



ADVENT



2024 Devotional



It's the most Wonderful time of the year!

As the season of Advent approaches, we enter a time of anticipation and preparation within the Christian liturgical calendar. Advent, derived from the Latin word *adventus*, meaning “coming,” invites us to reflect on the dual anticipation of Christ’s birth and His promised return. This year we explore the traditional themes of Hope, Peace, Joy, Love through the lens of *Waiting*, *Watching*, *Wondering*, and *Welcoming*—drawing our hearts toward the coming Light in the midst of winter’s darkness.

The Word of God is a way we experience the coming Light. As a congregation, we are entering a time where we follow the weekly lectionary—a structured cycle of scripture readings that guides congregations through the biblical narrative. By following the weekly lectionary readings at church, and the daily lectionary in this devotional study, we join our communal and individual worship with that of the global Christian community. >

Knowing that preferences and availability vary from person to person, there are a variety of ways to engage in this holistic Advent devotional:

- ✦ **Weekly** suggestions for embodied practices that correspond to each theme—simple, meaningful activities that engage our bodies and senses, fostering a deeper connection to the season.
- ✦ **Daily**, the lectionary texts are included and paired with a carefully selected song. There are prompts for spending time in reflection and prayer.
 - ◆ The lectionary offers three brief passages and a selection of Psalms for the morning and evening. Engage with the texts as best suits your availability and preferences. (Ex: You may prefer to forego the morning and evening Psalms and focus on the other readings.)
 - ◆ You are invited to utilize the PCUSA website that includes the text all five passages for each day in one location, or use your favorite Bible.

As we live out the themes of Advent with intention and grace, may your heart be blessed by the transformative power of Christ.

Laura Fuller

Lead Director of Discipleship



Scan or [click here](#)
for the daily Bible
verses from the
PCUSA website.



Scan or [click here](#)
for a Spotify playlist
of the daily song
selections,

WEEK 1

Waiting

The Hope of Anticipation



Ordinary Extraordinary by Laura Kestly

Advent invites us into a season of Waiting where we embrace the hope that accompanies anticipation. This week, we reflect on the profound significance of Waiting—not just as a passive act, but as an active engagement in faith. Just as the Israelites longed for a Messiah, we too await the fulfillment of God’s promises. Through scripture, we glimpse hope that inspires our hearts, reminding us that in our waiting, God is at work, shaping us for His ultimate purpose. Let us accept the holy invitation into this sacred pause, preparing ourselves to receive the Light of Christ.

Week 1 Practices

God came down to Earth as fully God and fully man—God incarnate. As we reflect on the coming of that tiny babe over the next four weeks, lean into what it means to live an embodied life...an embodied *faith!* During the week, consider engaging in the following practices on your own, with a friend or family member(s).



Watch: See and hear about the rich biblical meaning and application for the week’s Advent word through the Bible Project’s video on [Yakh/Hope](#).

Experience: There’s a good chance you will find yourself waiting in line at some point this week. Use this time to remind you of the hope we find in this season of waiting for Jesus OR to practice one of the breather prayers from the week.

Engage: Light a candle as you begin your daily/weekly practice to remind you of God’s presence with you. This week, purchase (or select from your stash at home) a candle to use for this purpose. You may want to choose a scent you associate with this season.

Create: Create your own advent wreath or candle collection. With each week, light an additional candle (Week 1: candle of Hope; Week 2: candle of Peace; Week 3: candle of Joy; Week 4, candle of Love, and if you’d like to light one on Christmas, the Christ candle). Here are some images to inspire you:



Daily Practice: Sunday, December 1

Readings

First Reading: [Isaiah 1:1-9](#)

Second Reading: [2 Peter 3:1-10](#)

Gospel Reading: [Matthew 25:1-13](#)

Psalms

Morning: [Psalms 122; 145](#)

(as able, before you get out of bed
or as you sip your morning coffee)

Evening: [Psalms 40; 67](#)

(as able, before you go to bed or
as you wind down for the day)



Song: [“Keep Your Lamps Trimmed and Burning”](#)

Question/Journal Prompt: According to today’s passages, why is it important to practice mindful waiting? How might that look in your daily life, especially during this season of holy waiting?

