

DAILY DEVOTIONS AND PRAYER

FOR INDIVIDUALS AND FAMILIES

This order of prayer may be used as a guide for daily devotions time and prayer for individuals and families. In group settings, one person may read the words in regular type and the others may respond with the words in bold type.

The sign of the cross ✠ may be made by all in remembrance of their Baptism.

In the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

I cry to You, O LORD;

in the morning my prayer comes before You.

Psalm 88:13

Restore to me the joy of Your salvation,
and uphold me with a willing spirit.

Psalm 51:12

My mouth is filled with Your praise,
and with Your glory all the day.

Psalm 71:8

Every day I will bless You
and praise Your name forever and ever.

Psalm 145:2

Bless the LORD, O my soul,
and all that is within me, bless His holy name!

Psalm 103:1

Hear my prayer, O LORD;
let my cry come to You.

Psalm 102:1

**Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit;
as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen.**

A hymn or psalm may be sung or spoken.

A reading from the weekly lectionary is read.

The Apostles' Creed is confessed.

(The Apostles' Creed, the Lord's Prayer, Luther's Morning and Evening Prayers, and other prayers may be found in the back of this book.)

Lord's Prayer

Prayers for others and ourselves

Let us bless the Lord.

Psalm 103:1

Thanks be to God.

The Lord bless us, defend us from all evil, and bring us to everlasting life.

Amen.



ENDURING GRACE

A CHURCH YEAR JOURNAL FOR KIDS

YEAR
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Text on the seasons and festivals are drawn from the following CPH resources:

A Year with the Church Fathers: Meditations for Each Day of the Church Year © 2011 Concordia Publishing House.

Lutheran Service Book: Companion to the Services © 2022 Concordia Publishing House.

Lutheran Service Book: Hymn Selection Guide © 2006 Concordia Publishing House.

Lutheran Service Book: Pastoral Care Companion © 2007 Concordia Publishing House.

Lutheranism 101: Worship © 2017 Concordia Publishing House.

Ordering Our Days in His Peace: An Introduction to the Christian Church Year © 2009 Concordia Publishing House.

Treasury of Daily Prayer © 2008 Concordia Publishing House.

Worship Planning Book: Year B 2024 © 2023 Concordia Publishing House.

Manufactured in China / 055760 / 340934.

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How to Use This Journal

Dear reader,

God's Word is a great gift, given to us "so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in His name" (John 20:31). This journal was created to help you enjoy time in God's Word throughout the week.

This journal outlines the Scripture readings for every Sunday from the Three-Year Lectionary and provides introductions to each season and fourteen festivals of the Christian Church Year. Reflections on the readings, discussion prompts, Bible illustrations to color, space for journaling and prayers, and hymn suggestions from *Lutheran Service Book (LSB)* give you and your family the opportunity to enjoy time in God's Word together and encourage one another in the faith.

Getting Started

Each Church Year calendar cycle begins with the First Sunday in Advent. If you are beginning this book in Advent, simply turn to the first pages. If you are beginning at another time of the year, you can find the correct page by finding out which Sunday of the Church Year you last observed at church, by asking your pastor, or by looking up a calendar for Year B of the Three-Year LCMS Lectionary. There are more Sunday readings in this journal than are celebrated each year. The date of Easter, which moves each year, determines the dates for other events in the Church Year. Ash Wednesday, the first day of Lent, is in the seventh week before Easter. The Ascension of Our Lord is on a Thursday, forty days after Easter Day. The Day of Pentecost is seven weeks, or the fiftieth day, after Easter. An early celebration of Easter means there will be more Sundays after Pentecost. A later Easter means there will be more Sundays after Epiphany.

Introduction to the Church Year and the Three-Year Lectionary

What is the Church Year?

The Church Year tells the true story of the life and work of Jesus Christ. It takes us on a journey through His birth, life, death, resurrection, and ascension. The life of the church is centered around the life of Christ. As we celebrate each part of His life, we are reminded of God's great love for us in Jesus, our Savior. Celebrating faith events around a calendar isn't new. In Old Testament times, God commanded the Israelites to celebrate the Passover and other festivals each year as a remembrance and celebration of His gifts, promises, and blessings. Early Christians adapted some of the Jewish festivals, recalling historic events that were important to their faith. Christians also added their own unique celebrations, which revolved around events in the life of Jesus.

