**Prayers of Intercession**

Advent God, who comes to us in love, peace and joy.

We thank you for love that nourishes and sustains our hearts, for peace that enables us to live in friendship with others for joy that illuminates and inspires our lives. We bring forth our prayers to you.

The response is Lord Bring Us Your light.

1st candle – prophecy - Hope

**We pray for people in need**

We pray for homeless people and for refugees who have no country to call their own. Let your blessing be with those who work to help the homeless this Christmas, and give to all of us the determination to help where we can.

We pray for people who are lonely, those who are lonely because they have lost a partner, those who are lonely because no-one seems to care, those who are lonely because of handicap or illness. Let your presence be with those who are alone at this season of friendship and may we take your friendship and hope to those who we know will be alone this Christmas,

Lord Hear Us

2nd candle – Bethlehem – Peace

Give peace to the world

Give peace to the victims of war, the refugees, the widowed and the orphans.

Give peace to family and friends; to those who have quarrelled and need to be reconciled.

Give peace in our own divided hearts.

Your Son came as the Prince of Peace and brought a message of Peace for all people. Help us to be Peacemakers in our own homes, at our work or wherever we meet people, so that the peace and goodwill of Christmas can find a place in the hearts of all people.

Lord Hear Us

* 3rd candle – Shepherds – Love

We pray for friends and family who are ill at this time, and remember them in the quietness of our hearts. We bring them to you in the confidence that you love them and know their every need and that your healing power is still the same today. Bless all that is being done for their recovery and answer our prayers as you see best.

Lord Hear Us

* 4th candle - Joy

Heavenly Father, as once again we prepare for Christmas, help us to find time in our busy lives for quiet and thought and prayer, that we may reflect upon the wonder of your love and allow the story of the Saviour’s birth to penetrate our hearts and minds. So may our joy be deeper, our worship more real, and our lives worthier of all that you have done for us through the coming of your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

Lord Hear Us

* 5th candle – this will be lit on Christmas Day to celebrate the birth of our Lord and Saviour, so we pray…

Prayer for Pope Francis

We ask God, in his infinite mercy to continue to guide Pope Francis. May he bring forth the light of Christ to those who seek the presence of Christ in their lives, especially at this time of year. We ask that he encourages the faithful to be compassionate to those in need and to stay steadfast to the teachings and traditions of your universal Church.

Lord Hear Us