Prayer: Breath prayers are a beautiful way to practice embodied faith; our breath and communication with God intertwined. We can engage in this type of prayer through a phrase of your choosing or a piece of scripture (or inspired by scripture).

The basics are simple:

1. As you **inhale**, pray the first part silently.
2. As you **exhale**, pray the second part silently.
3. **Repeat** as many times as you desire.

Today’s prayer: (Inhale) God of hope...(exhale) I wait for you. ✨

Monday, December 2

Readings

First Reading: [Isaiah 1:10-20](#)

Second Reading: [1 Thessalonians 1:1-10](#)

Gospel Reading: [Luke 20:1-8](#)

Psalms

Morning: [Psalms 122; 145](#)

Evening: [Psalms 40; 67](#)



Song: [“Psalm 40”](#)

Question/Journal Prompt: Choose a verse that stood out to you in today’s reading. Consider: What is this verse saying about God or our relationship with God? What sort of invitation do you hear in the text? ➤

Prayer: Begin with the prayer opening below, and continue to share your heart with the Lord.

God of Hope, help me to wait patiently for you and grow in confidence as I watch for your response to my heart's cry...(continue)...Amen. ✦

Tuesday, December 3

Readings

First Reading: [Isaiah 1:21-31](#)

Second Reading: [1 Thessalonians 2:1-12](#)

Gospel Reading: [Luke 20:9-18](#)

Psalms

Morning: [Psalms 33; 146](#)

Evening: [Psalms 85; 94](#)



Song: [“Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence”](#)

Question/Journal Prompt: What places in your life need the benefit and Grace of the Lord's counsel or an outpouring of his steadfast Love and Hope? How might imagining Jesus as a tiny baby change the way you approach God to meet these needs?

Prayer: Rewrite Psalm 33:20-22 in your own words and use it as a prayer of praise.

20 *Our soul waits for the LORD;*

he is our help and shield.

21 *Our heart is glad in him,*

because we trust in his holy name.

22 *Let your steadfast love, O LORD, be upon us,*

even as we hope in you. ✦

Wednesday, December 4

Readings

First Reading: [Isaiah 2:1-4](#)

Second Reading: [1 Thessalonians 2:13-20](#)

Gospel Reading: [Luke 20:19-26](#)

Psalms

Morning: [Psalms 50; 147:1-11](#)

Evening: [Psalms 53; 17](#)



Song: [“Come Now, O Prince of Peace”](#)

Question/Journal Prompt: How can we actively seek to embody the peace and unity described in Isaiah, transforming our own “swords” and “spears” into instruments of peace and hope in our daily lives? ➤

Prayer: Choose a current issue or event that is pushing against the hope we find in God. Spend time lifting your concerns to God, then conclude with silence and listen for the Lord's voice. ✦

Thursday, December 5

Readings

First Reading: [Isaiah 2:5-22](#)

Second Reading: [1 Thessalonians 3:1-13](#)

Gospel Reading: [Luke 20:27-40](#)

Psalms

Morning: [Psalms 18:1-20; 147:12-20](#)

Evening: [Psalms 126; 62](#)



Song: ["Walk in the Light"](#)

Question/Journal Prompt: Using 1 Thessalonians 3:9-13 as a guide, what words of encouragement in the faith do you need to hear today? Reflect on why this resonated with you.

Prayer: *(Inhale) Light of Jesus...(exhale) shine through me.* ✦

Friday, December 6

Readings

First Reading: [Isaiah 3:1-4:1](#)

Second Reading: [1 Thessalonians 4:1-12](#)

Gospel Reading: [Luke 20:41-21:4](#)

Psalms

Morning: [Psalms 122; 145](#)

Evening: [Psalms 40; 67](#)



Song: ["Silver and Gold"](#)

Question/Journal Prompt: This time of year can sometimes be emotionally challenging. How do these passages offer hope in the midst of tragedy and trial?

