



# FIRST SUNDAY OF *Advent*

O God of surprises  
on this First Sunday of Advent,  
you remind us to “Be watchful! Be alert!”  
as we light our first Advent candle.

Just as you did two thousand years ago,  
when your Word became human flesh  
in the person of Jesus,  
you continue to break into our lives.

As we begin this Advent season  
and prepare ourselves to celebrate Christmas,  
Give us new eyes and new ears  
so that we can be watchful and alert.

Help us to break out of our ruts  
of complacency and routine.

Give us courage to venture beyond our comfort zones.  
Guide us to encounter your love  
in new and exciting ways.

Inspire us to be your face of compassion  
to those on the edges of our families,  
neighborhoods and in the world  
who most need your love  
to break into their despair and heal their suffering.  
Awaken in us your call  
and our response to be your missionary disciples.

We ask this through Jesus,  
who is the human face of  
your compassion and mercy.

*Amen.*