

The purpose of this Lenten Candle reading was originally used during Children's Church which was held during regular worship away from regular church. It can be used during Sunday School or even used in regular worship with the children of the church participating as worship leaders for this special candle reading. It is difficult to obtain colored candles that are substantial enough to withstand being burned for long periods of time each week, so I purchased white candles that are about 2-3 inches in diameter and then wrapped each white candle with an appropriate colored ribbon (about 1 inch width), pinning the ends of the ribbon into the candle to secure them. I actually used these wrapped candles for many years in other events. And you will also need a white candle to represent the Christ candle. I liked having the Christ candle be a little taller than the other candles. On the table, I had 3 candles on one side of the Christ candle and three on the other side. The order in how the candles are placed is also important. This would make a beautiful arrangement on your Communion Table during Lent and having the children in charge of this creates opportunities for them to minister to your congregation. It is designed to have 2 readers each week, but you can use it however you wish. The first day you light all 7 candles. Then you extinguish one each Sunday until on Palm Sunday, the only candle lit is the Christ candle. It is then extinguished at the end of worship that day with words the Pastor will proclaim. This part can be done as a benediction with the Christ candle extinguished.---

I hope these readings bring love, understanding and grace to your Lenten journey! If you have questions, feel free to contact me at ehowsley@yahoo.com.

Blessings & Grace! Pastor Elaine Howsley, Pauls Valley OK

Blue – Baptism

Green – Growth – the lessons he taught

Yellow - The brightness of Christ

Orange – Life and vitality – healing

Purple – Royalty - the king of kings

Red – Christ's blood shed

Order of candles:

Blue

Green

Yellow

Orange

Purple

Red

Lenten Candle Readings for Children's Church

1st Sunday of Lent

Reader 1: During the weeks before Christmas, we celebrate the coming of the Christ child with candles. There are four candles lit at Advent. The candle of Peace, Hope, Joy and Love.

Reader 2: We are now in the Season of Lent. A time that is opposite of Christmas. It is a time to prepare for Christ's sacrifice to die on the cross for our sins.

Reader 1: During Lent we will extinguish a candle for each Sunday before Easter. The candles will remind us of the life of Jesus and the things he was willing to do for us.

Reader 2: Each candle represents a part of Jesus that he freely gave to the world. Today, we begin with all of the candles lit, to represent Christ's ministry to the world. The white candle represents Jesus.

Reader 1: Matthew 3:16

¹⁶ As soon as Jesus was baptized, he came up out of the water. Then heaven opened, and he saw God's Spirit coming down on him like a dove. ¹⁷ And a voice from heaven said, "This is my Son, whom I love, and I am very pleased with him."

Reader 2: Today we extinguish the first candle, the blue candle representing Christ's baptism and the beginning of his ministry. Jesus obeyed God's plan by allowing John to baptize him so he could begin his life as God's servant.

2nd Sunday of Lent

Reader 1: Today we begin with only 5 candles lit plus the white Christ candle. We begin our time together remembering how much Jesus loved us by the way he worked with the disciples and taught them lessons to live by.

Reader 2: The green candle represents growth. We know when springtime comes, the grass will grow and the trees will once again have leaves.

Reader 1: Jesus selected the 12 Disciples and then began to travel from place to place...teaching them the things they would need to know to grow in their faith so that they could tell others about Jesus' love.

Reader 2: John 15:1-5a

"I am the true vine; my Father is the gardener. ² He cuts off every branch of mine that does not produce fruit. And he trims and cleans every branch that produces fruit so that it will produce even more fruit. ³ You are already clean because of the words I have spoken to you. ⁴ Remain in me, and I will remain in you. A branch cannot produce fruit alone but must remain in the vine. In the same way, you cannot produce fruit alone but must remain in me.

"I am the vine, and you are the branches.

Reader 1: Today we extinguish the green candle. As Jesus nears the cross, his lessons become more and more important. Our teacher will soon bear the weight of the world upon his shoulders.

3rd Sunday of Lent

Reader 1: This morning we begin with only 4 candles lit plus the white Christ candle. We begin our worship time together remembering that Jesus was often called the Light of the world.

Reader 2: We, as his followers, are instructed to walk in the light, as he is in the light. The yellow candle represents the brightness of Christ. It is symbolic of the sun which gives us light each day. Jesus is the one who gives us light for our Christian lives.

Reader 1: Light. Without it, we stumble blindly in the dark. We do not know our way. We know we are safe when we have the light to guide our paths.

Reader 2: Matthew 5:14-16

¹⁴ “You are the light that gives light to the world. A city that is built on a hill cannot be hidden. ¹⁵ And people don’t hide a light under a bowl. They put it on a lampstand so the light shines for all the people in the house. ¹⁶ In the same way, you should be a light for other people. Live so that they will see the good things you do and will praise your Father in heaven.