Prayer: Spend some time in silence with the Lord. Begin and end your time of silence with the following phrases from Psalm 130:5-6.

I wait for the Lord, my soul waits, and in his word I hope...(time in silence)...my soul waits for the Lord. ✦

Saturday, December 7

Readings

First Reading: [Isaiah 4:2-6](#)

Second Reading: [1 Thessalonians 4:13-18](#)

Gospel Reading: [Luke 21:5-19](#)

Psalms

Morning: [Psalms 90; 149](#)

Evening: [Psalms 80; 72](#)



Song: [“Lo He Comes with Clouds Descending”](#)

Visio Divina “How to”: Use the [image from the beginning of this week](#) as the focus for a Visio Divina practice.

1. **Begin by opening your heart in prayer** and asking the Holy Spirit to be with you in this time of contemplation.
2. **Lectio (Read): Look at the image and let your eyes stay with the very first thing that you see.** Keep your attention on that one part of the image that first catches your eye. Try to keep your eyes from wandering to other parts of the picture.
3. **As you gaze at the image, take a few deep breaths.**
4. **Meditatio (Meditate): Simply be present to the image and allow it to speak to your heart,** without any particular agenda. It might speak to you in words or in other ways.
 - ♦ *How do you feel looking at the image?*
 - ♦ *If you had to describe the image in a sentence or two silently to yourself, what would you say?*
 - ♦ *If you were in the image, where would you place yourself?*
 - ♦ *Do you get a glimpse of the sacred from this image? Is God speaking to you in this image?*
 - ♦ *Does a name for God arise for you from this image?*
5. **In silence, sit for a minute or so with what you have received.**
6. **Oratio (Pray):** Identify a word or phrase to express your experience of the image. **Talk with God about what you’ve experienced.**
7. **Contemplatio (Contemplation):** Gaze at the image one final time. What is God speaking to you through this image today? ✨

WEEK 2

Watching

The Peace of Presence



Mary & Eve by Scott Erickson.

Based on the original illustration by Sister Grace Remington.

In the second week of Advent, we turn our focus to Watching, where we cultivate Peace through mindful awareness. This theme invites us to be alert to the presence of God in our lives and the world around us - the way God's shalom (peace, wholeness, well-being) is already present. As we explore the scriptures, we'll consider the ways in which we can watch for signs of His coming and the hope He brings. Let's seek Peace amidst the chaos of our daily lives. As we keep watch we are reminded: we are not alone. Together, let us engage in practices that sharpen our senses to the Divine, fostering a spirit of Peace as we await the arrival of Christ.

Week 2 Practices

Let's live our embodied faith! During the week, consider engaging in the following practices.



Watch: See and hear about the rich biblical meaning and application for the week's Advent word through the Bible Project's video on [Shalom/Peace](#).

Experience: Consider how you can "pass the peace" as you go about your daily life, as you watch for moments where people choose to live and enact peace in the community during this busy season. How were you able to share the Peace of Christ? What examples do you notice as you observe others? Spend some time in reflection over what you saw and experienced. Share these thoughts at the dinner table, on the phone with a friend, or keep a running list to share with your small group at the end of the week (or however you would like to share).

Engage: Grab a to-go cup of hot cocoa or your favorite warm bevy, and set out by foot or car to take in the sights and sounds of the season. What are the signs that Christmas is coming?

Create: Using your preferred artistic method (draw, paint, collage, etc.), create a visual representation of "Prince of Peace," "Shalom," or similar phrase. It can be something that takes you 5 minutes or 5 hours! Place it in a prominent location and use it as a reminder of the Peace God's Presence brings.

Daily Practice: Sunday, December 8

Readings

First Reading: [Isaiah 5:1-7](#)

Second Reading: [2 Peter 3:11-18](#)

Gospel Reading: [Luke 7:28-35](#)

Psalms

Morning: [Psalms 24; 150](#)

Evening: [Psalms 25; 110](#)



Song: [“On Jordan’s Bank”](#)

Question/Journal Prompt: How can we cultivate a watchful heart that helps us embrace God’s purpose for us, even when it challenges how we may be set in our ways? How does this openness lead us to a deeper sense of peace?

