

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.

Our theme this year is the Jesse Tree. Isaiah says to us: *A shoot shall come out from the stump of Jesse, and a branch shall grow out of his roots.* So what makes Jesse so important? Jesse was David's father and the image of a new branch growing out of David's lineage points us to Jesus. In our readings we hear the stories that tell of that lineage – looking back and looking forward, not unlike the season that we are in. What all of that has to say to us in this time and place will form part of our prayer and reflection.

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 6 to December 12

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

Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight. All flesh shall see the salvation of God.

Luke 3.4, 6

We continue with the Psalm

When the Lord restored the fortunes of Zion, *
then were we like those who dream.

Then was our mouth filled with laughter, *
and our tongue with shouts of joy.

Then they said among the nations, *
"The Lord has done great things for them."

The Lord has done great things for us, *
and we are glad indeed.

Restore our fortunes, O Lord, *
like the watercourses of the Negev.

Those who sowed with tears *
will reap with songs of joy.

Those who go out weeping, carrying the seed, *
will come again with joy, shouldering their sheaves.

Ps 126

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.

In Peace We Pray

The Canticle ~ A Song of Zechariah

Blessed be the Lord, the God of Israel; *
he has come to his people and set them free.

He has raised up for us a mighty Saviour, *
born of the house of his servant David.

Through his holy prophets he promised of old,
that he would save us from our enemies, *
from the hands of all who hate us.

He promised to show mercy to our fathers *
and to remember his holy covenant.

This was the oath he swore to our father Abraham, *
to set us free from the hands of our enemies,

free to worship him without fear, *
holy and righteous in his sight
all the days of our life.

You, my child, shall be called the prophet
of the Most High, *
for you will go before the Lord to prepare his way,

to give his people knowledge of salvation *
by the forgiveness of their sins.

In the tender compassion of our God *
the dawn from on high shall break upon us,

to shine on those who dwell in darkness and the shadow
of death, *
and to guide our feet into the way of peace.

Luke 1.68-79

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

The Intercessions

We offer prayers:

For God's creation...

For peace in the world...

For the Church and all who serve in Christ's name...

For the poor, the persecuted, the sick, and all who suffer...

For forgiveness from those whom we have injured or offended...

For those who have gone before us in faith...

We conclude our prayers

God of mercy,
may the radiance of your redeeming love rise in our hearts,
lighting the way from the shadow of darkness
and guiding our feet into the way of peace. Amen.

[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.

We conclude

Our Lord says, 'I am coming soon.'
Amen. Come, Lord Jesus.
May the Lord, when he comes,
Find us watching and waiting.

The Readings and Reflections

Sunday

So Jacob rose early in the morning, and he took the stone that he had put under his head and set it up for a pillar and poured oil on the top of it. He called that place Bethel; but the name of the city was Luz at the first. Then Jacob made a vow, saying, 'If God will be with me, and will keep me in this way that I go, and will give me bread to eat and clothing to wear, so that I come again to my father's house in peace, then the LORD shall be my God, and this stone, which I have set up for a pillar, shall be God's house; and of all that you give me I will surely give one-tenth to you.'

Genesis 28.18-22

Reflection

If God will be with me...

What new place is God calling you to seek?

If God will be with me...

Follow the way

God is with you.

Monday

Now Israel loved Joseph more than any other of his children, because he was the son of his old age; and he had made him a long robe with sleeves. But when his brothers saw that their father loved him more than all his brothers, they hated him, and could not speak peaceably to him.

Once Joseph had a dream, and when he told it to his brothers, they hated him even more. He said to them, 'Listen to this dream that I dreamed. There we were, binding sheaves in the field. Suddenly my sheaf rose and stood upright; then your sheaves gathered around it, and bowed down to my sheaf.' His brothers said to him, 'Are you indeed to reign over us? Are you indeed to have dominion over us?' So they hated him even more because of his dreams and his words.

He had another dream, and told it to his brothers, saying, 'Look, I have had another dream: the sun, the moon, and eleven stars were bowing down to me.' But when he told it to his father and to his brothers, his father rebuked him, and said to him, 'What kind of dream is this that you have had? Shall we indeed come, I and your mother and your brothers, and bow to the ground before you?' So his brothers were jealous of him, but his father kept the matter in mind.

Genesis 37.3-11

Reflection

Joseph dreams about things that challenge his family. He inspires jealousy—and it is easy to see why.

But his father kept the matter in mind.

Has it ever happened that you didn't like what you were hearing and yet, somehow you knew that the words being said were ones you needed to keep in mind.

Sometimes the hard thing to hear is what most needs to be said. Listen...

