

Advent Prayers



Church of the Redeemer
Advent Two to the Saturday Following

Introduction

We invite you to enter into a time of intentional prayer this Advent through the use of this resource.

The season of Advent is the four Sundays (and following weekdays) before Christmas Day. The season's name comes from the Latin word *adventus*, which means "arrival". We use this time to get ready for "the birth in time of the timeless Son of God" – and to get ready for the same Son of God to come again at the end of time. It is a time that we look back to his birth and yet also look ahead to the time that is yet to come.

We have looked to readings that call us to enter into a time where we wait, watch, prepare. We prepare to welcome the little one born in a manger. We wait for the Jesus—the One—who came to cast light on the path before us. In our waiting, watching and preparing we seek Jesus the Christ who is our companion. We seek to make time for quiet, for stillness where we might listen for the voice of the One who calls us beloved.

The order for daily prayer contains elements that are traditional forms familiar to many and contemporary aspects that are also familiar. Use as much or as little of the order as you need to give shape to your time of prayer. It matters not the time of day that you set aside for prayer – morning, noon, or night as your schedule allows. As each of us pauses to pray, we know that others within the parish have joined with us, each in our own time and space, for a continuum of prayer throughout the day.

The booklets for each week will be available in church as well as online. You are welcome to keep the booklets for use again. In addition, we will include some part of each day's reading or reflection on our Facebook page.

In Peace we pray...

Advent Two to the Saturday Following

December 7 to December 13

We enter into a time of quiet. We offer to God our selves and in the silence know that God embraces us as God's very own. We offer to God our hopes and our concerns through our prayers and in the silence listen for God.

We begin by saying

Watch at all times, praying that you may have the strength to escape all these things that will take place, and to stand before the Son of Man

Luke 21.36

We continue with the Psalm

To the leader. Of the Korahites. A Psalm.

LORD, you were favourable to your land;

you restored the fortunes of Jacob.

You forgave the iniquity of your people;

you pardoned all their sin.

Selah

Let me hear what God the LORD will speak,

for he will speak peace to his people,

to his faithful, to those who turn to him in their hearts.

Surely his salvation is at hand for those who fear him,

that his glory may dwell in our land.

Steadfast love and faithfulness will meet;

righteousness and peace will kiss each other.

Faithfulness will spring up from the ground,

and righteousness will look down from the sky.

The LORD will give what is good,

and our land will yield its increase.

Righteousness will go before him,

and will make a path for his steps.

Ps 85.1-2, 8-13

In Peace We Pray

We continue with the reading and the reflection beginning on page eight. In silence we ask what the reading has to say to us today. Is there something in the reflection that draws us more deeply into the reading? What does God have to say to us? What do we have to ask God?

When the time is right, we conclude our time of silence with the canticle below.

The Canticle ~ A Song in the Wilderness

The wilderness and the dry land shall rejoice,
the desert shall blossom and burst into song.
They shall see the glory of the Lord,
the majesty of our God.
Strengthen the weary hands,
and make firm the feeble knees.
Say to the anxious, 'Be strong, fear not,
your God is coming with judgement,
coming with judgement to save you.'
Then shall the eyes of the blind be opened,
and the ears of the deaf unstopped;
Then shall the lame leap like a hart,
and the tongue of the dumb sing for joy.
For waters shall break forth in the wilderness,
and streams in the desert;
The ransomed of the Lord shall return with singing,
with everlasting joy upon their heads.
Joy and gladness shall be theirs,
and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

Isaiah 35.1,2b-4a,4c-6,10

We continue in prayer for those people and situations that we hold up before God (The Intercessions) and continue with the prayer for the day, the Lord's prayer and the concluding prayer.

The Intercessions

Prayer for the Day

Second Sunday of Advent

God of timeless grace, you fill us with joyful expectation. Make us ready for the message that prepares the way, so that with uprightness of heart and holy joy we may eagerly await the coming of Christ, who reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, now and forever.

Monday

Let our prayers and petitions be set forth in your sight, O Lord, that our desire to serve you with unblemished integrity may bring us to the mystery of the incarnation of your only Son, who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, now and for ever.

