One Candle

an advent liturgy for 2020
by Rev. Karen Ware Jackson

Light one candle for hope.

Because the world is broken and the wait is long,
 but hope just won't let go.
Hope holds space for all our longings
 lingers on the edge of harsh reality
 like the dawn gently awakening the sky.
"Keep awake," she whispers,
 "for the world is being made new."
So we light one candle, because it only takes one:
 Christ with us.

Light one candle for peace.

Because the world is broken and the wait is long,
 but we refuse to be frozen by fear.
Peace comes in fits and starts-
 a deep breath
 a courageous truth
 a humble heart.
"Prepare the way," she whispers,
 "for the Lord comes to make the broken whole."
So we light one candle, because it only takes one:
 Christ with us.

Light one candle for joy.

Because the world is broken and the wait is long,
 but our joy cannot be contained.
Like a toddler, toppling the thrones of power with a
gleeful swipe,
Joy pierces our silence with song
 interrupts our sighing with laughter
 unshackles our fumbling feet to dance.
"My soul magnifies the Lord," she whispers,
 "and my Spirit rejoices in God my savior."
So we light one candle, because it only takes one:
 Christ with us.

Light one candle for love.

Because the world is broken and the wait is long,
 but love never ends.
Love faithfully goes about the work of
 casting out fear
 speaking truth
 healing the deepest wounds
 crossing the divide from this world to the next
 and back again.
"Here i am," she whispers,
 "the servant of the Lord."
So we light one candle, because it only takes one:
 Christ with us.

Light one candle for Christ.

Because the world is broken and the wait is long
 but Christ is with us through it all.
In humble manger in a back water town - a baby.
 On a convict's cross - a king.
 in every heart and every home where hope, peace,
 joy, and love endure-Christ with us.
"Glory to God in the Highest heaven," she whispers,
 "and peace to all on earth."
So we light one candle, because it only takes one:
 Christ with us.