What is a lectionary?

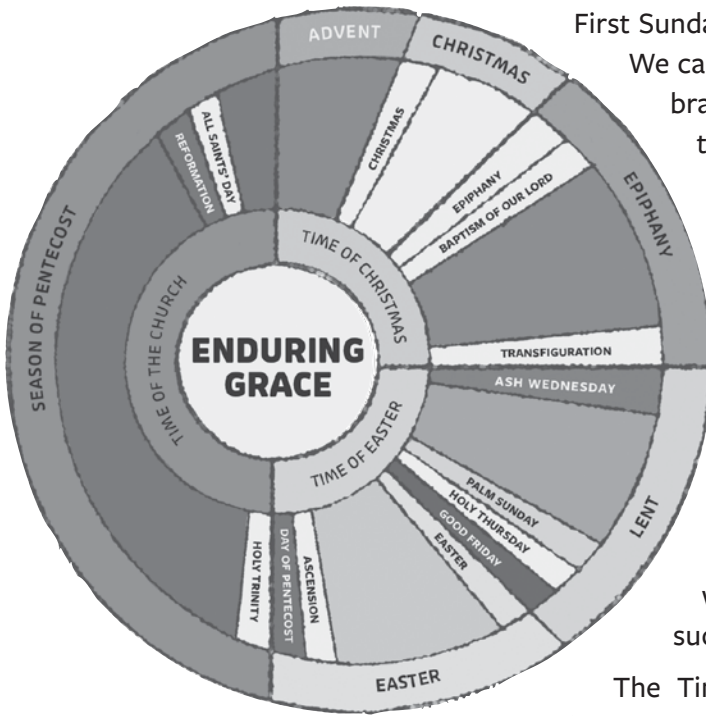
A lectionary is a collection of Scripture readings, or lections, for the Church Year. Early Christians kept the Jewish practice of reading portions of the Pentateuch and the Prophets, adding readings from the Gospels and the Epistles as time went on. Through the years, various patterns of reading Scripture were used in different places. As the Church Year seasons and festivals developed, readings aligned more closely with the Church Year.

The readings in this lectionary journal are part of a three-year lectionary that has roots in historic lectionaries and the Revised Common Lectionary. The Gospel readings for each year (A, B, and C) focus

on Matthew, Mark, and Luke respectively. The Gospel of John is woven throughout. The Gospel sets the theme of the day. The Old Testament Reading often connects with the Gospel and may have a prophetic or Christological import. The Epistle sometimes coordinates with the Gospel and sometimes reads through a letter sequentially. The Psalm complements and is a response to the Old Testament or First Reading.

As you read, journal, and pray over the Scripture in this lectionary, may the Spirit strengthen your faith through our God’s precious, saving Word.

The Church Year Calendar



The Church Year calendar has two halves. The first half begins with the First Sunday in Advent and goes through the Day of Pentecost.

We call this the festival half, since during this time we celebrate important events in the life of Christ. Throughout this half of the year, we hear what God the Father has done and continues to do for us through His Son, Jesus. The nonfestival half of the year begins on Trinity Sunday and goes through the Last Sunday of the Church Year. The second half of the year focuses on the life of the church as it is strengthened daily by the Holy Spirit through the Word.

The Church Year is also divided into three sections: the Time of Christmas, the Time of Easter, and the Time of the Church. Each time includes smaller units called seasons. Within each season, we celebrate special days called feasts or festivals, such as Christmas, Epiphany, Easter, and Pentecost.

The Time of Christmas includes the seasons of Advent, Christmas, and Epiphany. The Time of Easter includes the Lent and Easter seasons. And the Time of the Church includes the season after

Pentecost. In the Time of Christmas, we remember how the Father sent His Son, Jesus, into the world. The Time of Easter focuses on Jesus’ payment for our sins through His suffering, death, and resurrection. The Time of the Church, the season after Pentecost, shows the ongoing work of the Holy Spirit in the church.