Tuesday

O God, you have declared your salvation to all the ends of the earth. Grant that we may joyfully await the glory of the birth of him who came to make us all your children, and who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, now and for ever.

Wednesday

Almighty God, you call us to prepare the way for Christ our Lord. Mercifully grant that the pains of our humanity may not weary or overcome us, who rely upon the strengthening presence of the heavenly physician, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.

Thursday

Rouse our hearts, O Father, to prepare the way of your only Son, that by his coming we may serve you with pure hearts and faithful minds; through the same Jesus Christ our Lord, lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.

Friday

Almighty God, give your people strength to await with unceasing vigilance the coming of your only Son, so that, just as he has taught us, we may hasten with lighted lamps to meet him when he arrives.

Saturday

May the splendour of your glory rise in our hearts, O God, so that when all the shadows of this present age have been banished, the coming of your only Son may reveal us as children of the light; through the same Jesus Christ our Lord, lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.

[let us pray as our Saviour taught us,]

Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins,
as we forgive those who sin against us.
Save us from the time of trial,
and deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power,
and the glory are yours,
now and for ever. Amen

OR

God, who cares for us,
The wonder of whose presence fills us with awe,
Let justice, kindness and love shine in our world.
Let your secrets be known here as they are in heaven.
Give us the food and the hope we need for today.
Forgive us our wrongdoing
as we forgive the wrongs done to us.

Protect us from pride and from despair
and from the fear and hate which can swallow us up.
In you is truth, meaning, glory and power,
while worlds come and go. Amen.

Concluding Prayers

In the morning

Holy and enabling Spirit,
Give wings to our morning prayers.
May those we support and cherish with our love
Receive your grace to help them in their need. Amen.

In the evening

Preserve us, O God, while waking,
And guard us while sleeping,
That awake we may watch with Christ,
And asleep may rest in your peace. Amen.

The Readings and Reflections

Sunday

The beginning of the good news of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

As it is written in the prophet Isaiah,
'See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you,
who will prepare your way;
the voice of one crying out in the wilderness:
"Prepare the way of the Lord,
make his paths straight" ',

John the baptizer appeared in the wilderness, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. And people from the whole Judean countryside and all the people of Jerusalem were going out to him, and were baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins. Now John was clothed with camel's hair, with a leather belt around his waist, and he ate locusts and wild honey. He proclaimed, 'The one who is more powerful than I is coming after me; I am not worthy to stoop down and untie the thong of his sandals. I have baptized you with water; but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit.'

Mark 1.1-8

Reflection

Each Sunday morning in Advent we gather in the dim light of the darkened worship space. We are still. Around us are the sounds of traffic going by, the rumble of the subway underfoot. In the quiet of our space, soon song encircles us

Prepare the way of the Lord...

and our voices blend together. In the darkness, light breaks through as the candle is carried into our midst. Each week the light grows—today the candlelight of two candles flickers and dances before us.

How are you preparing the way? How are you readying yourself to welcome the One who is called the Light of the World?

Monday

As they went away, Jesus began to speak to the crowds about John: 'What did you go out into the wilderness to look at? A reed shaken by the wind? What then did you go out to see? Someone dressed in soft robes? Look, those who wear soft robes are in royal palaces. What then did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet. This is the one about whom it is written,

"See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you,
who will prepare your way before you."

Truly I tell you, among those born of women no one has arisen greater than John the Baptist; yet the least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he.

Matthew 11.7-11

Reflection

What are you looking for?
What will you find?
Will it be what you expect?

This time of year it seems we are always out there looking—for the perfect gift, for the right ingredient for the feast, for the ideal tree, for...something that we don't quite know what it is but we'll know it when we see it.

What are you looking for? Pause for a moment. Set aside the search for things. Look for the one who prepares the way. In the unexpected, what do you find?

Tuesday

A voice cries out:

'In the wilderness prepare the way of the LORD,
make straight in the desert a highway for our God.

Every valley shall be lifted up,
and every mountain and hill be made low;
the uneven ground shall become level,
and the rough places a plain.

