that leaves some bound and others comfortable. We wait with open eyes and ready hands, as our ancestors waited and worked for freedom, trusting the God who tears open the heavens to meet us where we are. We hope, we watch, and we work. Amen.