Prayer: *Today’s prayer: (Inhale) God of hope..(exhale) I wait for you. ✦*

Monday, December 9

Readings

First Reading: [Isaiah 5:8-17](#)

Second Reading: [1 Thessalonians 5:1-11](#)

Gospel Reading: [Luke 21:20-28](#)

Psalms

Morning: [Psalms 122; 145](#)

Evening: [Psalms 40; 67](#)



Song: [“Lift up Your Heads”](#)

[“Soon and Very Soon”](#)

Question/Journal Prompt: Choose a verse that stood out to you in today’s reading. Consider: What is this verse saying about God or our relationship with God? What sort of invitation do you hear in the text?

Prayer: Begin with the prayer opening below based on Psalm 145:2,8,16, and continue to share your heart with the Lord.

God of Peace, every day I will bless you. You are gracious and merciful, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love. You open your hand and satisfy my every need... (continue)..Amen. ✦

Tuesday, December 10

Readings

First Reading: [Isaiah 5:18-25](#)

Second Reading: [1 Thessalonians 5:12-28](#)

Gospel Reading: [Luke 21:29-38](#)

Psalms

Morning: [Psalms 33; 146](#)

Evening: [Psalms 85; 94](#)



Song: [“In the Bleak Midwinter”](#)

Question/Journal Prompt: Choose a verse that stood out to you in today's reading. What sort of invitation do you hear in the text? How will you respond?

Prayer: 1 Thessalonians 5:25 beseeches the reader, “Beloved, pray for us.” Spend some time in prayer for our church leadership and fellow congregants. ✨

Wednesday, December 11

Readings

First Reading: [Isaiah 6:1-13](#)

Second Reading: [2 Thessalonians 1:1-12](#)

Gospel Reading: [John 7:53-8:11](#)

Psalms

Morning: [Psalms 50; 147:1-11](#)

Evening: [Psalms 53; 17](#)



Song: [“Thuma Mina \(Send Me, O Lord\)”](#)

Question/Journal Prompt: Rewrite Psalm 147:1-6 using language and examples that reflect your lived experience.

- 1 Praise the Lord!
How good it is to sing praises to our God;
for he is gracious, and a song of praise is fitting.*
- 2 The Lord builds up Jerusalem;
he gathers the outcasts of Israel.*
- 3 He heals the brokenhearted,
and binds up their wounds.*
- 4 He determines the number of the stars;
he gives to all of them their names.*
- 5 Great is our Lord, and abundant in power;
his understanding is beyond measure.*
- 6 The Lord lifts up the downtrodden;
he casts the wicked to the ground. ➤*

Prayer: Choose a current issue or event that is pushing against the Peace of God. Spend time lifting your concerns to God, then conclude with silence and listen for the Lord's voice. ✦

Thursday, December 12

Readings

First Reading: [Isaiah 7:1-9](#)

Second Reading: [2 Thessalonians 2:1-12](#)

Gospel Reading: [Luke 22:1-13](#)

Psalms

Morning: [Psalms 18:1-20; 147:12-20](#)

Evening: [Psalms 126; 62](#)



Song: [“How Deep the Father’s Love For Us”](#)

[“Come O Come Emmanuel”](#)

Question/Journal Prompt: Reflect on the past week. How have you needed to be on guard against the influence of that which tries to steal your peace? How can you prepare your mind and heart to persevere in the peace God offers?

Prayer: *(Inhale) Peace of Christ... (exhale) be my guide.* ✦

Friday, December 13

Readings

First Reading: [Isaiah 7:10-25](#)

Second Reading: [2 Thessalonians 2:13-3:5](#)

Gospel Reading: [Luke 22:14-30](#)

Psalms

Morning: [Psalms 102; 148](#)

Evening: [Psalms 130; 16](#)



Song: [“Of the Father’s Love Begotten”](#)

Question/Journal Prompt: How do the promises in Isaiah and the steadfastness of Christ in 2 Thessalonians encourage us to deepen our trust in God? In what ways does Jesus' call to serve challenge our understanding of leadership?