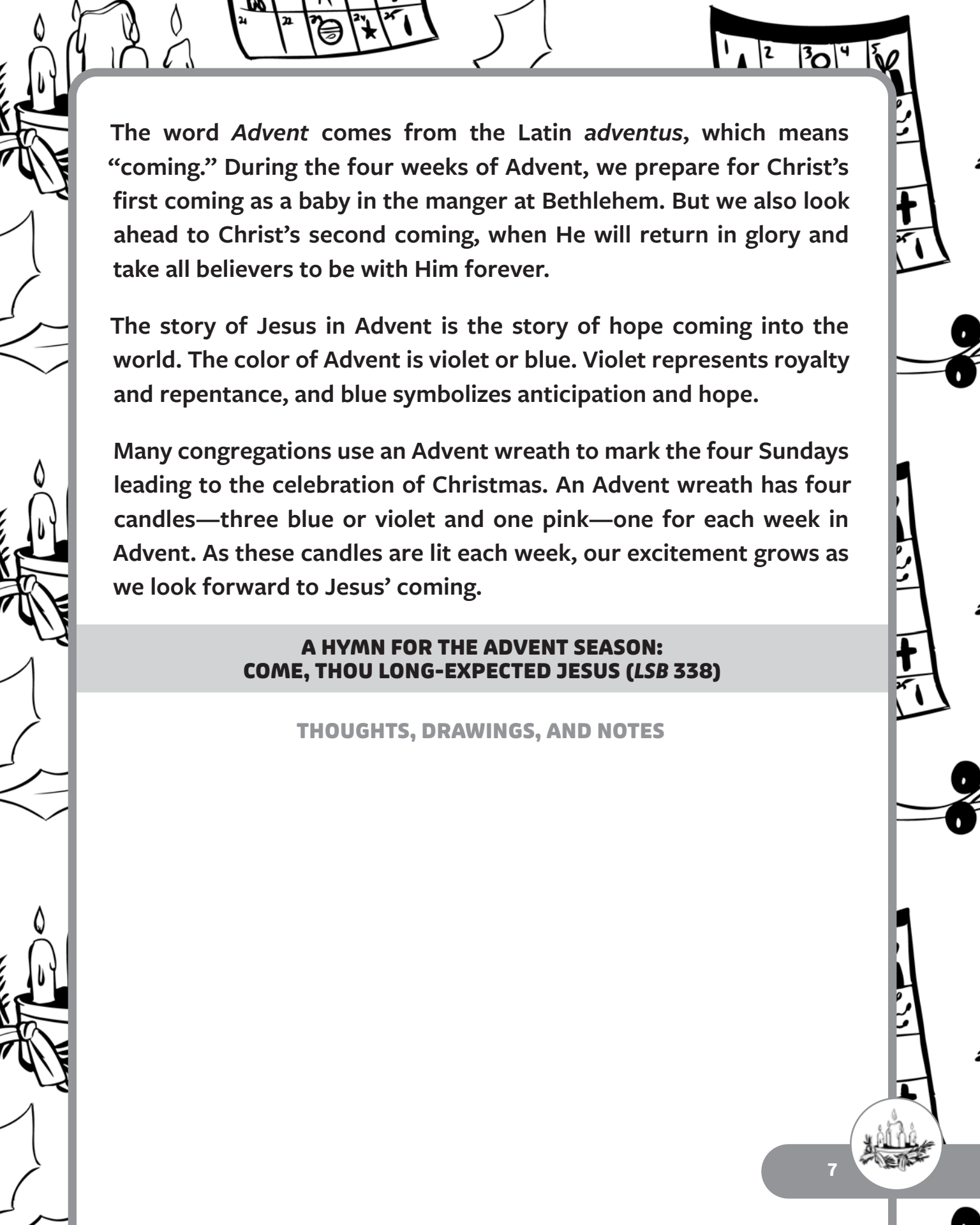
For centuries, the church has used colors and symbols to help teach about the seasons and festivals of the Church Year. The colors and customs of each season and festival help tell the message of the readings and events in the Church Year.