Then the glory of the LORD shall be revealed,
and all people shall see it together,
for the mouth of the LORD has spoken.'

Isaiah 40.3-5

Reflection

Sometimes when I'm out running, I meet up with a hill that might as well be a mountain for the ease that I feel I can reach the top. Sometimes, if I look just far enough ahead of my footsteps I can imagine that it is flat ground. The mountain before me is made low, the uneven ground becomes level. I wonder if that is a little bit like what happens when we prepare the way of the Lord—that we don't look too far ahead but see what is before us. We see those who are cast down and raise them up; we see the hurting and we ease their burden; we bring those from the edges in to the midst. Who is near you that you can help to make the rough places, plain?

Wednesday

The reason I speak to them in parables is that “seeing they do not perceive, and hearing they do not listen, nor do they understand.” With them indeed is fulfilled the prophecy of Isaiah that says:

“You will indeed listen, but never understand,
and you will indeed look, but never perceive.
For this people’s heart has grown dull,
and their ears are hard of hearing,
and they have shut their eyes;
so that they might not look with their eyes,
and listen with their ears,
and understand with their heart and turn—
and I would heal them.”

But blessed are your eyes, for they see, and your ears, for they hear. Truly I tell you, many prophets and righteous people longed to see what you see, but did not see it, and to hear what you hear, but did not hear it. *Matthew 13.13-17*

Reflection

Blessed are your eyes, for they see
the hungry
the lost
the lonely
the fed
the found
the gathered
Blessed are your ears, for they hear
the cry
the shout
the whisper
the sigh
the sob
the babble
Blessed are you.

Thursday

A voice says, 'Cry out!'
And I said, 'What shall I cry?'
All people are grass,
their constancy is like the flower of the field.
The grass withers, the flower fades,
when the breath of the LORD blows upon it;
surely the people are grass.
The grass withers, the flower fades;
but the word of our God will stand for ever.

Isaiah 40.6-8

Reflection

The grass crunched beneath my feet. There had been no rain for days. The sun beat down on the dry soil. The flowers withered. There had been no rain for days. The sun faded their colour. I stood there in the quiet, arid land beneath me, pastel flowers beside me.

The warm breezes caressed my face. I wanted to cry out. What can I cry?

God.

Friday

But do not ignore this one fact, beloved, that with the Lord one day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like one day. The Lord is not slow about his promise, as some think of slowness, but is patient with you, not wanting any to perish, but all to come to repentance. But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, and then the heavens will pass away with a loud noise, and the elements will be dissolved with fire, and the earth and everything that is done on it will be disclosed.

Since all these things are to be dissolved in this way, what sort of people ought you to be in leading lives of holiness and godliness, waiting for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be set ablaze and dissolved, and the elements will melt with fire? But, in accordance with his promise, we wait for new heavens and a new earth, where righteousness is at home.

Therefore, beloved, while you are waiting for these things, strive to be found by him at peace, without spot or blemish; and regard the patience of our Lord as salvation. So also our beloved brother Paul wrote to you according to the wisdom given to him.

2 Peter 3.8-15a

Reflection

One day is like a thousand years and a thousand years like one day. Does it seem like time can be measured this way sometimes? Soon but not yet. Now but also in a time to come. Is that what our days through Advent are like? We prepare for the day that is soon and the day that is not yet. We prepare for now and for the day that is to come. Be still for a moment and give thanks for the day that soon and for the anticipation for the day that is yet to come.

Saturday

Get you up to a high mountain,
O Zion, herald of good tidings;
lift up your voice with strength,
O Jerusalem, herald of good tidings,
lift it up, do not fear;
say to the cities of Judah,
'Here is your God!'
See, the Lord GOD comes with might,
and his arm rules for him;
his reward is with him,
and his recompense before him.
He will feed his flock like a shepherd;
he will gather the lambs in his arms,
and carry them in his bosom,
and gently lead the mother sheep.

Isaiah 40.9-11

Reflection

Lift up your voice

Strength

Good tidings

Without fear

See before you

God comes

God feeds

God gathers

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