Prayer: Begin with the prayer opening below based on Psalm 130:5-7, and continue to share your heart with the Lord.

Lord, I wait on you and I hope in your word. Just as I know the morning will come, so too am I confident in your steadfast love... (continue)... Amen. ✦

Saturday, December 14

Readings

First Reading: [Isaiah 8:1-15](#)

Second Reading: [2 Thessalonians 3:6-18](#)

Gospel Reading: [Luke 22:31-38](#)

Psalms

Morning: [Psalms 90; 149](#)

Evening: [Psalms 80; 72](#)



Song: [“O Come All Ye Faithful”](#)

Visio Divina “How to”: Use the [image from the beginning of this week](#) as the focus for a Visio Divina practice.

1. **Begin by opening your heart in prayer** and asking the Holy Spirit to be with you in this time of contemplation.
2. **Lectio (Read): Look at the image and let your eyes stay with the very first thing that you see.** Keep your attention on that one part of the image that first catches your eye. Try to keep your eyes from wandering to other parts of the picture.
3. **As you gaze at the image, take a few deep breaths.**
4. **Meditatio (Meditate): Simply be present to the image and allow it to speak to your heart,** without any particular agenda. It might speak to you in words or in other ways.
 - ♦ *How do you feel looking at the image?*
 - ♦ *If you had to describe the image in a sentence or two silently to yourself, what would you say?*
 - ♦ *If you were in the image, where would you place yourself?*
 - ♦ *Do you get a glimpse of the sacred from this image? Is God speaking to you in this image?*
 - ♦ *Does a name for God arise for you from this image?*
5. **In silence, sit for a minute or so with what you have received.**
6. **Oratio (Pray):** Identify a word or phrase to express your experience of the image. **Talk with God about what you’ve experienced.**
7. **Contemplatio (Contemplation):** Gaze at the image one final time. What is God speaking to you through this image today? ✨

WEEK 3

Wondering

The Joy of Discovery



Seeing Shepherds by Daniel Bonnell

It's the third week of Advent! Together, we embrace the theme of Wondering, where Joy unfolds through curiosity and discovery. This week invites us to reflect on the awe-inspiring mystery of God's Love revealed in the birth of Christ. We will delve into the Wonder of the Incarnation, encouraging us to approach our faith with childlike joy. As we engage in activities that spark our imagination and creativity, we open ourselves to the Joy that comes from seeing the world through the lens of God's Grace. Let this week be a celebration of the Joy that arises when we allow ourselves to Wonder about the depths of His Love.

Week 3 Practices

Let's live our embodied faith! During the week, consider engaging in the following practices.



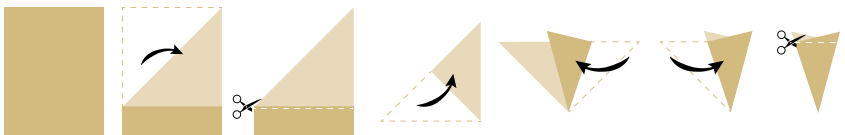
Watch: See and hear about the rich biblical meaning and application for the week's Advent word through the Bible Project's video on [Chara/Joy](#).

Experience: What sparks awe of the Lord in your life? The beauty of nature? The massive expanse of space and all it holds? The sweet snuggle of a child you adore? The tingling thrill of a glorious piece of music? The subtle or striking hues of a piece by your favorite artist? **Seek it out!** Enjoy and marvel at the wondrous universe God has created.

Engage: Spend some time reflecting on your local community. Wonder about how it could be more filled with God's love. Where is there a need that you could help meet? What is the first step you need to take to make this happen? Now...act! Help spread the wonder of God's love through engagement and service in your community.