A companion book, *Enduring Grace: A Church Year Journal, Year B*, is available to use alongside this journal. The full text of each Sunday’s Scripture readings for Year B are printed in this beautifully illustrated, hard-cover book. The book also provides a printed hymn text and Reflection on the Hymn for each season and fourteen festivals of the Church Year. Using the two resources together will help kids, adults, and families connect and grow in faith as they engage with God’s Word.

THE ADVENT SEASON



The Christian Church Year begins with Advent. Advent begins four Sundays before December 25 and ends on December 24. Many churches have midweek services in Advent. During these services, we remember our sins and our need for a Savior, and we prepare for Jesus' coming.



The word *Advent* comes from the Latin *adventus*, which means “coming.” During the four weeks of Advent, we prepare for Christ’s first coming as a baby in the manger at Bethlehem. But we also look ahead to Christ’s second coming, when He will return in glory and take all believers to be with Him forever.

The story of Jesus in Advent is the story of hope coming into the world. The color of Advent is violet or blue. Violet represents royalty and repentance, and blue symbolizes anticipation and hope.

Many congregations use an Advent wreath to mark the four Sundays leading to the celebration of Christmas. An Advent wreath has four candles—three blue or violet and one pink—one for each week in Advent. As these candles are lit each week, our excitement grows as we look forward to Jesus’ coming.

**A HYMN FOR THE ADVENT SEASON:
COME, THOU LONG-EXPECTED JESUS (LSB 338)**

THOUGHTS, DRAWINGS, AND NOTES



First Sunday in Advent

Old Testament: Read Isaiah 64:1-9.

All our righteous deeds are like a polluted garment. We can't make ourselves righteous, or free from sin, so why would we still want God to come down to us? How does He prepare us for His return? (See the Epistle.)

Epistle: Read 1 Corinthians 1:3-9.

I give thanks to my God always for you. Paul gives thanks to God for the Corinthian Church. Why? What has God done for them?

Gospel: Read Mark 11:1-10.

Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord! Why does it make sense to read about the Palm Sunday account as we enter into the season of Advent?

Psalm: Read Psalm 80:1-7.

Let Your face shine, that we may be saved! Read verse 7 of the psalm. Then look up Numbers 6:24-26. Think about this blessing and what it means for God's face to shine on you.



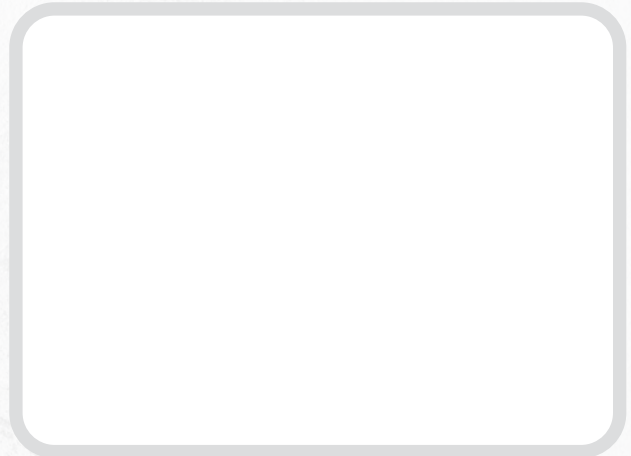
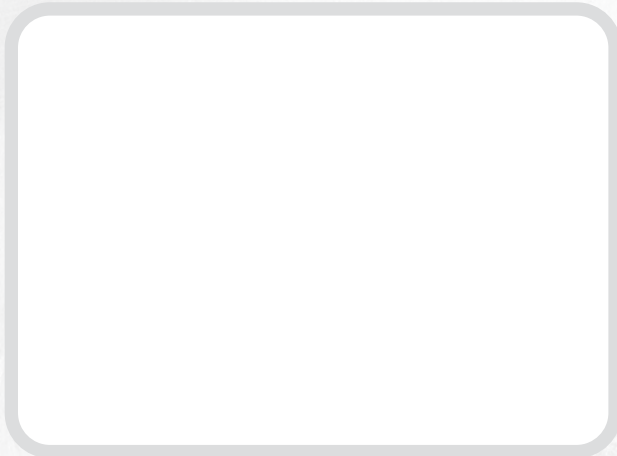
THEME OF THE READINGS

Have you ever sat at the window waiting for special visitors to come? You know they're coming soon, but you don't know the exact time, so you wait and watch, eyes glued on the road. Jesus tell us to watch for His second coming. No one knows the day or hour He'll come, so we keep watch! How? We pray and read His Word and worship with other Christians. How awesome it will be when He arrives!

