





LOVING **GOD.**  
LOVING **PEOPLE.**

*A special thank you to our church elders, who contributed  
to writing this Christmas devotional:*

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# A Note from Pastor

Warm season's greetings!

The elders and I have prepared an Advent devotional with daily readings from December 1st through December 25th. Our prayer is that these reflections bless you deeply as you prepare your heart to celebrate the first coming of Christ into the world.

The word "Advent" comes from the Latin word *adventus*, which means "coming" or "arrival."

The season of Advent is a time of waiting, reflection, and hope. It marks the beginning of the Christian year and prepares our hearts for the coming of Jesus Christ — both His first coming as a humble baby in Bethlehem and His promised return as King of Kings at the end of time.

It's a special time, when Christians reflect on:

Hope — God's promises fulfilled in Christ

Peace — Jesus bringing peace to our hearts and the world

Joy — the good news of the Savior

Love — God's great love shown through Jesus

During these weeks leading up to Christmas, we pause to remember that God's promises never fail. We look back with gratitude for the gift of salvation and look forward with anticipation to the day when all things will be made new.

Advent invites us to slow down in a busy season, to refocus our hearts on Jesus, and to let our hearts be renewed with hope, peace, joy, and love — the four great themes of this season. As we journey through these twenty-five devotions, may we draw closer to Jesus, the Light of the World, Who came to dwell among us so that we might live forever with Him.

Let this be a time of renewed wonder, grateful worship, and joyful expectation as we prepare room in our hearts for the coming King.

Merry **CHRIST**mas,

*Pastor Pat*

### □ Reading: Isaiah 9:1-2

Isaiah 9:1–2 speaks of “no more gloom” for those who lived in deep darkness. The regions mentioned — Zebulun and Naphtali — were borderlands often attacked, neglected, and spiritually dim. Yet those very places became the first to see the great Light through the ministry of Jesus.

### Reflection

Wherever you feel darkness creeping in — discouragement, confusion, pressure — the promise still holds true: His dawn cannot be stopped. Jesus shines not only around you, but for you and within you. Our greatest needs in life aren’t met by self-help, new habits, or better circumstances—they are met by the presence of Jesus. His light doesn’t simply reveal truth; it transforms us. What God promises, He finishes. Even if you feel like you’re walking in deep darkness, God already has a plan in motion. The darkness you see is not the final chapter.

“The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who dwelt in the land of the shadow of death, *upon them a LIGHT has shined*” (Isaiah 9:1-2).

### Prayer

Lord, thank You for sending light into my darkness. Let Your presence break through every shadow in my heart and home. Shine Your hope today where I need it most. In Jesus’ name. Amen.

## □ Reading: Isaiah 9:3-5

The joy Isaiah describes isn't small. It's a joy that increases—grows, builds, and expands because it is rooted in God's victory. Just as God defeated Midian in a miraculous and unlikely way (Judges 7), He defeats the powers that overwhelm us.

## Reflection

The breaking of the "yoke," and the "rod," remind us that God's salvation is not partial. He breaks what binds. He removes what crushes. He lifts what weighs down. Through Jesus, the joy God gives us is not based on circumstances—it is grounded in His finished work.

Your joy is not fragile. Your joy is not based on your performance. Your joy flows from the God who fights for you.

## Prayer

Heavenly Father, may the joy of the Lord radiate from our church in such a way that others see Christ in us. Let our joy be a light in weary places, a testimony that our hope is not in this world but in You. Use our joy to invite others into the life found only in Jesus. In His name. Amen.

## □ Reading: Isaiah 9:6-7

The hope of God's people comes wrapped in humility: a child. God's answer to the world's chaos is not an army, but a baby—soft, small, dependent. Yet His titles reveal His true nature:

*Wonderful Counselor* — wisdom for every decision

*Mighty God* — strength for every battle

*Everlasting Father* — care that will not quit

*Prince of Peace* — wholeness in the storm

Each title reveals how Jesus meets the deepest needs of the human heart. He guides with wisdom beyond human understanding. He has the power to save, heal, and overcome the forces of darkness. He cares, protects, and provides with such tenderness; His love does not expire. This passage invites you to rest in who Jesus is—not just in what He does. His very identity brings hope.

## Reflection

Isaiah speaks these words into a world overshadowed by fear, oppression, and uncertainty. God's solution is not an army or a political figure—but a child. This teaches us that God's work often begins in ways that seem small, quiet, and easily overlooked.