Create: Snowflake flurries! It may not be a white Christmas, but we can still delight in the joy and wonder of snow. Using materials you have on hand, create a flurry of snowflakes to cover one of your windows (I like to cover my sliding glass door!). *Hint: the more little bits of paper you cut away, the more detailed your snowflake will look!*

How to Make Paper Snowflakes



Use your imagination and shape snowflake by cutting edges in different ways



Daily Practice: Sunday, December 15

Readings

First Reading: [Isaiah 13:1-13](#)

Second Reading: [Hebrews 12:18-29](#)

Gospel Reading: [John 3:22-30](#)

Psalms

Morning: [Psalms 24; 150](#)

Evening: [Psalms 25; 110](#)



Song: [“Prepare a Way O Zion”](#)

Question/Journal Prompt: What questions does today’s reading bring to mind? What do you think is the answer? Consider having a conversation with a friend (small group?) or family member about your question.

Prayer: *(Inhale) The Joy of the Lord...(exhale) is my strength.* ✨

Monday, December 16

Readings

First Reading: [Isaiah 8:16-9:1](#)

Second Reading: [2 Peter 1:1-11](#)

Gospel Reading: [Luke 22:39-53](#)

Psalms

Morning: [Psalms 122; 145](#)

Evening: [Psalms 40; 67](#)



Song: [“Come Thou Long-Expected Jesus”](#)

Question/Journal Prompt: Consider the lyrics from today’s song. Where do you see an intersection between their message and today’s scripture reading? Reflect on its significance to you and this season of Joy.

Prayer: Begin with the prayer opening below, and continue to share your heart with the Lord.

Creator God, because you are with me and in me, I can experience your joy...(continue to express the things that bring you joy or where you need the gift of joy)...Fill me with all joy and peace as I trust in you. Amen. God of Peace, every day I will bless you. You are gracious and merciful, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love. You open your hand and satisfy my every need...(continue)...Amen. ✨

Tuesday, December 17

Readings

First Reading: [Isaiah 9:2-7](#)

Second Reading: [2 Peter 1:12-21](#)

Gospel Reading: [Luke 22:54-69](#)

Psalms

Morning: [Psalms 33; 146](#)

Evening: [Psalms 85; 94](#)



Song: [“The People That Walked in Darkness”](#)

Question/Journal Prompt: Today’s scriptures offer many opportunities to wonder at God’s love, strength, steadfastness, and more. Make a list of phrases or examples that fit into one of these categories, or others that best describe the trait demonstrated.

Prayer: Choose one or two people that you know are struggling this holiday season. Spend some time praying for them and their specific circumstances, that they might experience God’s love, strength, steadfastness, etc.—whatever aspect of God that might best meet that person’s need or minister to their specific pain. ✦

Wednesday, December 18

Readings

First Reading: [Isaiah 11:1-9](#)

Second Reading: [Ephesians 6:10-20](#)

Gospel Reading: [John 3:16-21](#)

Psalms

Morning: [Psalms 50; 147:1-11](#)

Evening: [Psalms 53; 17](#)



Song: [“Lo How a Rose”](#)

Question/Journal Prompt: In what ways can the hope and peace described in Isaiah’s vision of harmony inspire you to put on the armor of God during Advent, enabling you to stand firm in faith and actively promote reconciliation and understanding in your community? Reflect on the juxtaposition of the armor of God and the tiny babe, Jesus.

Prayer: Spend some time praying for your “armor.” Talk to God about the things that feel strong, the pieces that you wished “fit” better, or the pieces you sometimes forget to “put on.” *Belt of Truth, Breastplate of Righteousness, Shoes to make you ready to proclaim Gospel of Peace, Shield of Faith, Helmet of Salvation, Sword of the Spirit (Word of God).* ✦

Thursday, December 19

Readings

First Reading: [Isaiah 11:10-16](#)

Second Reading: [Revelation 20:1-10](#)

Gospel Reading: [John 5:30-47](#)

Psalms

Morning: [Psalms 18:1-20; 147:12-20](#)

Evening: [Psalms 126; 62](#)



Song: [“People Look East”](#)

Question/Journal Prompt: Reflect on the past week. How have you needed to be on guard against the influence of that which tries to steal your Joy or distract you from the Voice of Truth? How can you prepare or open your mind and heart to abide in the truth and joy God offers?

