

THE CANDLES OF ADVENT

The **Fourth Candle** of the Advent wreath has been called the **Candle of the Angels**. It represents the spirit of love which is the content of the angels' announcement. It was God's love that sent his Son to be the Savior of the world. We consider God's love for us and the love with which the angels watched over the Savior's birth.

Lessons for the Fourth Sunday in Advent, Series C

Isaiah 7:10–17 ~ *God's sign of peace to Ahaz is also the promise of our Savior's birth.*

Romans 1:1–7 ~ *The good news promised through God's prophets is fulfilled in Jesus, our Lord.*

Matthew 1:18–25 ~ *Joseph, agonizing over Mary's pregnancy, was reassured by the angel.*

God's Power in Love – While Syria and Samaria prepared to attack, King Ahaz of Judah was given a sign of God's love so he could wait patiently: Immanuel - "God is with us." St. Paul introduced himself to the Romans as an apostle set apart to proclaim the Gospel of God's love in Christ Jesus, descendant of David and Son of God. When Joseph struggled with his loyalty to God's law and his love for Mary, God answered in Jesus: God himself would save his people from their sins.

Our lives are often beset by turmoil and conflict. Hard decisions twist us between alternatives, none of which are desirable. Left to our own choices we either indulge ourselves or take advantage of others, or both. God has promised to be with us in these hard times as well as the good ones. He fulfilled that promise in the birth of Jesus, the promised One, called Immanuel - 'God with us.' Trusting in His promise we are joined to His resurrection and rescued from the bondage of sin and death.

A Prayer for Advent 4: Lord, stir me up with Your mercy so that I may be comforted by Your love in Christ my Savior. Keep me ready to welcome Him always; help me live so that my faith is active in love toward my neighbors at all times. Amen.