



## Week 1: I Wonder about Hope

### **Wonderful Luminaries: Hope Shines in the Darkness**

Watch this activity build during the Advent season.

**Materials needed:** four empty tin cans (all the same size, such as coffee cans; or four different sizes, perhaps in descending order of size from large to small); spray paint (optional); water and a freezer; permanent black marker or paper, printer, and tape; a hammer and nails or an electric drill and drill bits; four battery-operated candles

**Time required:** 30 minutes (not counting the time it takes for the water to freeze in the cans overnight)

**Safety precautions:** An adult should handle opening and cleaning the cans, spray painting (optional), and hammering or drilling holes in the cans. Turn on

battery-operated candles and carefully drop them into the cans, rather than putting your hand inside the cans.

1. Talk about Advent and the four-week “wondering” you will be doing together as a family.
2. Remove and recycle the top lids from the cans. Make sure the cans are clean and dry and that any inside edges are smooth. If you wish, an adult can spray paint the cans in your choice of color.
3. Use the black marker to print the words *Hope*, *Love*, *Joy*, and *Peace* on the front of each can, one word per can. Create each letter with evenly spaced dots rather than straight lines. Another option is to choose a font on your computer and print out the words to use as a pattern. If you decide to do this, you can tape the paper on the can after it has been in the freezer.
4. Fill the cans with water and put them in the freezer overnight.
5. Once the water has frozen, remove the Hope can from the freezer. Use the hammer and nails or drill and drill bits to poke through the dots on the can or follow your pattern to make dots, spelling out *Hope*. The ice in the can creates a firm surface to hammer or drill through.
6. Set the can in warm water to dislodge the ice. Remove and dry the can.
7. Either now or in the coming weeks, repeat steps 5 and 6 to prepare the Love, Joy, and Peace luminaries.
8. Turn on a battery-powered candle and set it in the Hope luminary. Set the Hope luminary outside on your steps, porch, or deck or along a walkway. Gather together and watch the way the candle lights up the word *Hope*.
9. Light the luminary each evening during the first week of Advent. Discuss the ways that you find hope in everyday events, conversations, and tasks. Wonder together about the theme of hope, and pray about any concerns or reasons for thankfulness you may have.