Prayer: *(Inhale) I will testify... (exhale) Jesus is Lord.* ✨

Friday, December 20

Readings

First Reading: [Isaiah 28:9-22](#)

Second Reading: [Revelation 20:11-21:8](#)

Gospel Reading: [Luke 1:5-25](#)

Psalms

Morning: [Psalms 102; 148](#)

Evening: [Psalms 130; 16](#)



Song: [“It Came Upon a Midnight Clear”](#)

Question/Journal Prompt: Consider Rev 20:5 “And the one who was seated on the throne said, ‘See, I am making all things new.’” In what areas of your heart, mind, body, or life might God be inviting you to embrace the transformational power of the Spirit?

Prayer: Spend some time in silence with the Lord. Begin and end your time of silence with the following phrases from Psalm 16:11.

You show me the path of life. In your presence there is fullness of joy. ✨

Saturday, December 21

Readings

First Reading: [Isaiah 29:9-24](#)

Second Reading: [Revelation 21:9-21](#)

Gospel Reading: [Luke 1:26-38](#)

Psalms

Morning: [Psalms 90; 149](#)

Evening: [Psalms 80; 72](#)



Song: [“Gabriel’s Message”](#)

Visio Divina “How to”: Use the [image from the beginning of this week](#) as the focus for a Visio Divina practice.

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 - ♦ *Does a name for God arise for you from this image?*
5. **In silence, sit for a minute or so with what you have received.**
6. **Oratio (Pray):** Identify a word or phrase to express your experience of the image. **Talk with God about what you’ve experienced.**
7. **Contemplatio (Contemplation):** Gaze at the image one final time. What is God speaking to you through this image today? ✨

WEEK 4

Welcoming

The Love of Community



Nativity by Carol Aust

In the final week of Advent, we focus on welcoming, where love blossoms in community and hospitality. This theme calls us to open our hearts and homes, reflecting the inclusive love of Christ. We will consider how we can create spaces of welcome in our lives, both for ourselves and for others. This week reminds us that Love is not just a feeling but an action. Let us engage in practices that foster community, embodying the love of Christ as we prepare to celebrate His birth. May our hearts and homes be open, as we reflect the warmth of the Love we receive from God.

Week 4 Practices

Let's live our embodied faith! During the week, consider engaging in the following practices.



Watch: See and hear about the rich biblical meaning and application for the week's Advent word through the Bible Project's video on [Agape/Love](#).

Create: Make some favorite Christmas treats to share with friends, family, and/or neighbors.

Experience: Invite people into your home as an act of hospitality and welcome as you share these treats OR make plans to get coffee/share a meal with someone you know is feeling a bit lonely this season.

Engage: Join the church family for worship on Christmas Eve at LGPC (or wherever you are for this celebration).



Daily Practice: Sunday, December 22

Readings

First Reading: [Isaiah 31:1-9](#)

Second Reading: [Revelation 21:22-22:5](#)

Gospel Reading: [Luke 1:39-48a \(48b-56\)](#)

Psalms

Morning: [Psalms 24; 150](#)

Evening: [Psalms 25; 110](#)



Song: [“Magnificat/Mary’s Song”](#)

Question/Journal Prompt: When is a time when you experienced the goodness of God’s love so deeply that you could not hold back praise? How can that praise and gratitude translate into the ways you offer hospitality or hold space for others?

Prayer: *(Inhale) Source of Love and Light... (exhale) I abide in you.* ✨

Monday, December 23

Readings

First Reading: [Isaiah 33:17-22](#)

Second Reading: [Revelation 22:6-11, 18-20](#)

Gospel Reading: [Luke 1:57-66](#)

Psalms

Morning: [Psalms 122; 145](#)

Evening: [Psalms 40; 67](#)



Song: [“What Child is This”](#)

Question/Journal Prompt: How do you answer the questions, “What child is this?” “Who is Jesus?” How do these truths inspire you to live with open arms of welcome to others? How do these truths shape your Christmas celebrations and traditions?