## Prayer

Lord Jesus, we lift Your Name high. As a church, fill our hearts with wonder at who You are. Let Your wisdom guide our decisions, Your power strengthen our weaknesses, Your Fatherly care calm our anxieties, and Your peace rule over every ministry and relationship. May our worship reflect the greatness of who You are.

## □ Reading: John 1:1, 14

At the heart of Christmas is a miracle so profound that it reshaped all of history: the Incarnation—the eternal Son of God taking on flesh and becoming truly human. Christmas is not simply the story of a baby in a manger; it is the story of God entering our world, stepping into our weakness, and drawing near in a way humanity had never known. In the Incarnation, God came to us—not as a distant deity, but as Immanuel, God with us. Jesus did not merely appear human; He became fully human while remaining fully God. He embraced our limitations, experienced our sorrows, and walked in our world so that He could redeem us from our sin.

## Reflection

The cradle points to the cross, and the cross to the empty tomb. Through the Incarnation, God's rescue mission began in a humble stable, bringing light into our darkness and hope into our brokenness.

## Prayer

Gracious Father, we come before You with grateful hearts as we remember the miracle of the Incarnation—Your eternal Son taking on flesh and dwelling among us. Thank You for sending Jesus, fully God and fully man, to reveal Your heart, rescue us from sin, and bring light into our darkness.

□ *Reading: 2 Corinthians 1:20*

Every promise God ever made finds its fulfillment in Jesus Christ. The promise of salvation, the promise of God's presence, the promise of peace, hope, and eternal life—each one is secured through Christ. When you look at Jesus, you are looking at God's ultimate proof that He keeps His Word.

*Reflection*

If He fulfilled His greatest promise—sending His Son—He will surely keep every other promise He has made to you. We live in a world full of broken promises—plans fall apart, people disappoint us, and even our own intentions fail. But God is not like us. His promises are not uncertain. When He speaks, He acts. When He declares, He fulfills. This truth anchors our faith: God cannot lie. His character guarantees His promises. Even when circumstances seem to contradict what God has said, His Word stands firm. You can trust Him.

*Prayer*

Lord, help me rest in the certainty that Your promises never fail.



## □ Reading: Luke 1:37

Luke's Gospel begins with a profound and life-changing announcement — the birth of Jesus Christ, the Savior of the world. His detailed account highlights the hope, joy, and salvation that Jesus' coming brings to all humanity. It's truly the most pivotal message ever shared, because it marks God's entrance into history to redeem and restore us.

The angel Gabriel shares with Mary that she will have the honor to bring forth the Holy One the Son of God. Mary replies, *"How can this be, since I do not know a man?"* Gabriel responds, *"your cousin Elizabeth who was once barren, is now 6 months pregnant in her old age."* Wow! So, we can see God did a miracle then and will do one now again. Once again, we will see something that seemed impossible happen again, but this time something unique, a virgin to conceive by the power of Holy Spirit. So, if God made it possible for Elizabeth to conceive at her old age, He would also do the miracle for Mary to conceive. *"For with God nothing will be impossible."* We see in the Old Testament God did the impossible with Sarah, like Elizabeth she was beyond childbearing age, and God told her and Abraham that she would conceive. Which Sarah had Issac – a foreshadow of Christ. Sarah's miraculous conception and Isaac's role point forward to God's greater plan fulfilled in Christ—the incarnation, sacrifice, and resurrection, showing that nothing is impossible for God!

*"Is anything too hard for the Lord?"* (Genesis 18:14a) In the Old Testament we read stories that show God's incredible power, provision, and protection for His people. From leading the Israelites with a pillar of cloud and fire, to providing manna and water in the wilderness, to miraculous victories and deliverances like the walls of Jericho falling, Samson's strength, rain in drought, and the fiery furnace and lion's den rescues — all point to God's faithfulness and sovereignty. In the New Testament Jesus turned water into wine, opened the eyes of the blind, made the deaf to hear, the mute to speak and the paralytic to walk. He walked on water, set the demon possessed free, He was crucified, buried, and resurrected – defeating death. There's nothing that our God cannot do!

## Reflection

This verse calls us to surrender control and trust God. Will you trust Him?

