

Advent Prayers



Church of the Redeemer
Advent Four 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 Four to the Saturday Following

December 21 to December 27

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

Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son
and shall call his name Immanuel

Isaiah 7.14

We continue with the Psalm

A Maskil of Ethan the Ezrahite.
I will sing of your steadfast love, O LORD, for ever;
with my mouth I will proclaim your faithfulness to all generations.
I declare that your steadfast love is established for ever;
your faithfulness is as firm as the heavens.

You said, 'I have made a covenant with my chosen one,
I have sworn to my servant David:
"I will establish your descendants for ever,
and build your throne for all generations." '

Selah

Then you spoke in a vision to your faithful one, and said:
'I have set the crown on one who is mighty,
I have exalted one chosen from the people.
I have found my servant David;
with my holy oil I have anointed him;
my hand shall always remain with him;
my arm also shall strengthen him.
The enemy shall not outwit him,
the wicked shall not humble him.
I will crush his foes before him
and strike down those who hate him.

My faithfulness and steadfast love shall be with him;
and in my name his horn shall be exalted.
I will set his hand on the sea
and his right hand on the rivers.
He shall cry to me, "You are my Father,
my God, and the Rock of my salvation!"

Ps 89.1-4, 19-26

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 ~ The Song of Mary

My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord,
my spirit rejoices in God my Saviour;
for he has looked with favour on his lowly servant.
From this day all generations will call me blessed:
the Almighty has done great things for me,
and holy is his name.
He has mercy on those who fear him
in every generation.
He has shown the strength of his arm,
he has scattered the proud in their conceit.
He has cast down the mighty from their thrones,
and has lifted up the lowly.
He has filled the hungry with good things,
and the rich he has sent away empty.
He has come to the help of his servant Israel,
for he has remembered his promise of mercy,
the promise he made to our fathers,
to Abraham and his children for ever.

Luke 1.46-55

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

Fourth Sunday of Advent

God of scandalous love, Mary consented to bear the shame and carry your Word within herself; may her courage give hope to women and men who yearn to sing new songs of justice and find the world a dwelling place for God; through Jesus Christ, the one who is to come.

Monday

O King of the nations, and their desire, the cornerstone making both one: Come and save the human race, which you fashioned from clay.

Tuesday

O Emmanuel, our King and our lawgiver; the hope of the nations and their Saviour: Come and save us, O Lord our God.

Christmas Eve

Almighty God, you have given us your only-begotten Son to take our nature upon him and as at this time to be born of a pure virgin: grant that we, who have been born again and made your children by adoption and grace, may daily be renewed by your Holy Spirit; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.

Christmas Day

God whose Word became flesh, breathe a new song of joy and praise into the world, so that we may bear the good news of your salvation and proclaim your promise of peace to the ends of the earth; through Christ the Word.

Friday

Make haste, Lord Jesus, and do not tarry, that we who trust in your love may be strengthened and lifted up by the glad tidings of your coming.

Saturday

God of all hope and joy, open our hearts in welcome, that your Son Jesus Christ at his coming may find in us a dwelling prepared for himself; who 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

God faithful and true,
make us eager with expectation,
as we look for the fulfilment of your promise
in Jesus Christ our Saviour.

In the evening

Son of God, light that shines in the dark,
child of joy and peace,
help us to come to you
and be born anew this night.

The Readings and Reflections

Sunday

In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. And he came to her and said, "Greetings, favoured one! The Lord is with you."

But she was much perplexed by his words and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. The angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favour with God. And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus. He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give to him the throne of his ancestor David. He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end."

Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I am a virgin?" The angel said to her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be holy; he will be called Son of God. And now, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son; and this is the sixth month for her who was said to be barren. For nothing will be impossible with God."

Then Mary said, "Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word." Then the angel departed from her.

Luke 1.26-38

Reflection

Here I am.

Words offered bravely, boldly. Words said with conviction and confidence.
Words that changed and ever change.

Here I am.

Will you welcome the One who is to come. Bravely, boldly. With conviction and confidence. To be changed and ever changing?

Today, tomorrow and all the days to come.

Here I am.

Monday

Alas! that day is so great
there is none like it;
it is a time of distress for Jacob;
yet he shall be rescued from it.

On that day, says the LORD of hosts, I will break the yoke from off his neck, and I will burst his bonds, and strangers shall no more make a servant of him. But they shall serve the LORD their God and David their king, whom I will raise up for them.

But as for you, have no fear, my servant Jacob, says the LORD,
and do not be dismayed, O Israel;
for I am going to save you from far away,
and your offspring from the land of their captivity.
Jacob shall return and have quiet and ease,
and no one shall make him afraid.
For I am with you, says the LORD, to save you;
I will make an end of all the nations
among which I scattered you,
but of you I will not make an end.
I will chastise you in just measure,
and I will by no means leave you unpunished.

Jeremiah 30.7-11a

Reflection

Not a burden but burst free. Not a servant but to serve. Not scattered but brought together.

For I am with you...to save you.

Tuesday

Again the LORD spoke to Ahaz, saying,

Ask a sign of the LORD your God; let it be deep as Sheol or high as heaven.

But Ahaz said, I will not ask, and I will not put the LORD to the test. Then Isaiah said: 'Hear then, O house of David! Is it too little for you to weary mortals, that you weary my God also? Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign. Look, the young woman is with child and shall bear a son, and shall name him Immanuel. He shall eat curds and honey by the time he knows how to refuse the evil and choose the good.

Isaiah 7.10-15

Reflection

Do you ever look for a sign? Something that tells you that you are on the right path or that something is meant to be? Do you ever look for a sign? Something that tells you which decision to make—to stay or to go; to risk the unknown or to stay with the safety of where you are?

Here is a sign of what is to come...a child. Immanuel. God with us. Will you look for this sign and welcome him? Immanuel. God with us.

Christmas Eve

In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered. This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. All went to their own towns to be registered. Joseph also went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to the city of David called Bethlehem, because he was descended from the house and family of David. He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child.

Luke 2.1-6

Reflection

They came to be counted. Travelling great distance, they went to the place where he was descendent. In the swarm and swirl of all who moved from this place to that. They came to be counted. She heavily pregnant, away from family coming to family.

We come to be counted. We travel great distance—from that place to this place. For some the distance will be measure by geography; for some it will be of the heart.

While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. The child that we wait to be born in us. The child we have travelled to welcome.

We come to be counted among those who welcome him.
Emmanuel.

Christmas Day

And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.

Luke 2.7

Reflection

Draw near...

Come see...

He is born...wrapped in bands of cloth.

He is born...laid in a manger.

He is born...for us.

Make room.

Friday

When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, 'Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us.' So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger. When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child; and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them. But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

Luke 2.15-20

Reflection

Go.

Haste.

Find.

Tell the amazing story.

Angels

Birth.

Return.

Glorify.

Praise.

Jesus.

Saturday

Now there was a man in Jerusalem whose name was Simeon; this man was righteous and devout, looking forward to the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit rested on him. It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord's Messiah. Guided by the Spirit, Simeon came into the temple; and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him what was customary under the law, Simeon took him in his arms and praised God.

Luke 2.25-28

Reflection

Simeon knew
He was patient
It had been revealed

Holding the child in his arms
He praised God
He saw the day

Reach out to cradle
The little one
In your arms

As you offer your words
In wonder and praise
Embrace

Love

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