Prayer: Spend some time in prayer using the structure below (inspired by Psalm 145:1-3).

I worship you, my God and Savior. I bless your name and will praise you for my whole life and in the forever beyond. You are great, I can't help but praise you. (Tell God about what you know to be true of him...) What else would you have me know? (silence & listening) I will joyfully spend my whole life seeking you and learning more of your goodness and love. Amen. ✨

Tuesday, December 24

Readings

First Reading: [Isaiah 35:1-10](#)

Second Reading: [Revelation 22:12-17, 21](#)

Gospel Reading: [Luke 1:67-80](#)

Psalms

Morning: [Psalms 33; 146](#)

Evening: [Psalms 85; 94](#)



Song: [“O Holy Night”](#)

[“Silent Night”](#)

Question/Journal Prompt: Rewrite Psalm 85:8-11 in your own words OR write a response to the passage that stuck out to you today.

- 8 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.
- 9 Surely his salvation is at hand for those who fear him,
that his glory may dwell in our land.

- 10 Steadfast love and faithfulness will meet;
righteousness and peace will kiss each other.
- 11 Faithfulness will spring up from the ground,
and righteousness will look down from the sky.

Prayer: Use your writing as a starting point for today's prayer. Consider closing with:
I am awaiting your arrival. Come, Lord Jesus, you are welcome here. ✨

Wednesday, December 25

Readings

First Reading: [Zechariah 2:10-13](#)

Second Reading: [1 John 4:7-16](#)

Gospel Reading: [John 3:31-36](#)

Psalms

Morning: [Psalms 2; 147:1-11](#)

Evening: [Psalms 98; 96](#)




Song: [“Go Tell It”](#)

Question/Journal Prompt: How do you experience the arrival of the Christ child this year? What sensations or thoughts are similar to previous years? Where are there places of tenderness or the unexpected? Reflect on how you will carry this with you into the new year.

Visio Divina “How to”: Use the [image from the beginning of this week](#) as the focus for a Visio Divina practice.

1. **Begin by opening your heart in prayer** and asking the Holy Spirit to be with you in this time of contemplation.
2. **Lectio (Read): Look at the image and let your eyes stay with the very first thing that you see.** Keep your attention on that one part of the image that first catches your eye. Try to keep your eyes from wandering to other parts of the picture.
3. **As you gaze at the image, take a few deep breaths.**
4. **Meditatio (Meditate): Simply be present to the image and allow it to speak to your heart,** without any particular agenda. It might speak to you in words or in other ways.
 - ♦ *How do you feel looking at the image?*
 - ♦ *If you had to describe the image in a sentence or two silently to yourself, what would you say?*
 - ♦ *If you were in the image, where would you place yourself?*
 - ♦ *Do you get a glimpse of the sacred from this image? Is God speaking to you in this image?*
 - ♦ *Does a name for God arise for you from this image?*
5. **In silence, sit for a minute or so with what you have received.**
6. **Oratio (Pray):** Identify a word or phrase to express your experience of the image. **Talk with God about what you’ve experienced.**
7. **Contemplatio (Contemplation):** Gaze at the image one final time. What is God speaking to you through this image today? ✨



*When the song of the angels is stilled,
When the star in the sky is gone,
When the kings and princes are back home,
When the shepherds are back with their flock,*

The work of Christmas begins:

*To find the lost,
To heal the broken,
To feed the hungry,
To release the prisoner,
To rebuild the nations,
To bring peace among brothers,
To make music in the heart.*

Howard Thurman
“The Work of Christmas”



LAKE GROVE

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH



*This Advent Devotional is a gift to you from
Lake Grove Presbyterian Church.*

*Special thanks to Jeff Wood
for thoughtfully curating the daily songs.*