Reader 1: We rejoice that Jesus shared with us the importance of shining our light in the world. Let us gather strength from the example of Jesus as he faced the darkness of his own death. We extinguish the yellow candle as we draw nearer, ourselves, to the sadness of the cross.

4th Sunday of Lent

Reader 1: On this 4th Sunday of Lent, we begin with only 3 candles lit with the white Christ candle. We can begin this morning by remembering that Jesus performed many miracles and healed many people.

Reader 2: Orange is the color that stands for life and healing. In the three years that Jesus traveled with his disciples, he healed many people who were sick and dying.

Reader 1: We remember not long before the time when Jesus would enter into Jerusalem on Palm Sunday, he brought his friend, Lazarus back from the dead.

Reader 2: Jesus also healed the hearts of many who were filled with anger and hurt. He showed the disciples what it meant to love each other and to serve each other.

Reader 1: John 15:12-15

¹² "This is my command: Love each other as I have loved you. ¹³ The greatest love a person can show is to die for his friends. ¹⁴ You are my friends if you do what I command you. ¹⁵ I no longer call you servants, because a servant does not know what his master is doing. But I call you friends, because I have made known to you everything I heard from my Father. ¹⁶ You did not choose me; I chose you. And I gave you this work: to go and produce fruit, fruit that will last. Then the Father will give you anything you ask for in my name. ¹⁷ This is my command: Love each other.

Reader 2: We extinguish the orange candle today, as a reminder that with love Jesus healed people both in their bodies and in their spirits. May our words and our actions show our love just as Jesus' did.

5th Sunday of Lent

Reader 1: Today is the 5th Sunday of Lent. We begin our time together with only 2 candles lit with the white Christ candle. We remember that prayer was very important in the life of Jesus.

Reader 2: He taught his disciples the Lord's prayer. He went into the wilderness for 40 days and 40 nights to pray and to fast.

Reader 1: Purple is the color that stands for royalty and for kings. The color purple was very expensive in the days of Jesus and just as prayer is very valuable and precious to us, we use the color purple to remind us of how important Jesus was to our lives. He was the King of Kings.

Reader 2: The evening before Jesus was crucified, he shared a meal with his disciples. He broke the bread and asked them to remember his body that will be given in sacrifice each time we eat the bread.

Reader 1: He poured a cup of wine, made from the juice of the grape. He reminded the disciples that the wine would represent his shed blood on the cross.

Reader 2: After the Last supper, Jesus went into the garden to pray. He knew that Judas would betray him. He knew that Peter would deny ever knowing him. He knew that the time of his death drew near.

Reader 1: Matthew 26:42

⁴² Then Jesus went away a second time and prayed, "My Father, if it is not possible for this painful thing to be taken from me, and if I must do it, I pray that what you want will be done."

Reader 2: We extinguish the purple candle today as a reminder that Jesus, the King of Kings, loved us so much that he willingly gave his life for each of us.

6th Sunday of Lent

Reader 1: Today is Palm Sunday. We have waved our palm branches, celebrating Jesus entering into Jerusalem just as the people did so long ago. It is the beginning of Holy Week...seven days from the celebration of Jesus being raised from the dead.

Reader 2: But before we celebrate Easter morning, we must remember the sadness so soon to follow after the Palm Sunday happiness. Our candle for today is red, symbolic of the blood Christ will shed as he dies on the cross.

Reader 1: Red is the color of sacrifice. Jesus is welcomed by the people only to be abandoned by them by the end of the week. Each day of this coming week will bring us one step closer to Friday, the day of Jesus' death. Many people begin to plot His death.

Reader 2: Mark 14:10-11

¹⁰ One of the twelve apostles, Judas, went to talk to the leading priests to offer to hand Jesus over to them. ¹¹ These priests were pleased about this and promised to pay Judas money. So he watched for the best time to turn Jesus in.

Reader 1: Today the cheers of the happy crowd briefly held back the drumbeats of doom. We extinguish the red candle, symbolic of Jesus' shed blood on the cross. Today only the Christ candle burns through our time together.

Time before parting

Pastor (or Youth Leader): We have spent the last 6 Sundays lighting candles and extinguishing candles. We have remembered Jesus' baptism, his teachings, his miracles and healing. We talked about him being the light of the world and also the importance of prayer. Our time together began happy as we joyfully waved our palm branches because the Savior was with us.

Now we extinguish the Christ candle as we leave this place. We will remember his love. We will remember his sacrifice. We will come here again and rejoice that the tomb is empty.