

Advent Prayers



Church of the Redeemer

Advent Three 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 Three to the Saturday Following

December 15 to 21

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

The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me, because the Lord has anointed me to bring good news to the oppressed.

Isaiah 61.1

We continue with the Psalm

Hallelujah!

Praise the Lord, O my soul! *

I will praise the Lord as long as I live;

I will sing praises to my God while I have my being.

Put not your trust in rulers, nor in any child of earth, *
for there is no help in them.

When they breathe their last, they return to earth, *
and in that day their thoughts perish.

Happy are they who have the God of Jacob for their help! *
whose hope is in the Lord their God;

Who made heaven and earth, the seas, and all that
is in them; *
who keeps his promise for ever;

Who gives justice to those who are oppressed, *
and food to those who hunger.

The Lord sets the prisoners free;
the Lord opens the eyes of the blind; *
the Lord lifts up those who are bowed down;
The Lord loves the righteous;

the Lord cares for the stranger; *
he sustains the orphan and widow,

but frustrates the way of the wicked.
The Lord shall reign for ever, *
your God, O Zion, throughout all generations.
Hallelujah!

Ps 146

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 of Thanksgiving

Surely, it is God who saves me; *
I will trust in him and not be afraid.
For the Lord is my stronghold and my sure defence, *
and he will be my Saviour.
Therefore you shall draw water with rejoicing *
from the springs of salvation.
And on that day you shall say, *
Give thanks to the Lord and call upon his name;
make his deeds known among the peoples; *
see that they remember that his name is exalted.
Sing the praises of the Lord, for he has done great things,*
and this is known in all the world.
Cry aloud, inhabitants of Zion, ring out your joy, *
for the great one in the midst of you is the Holy One of Israel.

Isaiah 12.2-6

We continue in prayer for those people and situations that we hold up before God (The Intercessions) and continue with the 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 for whom we watch and wait,
you sent John the Baptist
to prepare the way of your Son:
give us courage to speak the truth,
to hunger for justice,
and to suffer for the cause of right,
with Jesus Christ our Lord. 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

As the people were filled with expectation, and all were questioning in their hearts concerning John, whether he might be the Messiah, John answered all of them by saying, 'I baptize you with water; but one who is more powerful than I is coming; I am not worthy to untie the thong of his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. His winnowing-fork is in his hand, to clear his threshing-floor and to gather the wheat into his granary; but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire.'

So, with many other exhortations, he proclaimed the good news to the people.

Luke 3.15-18

Reflection

Who is he? Is he the one?
He is clear that he is not the one.
He says who the one, yet to come, will be.
He proclaims the good news to those who listen.

Are you waiting?
Are you filled with expectation?
Are you ready...
To welcome the one who is coming?

Monday

Then all the tribes of Israel came to David at Hebron, and said, 'Look, we are your bone and flesh. For some time, while Saul was king over us, it was you who led out Israel and brought it in. The LORD said to you: It is you who shall be shepherd of my people Israel, you who shall be ruler over Israel.' So all the elders of Israel came to the king at Hebron; and King David made a covenant with them at Hebron before the LORD, and they anointed David king over Israel. David was thirty years old when he began to reign, and he reigned for forty years. At Hebron he reigned over Judah for seven years and six months; and at Jerusalem he reigned over all Israel and Judah for thirty-three years.

2 Samuel 5.1-5

Reflection

Do you remember at the beginning of Advent when we read about the stem that would come out of the stock of Jesse, the branch that would grow from his roots.

The branch is this king—the one who made a covenant and reigned for forty years—David.

We follow this branch to Bethlehem. To a census. To a manger. We aren't there yet. But soon. Soon we travel to be counted and we will trace the lineage back. Are you preparing for that journey?

Tuesday

The days are surely coming, says the LORD, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah. It will not be like the covenant that I made with their ancestors when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt—a covenant that they broke, though I was their husband, says the LORD. But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the LORD: I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. No longer shall they teach one another, or say to each other, 'Know the LORD', for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest, says the LORD; for I will forgive their iniquity, and remember their sin no more.

Jeremiah 31.31-34

Reflection

I
will
be
their
God
and
they
will
be
My
People

Beloved of God
you are known to God
Know
and
love
God

Wednesday

To the leader. A Psalm of David.

The heavens are telling the glory of God;
and the firmament proclaims his handiwork.

Day to day pours forth speech,
and night to night declares knowledge.

There is no speech, nor are there words;
their voice is not heard;

yet their voice goes out through all the earth,
and their words to the end of the world.

In the heavens he has set a tent for the sun,
which comes out like a bridegroom from his wedding canopy,
and like a strong man runs its course with joy.

Its rising is from the end of the heavens,
and its circuit to the end of them;
and nothing is hidden from its heat.

Psalm 19.1-6

Reflection

Today look up.

Look up at the sky.

Watch the sunrise or the sunset.

Watch the clouds gather or disperse.

Watch daylight come or darkness descend.

Be still.

Listen.

The heavens are telling the glory of God.

Listen.

Thursday

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 for ever, and of his kingdom there will be no end.'

Luke 1.26-33

Reflection

She was much perplexed by his words and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. And then the angel says—do not be afraid. I always remember the don't be afraid part of this story but how often have I noticed the part where Mary was perplexed? Was the angel so used to people cowering in fear that this was the typical preface to any message?

And what a message it was that she received. How do you react today as you listen for God's call to you? Perplexed? Afraid? Surprised?

Friday

Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice. Let your gentleness be known to everyone. The Lord is near. Do not worry about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

Philippians 4.4-7

Reflection

The peace of God...

In these days where violence and fear cause us to tremble

In these days where we search for hope

In these days where we seek glimpses of joy

We are reminded that God is near

We are reminded to offer thanksgiving

We are reminded that the peace of God...

Will guard our hearts and minds.

Peace be with you.

Saturday

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.

Isaiah 7.10-14

Reflection

Look for the sign...

Look around

What do you see?

Look

Credits:

Scripture quotations are from *The New Revised Standard Version of the Bible* copyright © 1989 by the Division of Christian Education of the National Council of Churches in the USA. Used by permission. All Rights Reserved.

The Psalm: from the Book of Alternative Services: Copyright © 2004 by the General Synod of the Anglican Church of Canada. All rights reserved. Reproduced under license from ABC Publishing, Anglican Book Centre, a ministry of the General Synod of the Anglican Church of Canada, from *Anglican Liturgical Library*

The Canticle is from *Common Worship: Services and Prayers for the Church of England* (2000) and is copyright © The Archbishops' Council.

The Collect: Trial use Collects for Year A—Anglican Church of Canada (Common Worship 2004—alt)

Introductory text and reflections: Church of the Redeemer

Church of the Redeemer

162 Bloor Street West Toronto, ON M5S 1M4

416.922.4948

office@theredeemer.ca

www.TheRedeemer.ca

Twitter: @theRedeemerTO

Facebook: theRedeemerTO

Instagram: theRedeemerTO