## Prayer

Dear Heavenly Father, I come before You today with a humble heart, seeking Your peace and guidance. In a world full of uncertainties, help me to trust You completely. When I face challenges, remind me that You are my refuge and strength and that nothing is too hard for You.

## □ Reading: Matthew 1:18-25

In today's reading we see that Joseph and Mary are engaged. In the cultural context of Mary and Joseph's time, engagement wasn't just a simple promise, it was a formal, legally binding commitment. Once engaged, the couple was considered legally married, even though they didn't live together or consummate the marriage yet.

This waiting period was to demonstrate faithfulness and purity. We know that Mary is pregnant by the Holy Spirit during this time. This was supernatural, a virgin conceived. Let's put ourselves in their shoes for a moment, Mary never had a physical relationship with a man but is pregnant.

Mary and Joseph were facing a situation that would be hard for anyone to understand or accept. Mary, carrying a child she had not conceived in the usual way, must have wrestled with so many emotions — fear, uncertainty, even wonder at what God was doing in her life. And Joseph, learning this before their marriage was fully established, had every reason to be confused, hurt, or angry. He was contemplating divorcing Mary quietly (Vs.20). His choice to protect Mary quietly shows deep love and respect, even amid confusion and potential social risk.

Joseph had a divine revelation in a dream that assured him and filled him with peace (Vs. 21-23). The child Mary was carrying was unique, conceived by the Holy Spirit, not by man. He would be a Son, and Joseph would name Him Jesus, the One who would save His people

## Reflection

The main point of this passage is Joseph's obedience (vs24). That's a powerful takeaway! Joseph's immediate obedience despite uncertainty really highlights his faith and trust in God. He chose God's will over his own feelings or assumptions, showing humility and courage. It's a great example of what it means to step out in faith—even when we don't see the full picture yet. Obedience truly is foundational in the life of a Christ follower. First Samuel 1:22b says, *"Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice"*. Jesus' obedience is truly the ultimate example for us. His willingness to submit to the Father's will—even unto death—shows the depth of His love and commitment. Because of His obedience, we have the hope of re-

## *Prayer*

Heavenly Father, I come before You with a humble heart, grateful for Your unfailing love and grace. I ask that You stir within me and our church a spirit of obedience—just as Your Son Jesus perfectly obeyed Your will, may we also walk in His footsteps. Teach us to listen closely to Your voice, to trust Your guidance even when the path is unclear, and to obey Your Word wholeheartedly without hesitation or delay. In Jesus' name. Amen.

### □ Reading: Luke 1:46-56

The “Song of Mary” recorded in Luke chapter 1 is also known as “The Magnificat”. Magnificat is the Latin word which literally means “magnify” which Mary does by lifting up the Lord in a song of praise. The connection between Mary’s Magnificat and Hannah’s song in 1 Samuel 2:1-10 is really powerful. It shows how God’s faithfulness and favor rests upon the humble. This is a theme throughout Scripture. Mary’s recognition of God’s grace and favor toward her is truly amazing, especially knowing she was chosen to bring the Savior into the world—a gift of grace none of us deserved. The beginning Magnificat verses (46-49) are very personal, Mary is praising the Lord for His grace and favor. She is chosen by God to birth the Savior of the world, this was unexpected grace, amazing grace. Mary’s response is so deeply moving because it’s both humble and profound. She recognizes that the favor shown to her is entirely from God’s grace—something she didn’t earn or expect. Her heart overflows with worship because she sees herself as part of God’s larger, redemptive plan.

Mary mentions many of God’s characteristics in her praise (49-51): mighty, holy, merciful, and strong. We then read (51-53) how God’s strength humbles those who call themselves mighty and rich, but His mercy is given to those poor in spirit (humble). God ignored the proud and chose a young handmaiden, Mary, to bring forth the Savior of the world. In the closing passage (54,55) we see God is a covenant keeping God—the promise He made to Abraham He will keep and fulfill (Gen. 12:1-3). Mary’s song opens with giving God glory and closes with the promise of God being remembered forever. This reminds me of all of God’s promises and the hope we have in Him. *“For all the promises of God in Him are Yes, and in Him Amen, to the glory of God through us”* (2 Corinthians 1:20).