THOUGHTS, DRAWINGS, AND NOTES ON THE SCRIPTURES & SERMON**HYMN OF THE DAY: SAVIOR OF THE NATIONS, COME (LSB 332)****PRAYERS**

Thanks & Praise:

Requests:

**BIBLE VERSE TO MEMORIZE**

“Hosanna! Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord!” Mark 11:9



Second Sunday in Advent

Old Testament: Read Isaiah 40:1-11.

Comfort, comfort My people, says your God. Isaiah points to the comfort that the Messiah, Jesus, will bring. What comforting words of Gospel do you find in this passage?

Epistle: Read 2 Peter 3:8-14.

The day of the Lord will come like a thief. This passage about Jesus' second coming may sound a little frightening at first, but it's actually filled with good news! What is God's will for all people according to verse 9? What wonderful thing will happen according to verse 13?

Gospel: Read Mark 1:1-8.

Behold, I send My messenger before Your face. What was John the Baptist's job, according to Mark and Isaiah? How did he carry it out? What was his message?

Psalm: Read Psalm 85.

Show us Your steadfast love, O LORD. When you feel sorry for and burdened by your sins, read this psalm and hear God's comforting words of love and forgiveness.



THEME OF THE READINGS

Do you ever wonder when Jesus is coming back? He promised He would return, so why is it taking so long? God isn't slow—He is patient, because He wants all people to repent and believe in Him! As we wait, we hold on to God's promises. He is faithful, and His love for us is steadfast—it is reliable and unchanging.

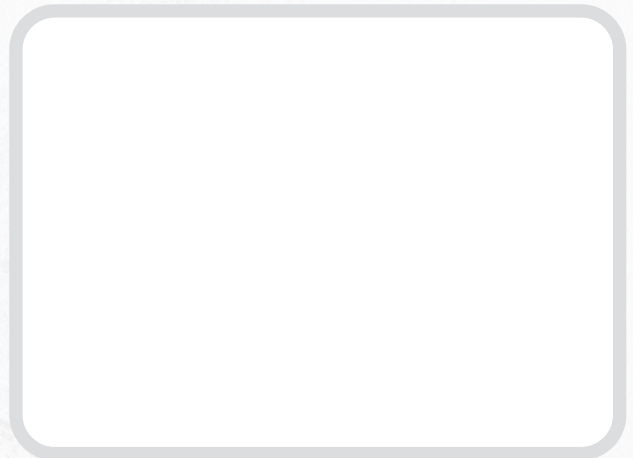
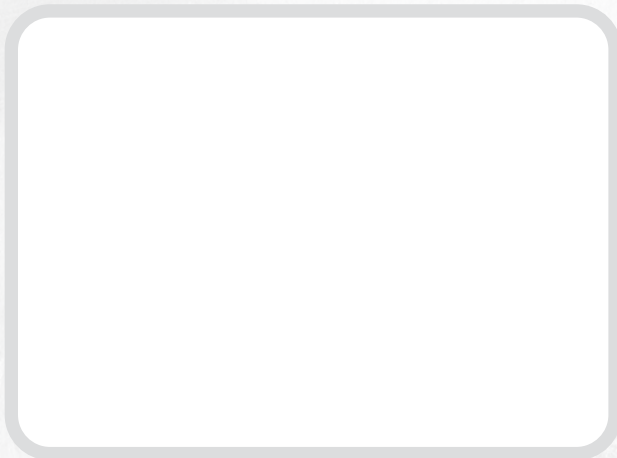
THOUGHTS, DRAWINGS, AND NOTES ON THE SCRIPTURES & SERMON

HYMN OF THE DAY: ON JORDAN'S BANK THE BAPTIST'S CRY (LSB 344)

PRAYERS

Thanks & Praise:

Requests:



BIBLE VERSE TO MEMORIZE

The grass withers, the flower fades, but the word of our God will stand forever. Isaiah 40:8