Tuesday

Moses was keeping the flock of his father-in-law Jethro, the priest of Midian; he led his flock beyond the wilderness, and came to Horeb, the mountain of God. There the angel of the LORD appeared to him in a flame of fire out of a bush; he looked, and the bush was blazing, yet it was not consumed. Then Moses said, 'I must turn aside and look at this great sight, and see why the bush is not burned up.' When the LORD saw that he had turned aside to see, God called to him out of the bush, 'Moses, Moses!' And he said, 'Here I am.' Then he said, 'Come no closer! Remove the sandals from your feet, for the place on which you are standing is holy ground.' He said further, 'I am the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.' And Moses hid his face, for he was afraid to look at God.

Exodus 3.1-6

Reflection

Here I am

Standing

The ground
Is holy
On which I stand

God

Calls

Here
I
Am

Wednesday

Then the prophet Miriam, Aaron's sister, took a tambourine in her hand; and all the women went out after her with tambourines and with dancing. And Miriam sang to them: 'Sing to the LORD, for he has triumphed gloriously; horse and rider he has thrown into the sea.'

Exodus 15.20-21

Reflection

The imagery of Miriam and all the women going out with tambourines and dancing is a beautiful one.

Imagine it. Imagine the sound. Imagine the swirl of their dance. Imagine the laughter and the song.

Imagine those who flee war and oppression. Who risk the seas to find safe passage and who find the hope that one day they will pick up tambourines and dance. Imagine the sound of joy and laughter. Imagine the swirl of their dance of safety and freedom.

Thursday

Then God spoke all these words:

I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery; you shall have no other gods before me.

You shall not make for yourself an idol, whether in the form of anything that is in heaven above, or that is on the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth. You shall not bow down to them or worship them; for I the LORD your God am a jealous God, punishing children for the iniquity of parents, to the third and the fourth generation of those who reject me, but showing steadfast love to the thousandth generation of those who love me and keep my commandments.

You shall not make wrongful use of the name of the LORD your God, for the LORD will not acquit anyone who misuses his name.

Remember the sabbath day, and keep it holy. For six days you shall labour and do all your work. But the seventh day is a sabbath to the LORD your God; you shall not do any work—you, your son or your daughter, your male or female slave, your livestock, or the alien resident in your towns. For in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them, but rested the seventh day; therefore the LORD blessed the sabbath day and consecrated it.

Honour your father and your mother, so that your days may be long in the land that the LORD your God is giving you.

You shall not murder.

You shall not commit adultery.

You shall not steal.

You shall not bear false witness against your neighbour.

You shall not covet your neighbour's house; you shall not covet your neighbour's wife, or male or female slave, or ox, or donkey, or anything that belongs to your neighbour.

Exodus 20.1-17

Reflection

Sometimes following the rules is not easy. Sometimes it feels as though rules are meant to be broken. What of these rules?

Is there one of these commandments that you find particularly difficult to follow? What makes it hard for you?

Which of them do you find easy to hold onto? Why is that so?

Today hold onto the tension between the commandments that you can embrace and that which you cannot. God is with you.

Friday

So she said, 'See, your sister-in-law has gone back to her people and to her gods; return after your sister-in-law.' But Ruth said,

'Do not press me to leave you
or to turn back from following you!

Where you go, I will go;

where you lodge, I will lodge;

your people shall be my people,

and your God my God.

Where you die, I will die—

there will I be buried.

May the LORD do thus and so to me,

and more as well,

if even death parts me from you!

When Naomi saw that she was determined to go with her, she said no more to her.

Ruth 1.15-18

Reflection

Go

We venture together

Lodge

We abide together

People

We are all together

God

With God—together

Saturday

Now the boy Samuel was ministering to the LORD under Eli. The word of the LORD was rare in those days; visions were not widespread.

At that time Eli, whose eyesight had begun to grow dim so that he could not see, was lying down in his room; the lamp of God had not yet gone out, and Samuel was lying down in the temple of the LORD, where the ark of God was. Then the LORD called, 'Samuel! Samuel!' and he said, 'Here I am!' and ran to Eli, and said, 'Here I am, for you called me.' But he said, 'I did not call; lie down again.' So he went and lay down. The LORD called again, 'Samuel!' Samuel got up and went to Eli, and said, 'Here I am, for you called me.' But he said, 'I did not call, my son; lie down again.' Now Samuel did not yet know the LORD, and the word of the LORD had not yet been revealed to him. The LORD called Samuel again, a third time. And he got up and went to Eli, and said, 'Here I am, for you called me.' Then Eli perceived that the LORD was calling the boy. Therefore Eli said to Samuel, 'Go, lie down; and if he calls you, you shall say, "Speak, LORD, for your servant is listening." ' So Samuel went and lay down in his place.

Now the LORD came and stood there, calling as before, 'Samuel! Samuel!' And Samuel said, 'Speak, for your servant is listening.'

1 Samuel 3.1-10

Reflection

Here I am

Speak

I am listening

Here I am

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