### Reflection

It’s so powerful to remember that Jesus loves us unconditionally, even with all our flaws, failures, and shame. Romans 3:24 reminds us that we are justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ. Ephesians 2:8 beautifully shows that it’s by grace we’re saved, not by anything we’ve done, so no one can boast. That truth should overflow in our hearts as worship—giving God all the glory and praise because He alone made a way for us when we couldn’t save ourselves. It’s a humbling, awe-inspiring reality that draws us closer to Him.

### Prayer

Lord God, I come before You with a heart full of praise, just as Mary magnified Your name with joy and humility. You’ve done great things for Your people and Your mercy endures generation to generation. Fill Your church with the same awe and gratitude that Mary had, so we may always recognize Your hand at work among us. In Jesus’ name. Amen.

## □ Reading: Micah 5:1-5

Micah 5:1-5 points us to the humble town of Bethlehem, a place seemingly insignificant on the map but destined to be the birthplace of the King of kings. The prophecy reveals a deep truth about God's ways—He often chooses the lowly and overlooked to accomplish His greatest plans.

At Christmas, we celebrate this miraculous moment when God entered history through a tiny, vulnerable baby born in a humble manger. The "ruler" who comes from Bethlehem is not just any king but one "whose origins are from of old, from ancient times"—the eternal God incarnate.

This passage reminds us of several Christmas truths:

- **God's sovereignty:** Though Bethlehem was small and unassuming, God's plan was not limited by earthly stature or status.
- **The fulfillment of prophecy:** Jesus' birth was no accident; it was the fulfillment of God's promises spoken long before.
- **Jesus as the Good Shepherd:** He leads and cares for His people, providing strength and security.
- **Jesus as our peace:** In a world of chaos, the second coming of Jesus brings lasting peace.

## Reflection

As we celebrate Christmas, let us remember that Jesus' arrival is a sign of God's grace and peace. Like Bethlehem, our lives may feel small or ordinary, but God can work through us in powerful ways.

## Prayer

Heavenly Father, thank You for sending Your Son, Jesus, the ruler from Bethlehem, to be our Savior and Shepherd. Help us to trust in Your plans, even when they seem humble. Fill our hearts with Your peace this Christmas and help us to share Your love with those around us.

## □ Reading: Luke 2:1-7

What a chaotic scene it must have been when Jesus was born into our world. The Roman census required everyone in Israel to travel back to their ancestral towns to register. Imagine the confusion and frustration — families packing up, crowded roads, and towns overflowing with visitors. It was probably one of the most disruptive government orders imaginable, stirring up stress and resentment among the people. Picture it like being stuck in an airport at Christmas during a snowstorm — flights canceled, crowds everywhere, everyone tired, hungry, and frustrated. That's what Mary and Joseph faced as they prepared to bring the Son of God into the world. To make matters worse, when they arrived in Bethlehem, there was no place for them to stay — not even with family. In that culture, when you return to your hometown, it was expected that relatives would host you. Inns were for strangers. So, when Scripture says there was "no room in the inn," it likely meant Joseph's own relatives had no space—or perhaps no desire—to welcome him. Imagine how rejected Joseph must have felt with his wife about to give birth and nowhere to go. Maybe some even shunned them because of the controversy surrounding Mary's pregnancy. We can't know for sure, but it's easy to imagine how difficult that must have been.

## Reflection

Now think about your life before Christ. Whether you grew up in a Christian home or not, sin made life messy, chaotic, and broken. Yet Jesus stepped into that mess — into our world — humbly and lovingly. Through His life, death, and resurrection, He saved us. And He still meets us today — not just in our best moments, but in our darkest ones too. One of the greatest comforts in the story of Jesus' birth is this truth: even in the middle of confusion, rejection, and chaos, God came to us. He loved the world so much that He gave His only Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have everlasting life (John 3:16).

## Prayer

Heavenly Father, as Mary and Joseph trusted Your plan, even when it was uncertain and difficult, teach us to trust You completely, especially in moments of waiting and challenge. May we, like them, have faith to say "yes" to Your will, knowing You hold all things in Your hands.

## □ Reading: Luke 2:8-20

The shepherds were ordinary, humble workers—often overlooked and considered lowly in society. Yet, God chose to announce His Son's birth first to them. This shows us that the good news of Jesus is for everyone, no matter their status or circumstance. God's love reaches to everyone. When the angel told them about Jesus' birth, the shepherds didn't hesitate or question. They went straight to Bethlehem to see the baby. By faith – they acted immediately on what God revealed. After seeing Jesus, the shepherds couldn't keep the news to themselves. They returned glorifying and praising God, telling everyone about what they had witnessed. Their encounter with Jesus changed them and compelled them to share His love.

