4. Pray and share

Love feast

Share the elements as part of your picnic using these simple words.

Together: **In love, Christ makes room for each one of us.**

Ordinary bread made by ordinary people
is holy
when we take and eat
and remember.

Ordinary grapes taken by ordinary people
made into ordinary wine
is holy
when we hold it to our lips and drink
and remember.

This bread . . . remember, his body was given for us....
This wine . . . remember, his blood was poured out for us....

Bread and wine,
from ordinary to holy . . .
Remember.

ANN WEEMS | *Searching for Shalom*

One person: On the night before he died, Jesus took bread, gave thanks, broke it and said, "this is my body, given for you."

Pass the bread: **The bread of life, given for you.**

Another: Then he took the cup and said, "this is the new covenant, poured out for you."

Pass the cup: **The cup of blessing, poured out for you.**

Read aloud together: *Bread and Wine.*

Closing prayer

Together:

May the God who makes room for possibility,
the Christ who comes to us even in ordinary places,
and the Spirit who hovers over every beginning go with us into the games,
the food,
and the afternoon.
Amen.

ADVENT 1 · MAKE ROOM FOR JOY

Make room for POSSIBILITY

Picnic Sunday · Group encounter: make room TOGETHER

A shared liturgy for families and small groups on a picnic rug or camping chairs in a circle in the park, built around the lighting of the hope candle and the story of Mary (Luke 1:26-38).



1. Gather

Light the hope candle

Switch on your candle. Say together:

We make room for hope.

Call to worship

Where is joy? *Read in two voices: one half of the circle reads each stanza.*

As the hand is made for holding,
and the eye for seeing,
You have fashioned us for joy.
Share with us the vision
that shall find it everywhere.

And, when our song of joy dies down to silence,
come, hold our powerlessness with love!
Then shall our fear be gone,
and our feet set on a radiant path.

THE NORTHUMBRIA COMMUNITY | *Celtic Daily Prayer II*

2. Settle and give thanks

Centering

Sit comfortably and take a slow breath. Go around the circle: each person names one thing they can see and one thing they can hear. Then, when you are ready to give thanks, one person leads the prayer and all respond where the words are in bold.

Gather and place. Find one small thing from the ground nearby (a gumnut, leaf, feather, stone etc). As you give thanks, place it around the candle. By the end, the rug has a small centrepiece of thanks.

Giving thanks

God of this place and of the people who first walked here, we thank you.

For the long light of early summer, **thank you.**

For cicada song and the shade of trees, **thank you.**

For the sea breeze that finds us in the afternoon, **thank you.**

For ground to sit on and food to share, **thank you.**

For the people on this rug, **thank you.**

For _____ (*each person names one thing and places their object*), **thank you.**

Together: **Thank you, God, for making room for us. Amen.**

A poem

The Messiah. One person reads aloud.

Look for the Messiah where you will,
but you'll find him where you live.
He will not be separated and kept apart
from those who cry to him.
He will be found right in the midst
of the daily, routine, ordinary stuff of life.
So wherever you're living
look for Him.
In the ordinary niches of that living,
look for the holy
that the holy might be found in you.

ANN WEEMS | *Searching for Shalom*

Silence

3. Mary's story

The reading

Luke 1:26-38. *Read in three voices: narrator, Gabriel and Mary.*

In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town of Galilee, Nazareth, to a virgin betrothed to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. And the name of the virgin was Mary. And the angel came to Mary and said:

"Rejoice, favoured one! The Most High God is with you."

Now, she was troubled by the angel's words and pondered what sort of greeting this was. Then the angel said to her,

"Fear not Mary, for you have found favour with God. And now, you will conceive in your womb and give birth to a son, and you will name him Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High, and the Sovereign God will give him the throne of his ancestor David. He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his sovereignty there will be no end."

Then Mary said to the angel,

"How can this be, since I have not known a man intimately?"

The angel said to her,

"The Holy Spirit, She will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the one born will be holy, He will be called Son of God. And now, Elizabeth your kinswoman has even conceived a son in her old age, and this is the sixth month for she who was called barren. For nothing will be impossible with God."

Then Mary said,

"Here am I, the woman-slave of God: let it be with me according to your word."

Then the angel left her.

Prof. Wilda Gafney | A Women's Lectionary for the Whole Church (Year W)

Talk together

- What word or phrase stuck with you?
- What feels impossible right now, in your own life or your family or in the world?
- If anything were possible, what would you hope for this Advent?
- Where in this park can you see possibility?

Find possibility. You might want to take this moment to stretch your legs and to physically locate "possibility" in the environment around you. You might want to visit another circle and affirm "I see possibility HERE." You might want to walk the labyrinth.

When you're ready, send one person to collect your love feast elements from Yvonne.