## Reflection

The shepherds represent us—ordinary people living in a world full of uncertainty and fear. The birth of Jesus brings light, peace, and hope into our darkness. Like the shepherds, we can find comfort knowing God came near for us. How can I be faithful in the “ordinary” tasks God has given me? Am I open to God using me, even if I feel unimportant? When God speaks to me through His Word or prayer, do I respond quickly and with trust? Or do I hesitate and doubt?

## Prayer

Heavenly Father, thank You for using ordinary people like shepherds to reveal Your extraordinary love. Help me to listen to Your voice, obey Your call, and share the joy of Jesus with those around me. In Jesus' name. Amen.

## □ Reading: Matthew 1:1-17

At first glance, Matthew 1:1-17 might seem like just a long list of names. But this genealogy is deeply significant, especially during Christmas. It reminds us that Jesus did not appear out of nowhere — He is the fulfillment of God's promises through generations. This list connects Jesus to Abraham and David, two pivotal figures in the Bible. God promised Abraham that through his offspring, all nations would be blessed (Genesis 12:3) and promised David that his throne would be established forever (2 Samuel 7:12-16). Jesus is the fulfillment of these promises — God's timing is perfect, and His plans never fail.

This genealogy shows that Jesus is fully human, part of a real family with real history. He entered our world not as a distant deity but as someone who understands our struggles because He shares in our humanity. Within this genealogy, we see names of imperfect people — some known for sin and failure, like Rahab and David. This reminds us that God's grace works through imperfect people to bring about His perfect plan. Christmas is a celebration of God's grace entering a broken world.

## Reflection

As we celebrate Jesus' birth, this genealogy reassures us that God is faithful to His promises. No matter the circumstances, God's plan to save and redeem continues through Jesus Christ.

## Prayer

Heavenly Father, thank You for the genealogy of Jesus that reminds us of Your unfailing faithfulness across every generation. As we reflect on the genealogy of Jesus, we are humbled by the names in His family line—men and women who were broken, frail, sinful, and yet chosen by You. May Your purpose in us be fulfilled just as Your purpose was fulfilled through the generations that led to Jesus.



## □ *Matthew 5:17-18*

Jesus is unique in both His person and His purpose. Jesus is the Christ, the long-awaited Messiah, the one and only Son of God. Jesus is fully God and fully human. The Savior of the world, who came to take away the sins of the world. He wasn't just some spiritual individual during His time on earth. He was both God's Son (John 3:16) and God Himself—God in human flesh. (1 Timothy 3:16). Jesus was a descendent from the Davidic line that is prophesized in the Old Testament. All proof in and outside of the Bible and all modern scholars of antiquity agree that Jesus existed historically. Jesus was born of a Virgin. He came to this Earth to die for our sins and save humanity. He served and ministered to the people of this Earth for 33 years. He performed many miracles, even the winds and waves obeyed Him. He invited people to leave all and follow Him. Though many followed and believed in Him, many of His own people did not. He was crucified, buried and on the third day He rose from the grave and then ascended to Heaven. He is coming back as He promised to take us (believers) to Heaven with Him. What a Glorious day that will be.

### *Reflection*

Are you ready? Readiness is about relationship, not perfection. Readiness is about living faithfully in the present. Readiness is about hope, not fear.

### *Prayer*

Heavenly Father, thank You for the blessed hope You have given us in the return of Your Son, Jesus Christ. Lord, help us to live ready, faithful, and expectant, honoring You with our life as we await Your glorious appearance. In Jesus' name. Amen.

## □ Reading: Isaiah 40:12-31

The nation of Israel, God's people, are held under the crushing fist of the Babylonian empire, exiles suffering for having turned from their God. But the Lord God is good, and in the fullness of time He tells His people, through the prophet Isaiah, that the time of comfort has come, that her warfare is ended, that her iniquity is pardoned (v2).

The time had come for Lord God to feed His flock like a shepherd, to gather the lambs with His arm (v11). Behold, His reward is with Him, And His work before Him (v10). Who is this One who promises comfort, promises pardoning, promises salvation? Who is this One whose timing is always exactly right? "Have you not known? Have you not heard? Has it not been told you from the beginning? Have you not understood from the foundations of the earth? It is He who sits above the circle of the earth, and its inhabitants are like grasshoppers," (21,22).

The prophet speaks for the Lord, "To whom will you liken God?" (v18).

## Reflection

As the Advent of Christ approached, two thousand years ago, the nation of Israel was again under the rule of the ungodly and the Lord God was about to move to provide comfort to His people. But this time, the voice of one crying in the wilderness (Isaiah 40:3, Matthew 3) was preparing the way for One who would provide salvation from the existential threat to His people. Where the Israelites sought salvation from the Romans, the Lord God was going to save His people from sin and death (Romans 8:2). In the fullness of time, the Word who created the circle of the earth (Isaiah 40:22, John 1:1-3) would be born on it (John 1:14). He would not only feed His flock like a Shepherd, but Jesus would complete the work before Him (v10) in His death on the cross, giving His life for the sheep that they might live (John 10:11).

As we celebrate the Advent of Christ today, to whom will you liken God? There is none like the Lord God, the Comforter and Salvation of Israel,

## Prayer

Heavenly Father, You are our strength in weakness, our peace in turmoil, our joy in seasons of heaviness. We rejoice knowing that Your power is far greater than every burden we carry, and Your love is deeper than

## □ Reading: Luke 1:5-25, 57-66

We all agree on the greatness and goodness of God. We nod our heads enthusiastically as Isaiah describes our Creator God who measures the waters in the hollow of His hand, weighs the mountains in a measure, the author of the whole host of heaven (Isaiah 40). And yet each of us has found ourselves having heard the voice of our Maker speaking to us through Scripture, or through a sermon, or through the loving words of a friend and have responded with... Wait. What? Me? No, certainly not me.

Zacharias – Elizabeth’s husband, soon to be John the Baptist’s father and Jesus’ uncle – has his moment. He’s a priest, serving God’s People, and an angel of the Lord tells him he will father the very one Isaiah said would come (Isaiah 40:3), a voice crying in the wilderness “Prepare the way of the Lord!” Maybe you recognize Zacharias’ response... Wait. What? Me? No, certainly not me. And yet, in spite of Zacharias’ doubt, God moves mercifully in the lives of Zacharias and Elizabeth with the birth of John the Baptist. And God moved mercifully in the history of mankind in providing one who would be great in the sight of the Lord, who would be filled with the Holy Spirit, who would turn many to the Lord their God; to make ready a people prepared for the Lord. (Luke 1:15-17)

## Reflection

In spite of your doubt, and my doubt, God moves mercifully in our lives. He is ever loving, ever compassionate, ever ready to bless us even when we doubt.

## Prayer

Heavenly Father, when I cannot see the way forward, doubt creeps in. But You see the whole path. You know every step before I take it. Give me the courage to walk by faith and not by sight. Help me to rest, to surrender, and to trust that You are working even when I can’t see it. In Jesus’ name. Amen.

□ *Reading: Isaiah 7:10-14, Matthew 1:23*

Immanuel, God with us. Since before the foundations of the world, the heart of the Father has been for His people. God created us in His image (Genesis 1:27), and despite our fall into sin, He has promised that He would love with an everlasting love (Jeremiah 31:3). How, then, has God loved His people? He loved the Israelites in His desire to be with them. At the dedication of the temple (II Chronicles 6-7), Solomon is amazed that the God of all creation would indeed dwell with men on the earth. But God did, and He put His name on the temple among His people, His glory filled the temple, and God was with His people. And now, fulfilling the prophesy of Isaiah, Jesus is born among men, born of a virgin, to be called Immanuel, truly God with us.

*Reflection*

The heart of the Father still longs to be with His people, but in an even more intimate way than in filling the temple with His glory. God has condescended to be born among us so that He could bridge the uncrossable divide between our sinfulness and His holiness. Jesus is born to be our kinsman redeemer (Ruth 3:9), to be both just and the justifier of those who have faith in Him (Romans 3:26), and to be with us always, even to the end of the age (Matthew 28:20).

*Prayer*

Heavenly Father, we come before You with gratitude, remembering the powerful truth that You are Immanuel—God with us. Thank You that You are not distant, not silent, not far away, but near to Your people. You walk with us in every season, in every valley, and on every mountain. In this season of Advent, help us to rest in this truth daily—that You are with us in our homes, our workplaces, our schools, our struggles, and our joys. In Jesus' name. Amen.

## □ *Readings: Luke 2:36-40, Matthew 5:17-18*

From the beginning of human history – from the protoevangelium (the first gospel in Genesis 3:15) all the way through to a widowed prophetess named Anna – a remnant had waited on the Lord for the Seed of the woman who would provide for the salvation, the redemption, of Israel. God was faithful in the gift of the protoevangelium, and remained faithful in the gift of Anna, the protoevangelist, who spoke of Him to all those who looked for redemption in Jerusalem (Luke 2:38). But how? How did Anna, and Simeon with her in the temple, know that this was the Messiah? Because the Law of the Israelites had long demanded a righteousness unobtainable by man (Exodus 20, Matthew 5:20), and the Prophets of Israel had long promised that God Himself would provide that righteousness to a people He would call His own (Exodus 12:13, Psalm 22, Isaiah 42:6,7). It was through the Spirit of God that Anna and Simeon knew that this One was the Seed.

Jesus tells the multitude on the mountainside as much, that all the Law and all the Prophets were to be fulfilled by Him (Matthew 5:17). Every word of the moral law, every word of the ceremonial law, and every word of the judicial law cried out for fulfillment, and every word of the Prophets promised there would be One who would do it.

## *Reflection*

Christmas reminds us of Jesus - the One, the Seed of the protoevangelium - came, suffered, rose again, and entered into His glory (Luke 24:26) just as was required by the Law and promised by the

## *Prayer*

Heavenly Father, thank You for sending Jesus, who perfectly fulfilled the Law and the Prophets, bringing Your promises to completion.

## □ *Reading: Matthew 2:1-12*

The story of the Magi is one of seeking, following, and finding. These wise men came from distant lands—outsiders drawn by a mysterious star that led them to the true King. Their journey reminds us that God's light reaches far beyond the boundaries of a nation, culture, or status. His invitation to worship the Christ Child is open to all who are willing to follow the light He gives.

The Magi's story also confronts us with two kinds of hearts:

- Herod's heart, fearful and threatened by the idea of another king.
- The Magi's hearts, humble and eager to bow before Him.

During Advent, we too are invited to search our hearts. Are we like Herod—trying to control our own kingdoms—or like the Magi, ready to surrender and adore?

Notice also that the Magi's journey required faith. They followed a star—not a map or GPS, just a glimmer of light. Sometimes, God guides us the same way: one step at a time, through small signs of His presence. Advent is a season of waiting and watching for that light—the light that has come and is still coming into our world.

When the Magi finally arrived, they offered their treasures: gold, frankincense, and myrrh—symbols of Jesus' kingship, divinity, and sacrifice. But their greatest act of worship wasn't what they brought; it was that they knelt. In the presence of Jesus, their posture changed.

## *Reflection*

This Advent, as you follow the light of Christ:

- Where might God be calling you to take the next step of faith, even if the path is dim?
- What "treasures" of your heart—your time, your trust, your love—can you lay before Him?
- How can you bow in worship, not only with your words, but with your life?

## *Prayer*

Father, we come before You with the same longing and hunger that filled the hearts of the wise men. They saw the star and responded with faith. They left comfort, crossed deserts, and endured uncertainty because they believed the King had come. Lord, give us that same spirit—a heart that seeks You above convenience, comfort, and familiarity. In Jesus' name. Amen.

## □ Reading: John 1:14

John doesn't say the Word appeared like flesh or simply visited for a moment—he says the eternal Word became flesh. God didn't shout salvation from heaven; He stepped into our world, into our pain, into our limitations. This is the heart of the gospel: God came near. The word dwelt literally means "tabernacled" or "pitched His tent among us." Just as God's presence filled the tabernacle in the wilderness, Jesus came to live among His people so God's glory could be experienced firsthand—not from a distance, but face-to-face. Jesus is the presence of God in human form. His life shows us the Father's heart—His compassion, His truth, His mercy, His faithfulness.

## Reflection

In this season of Advent, we are reminded that Jesus knows what it feels like to be tired, rejected, misunderstood, tempted, and overwhelmed. Because He became flesh, He can sympathize with us in every weakness. The author of Hebrews writes, "Seeing then that we have a great High Priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need" (Hebrews 4:14-16). What a stunning invitation. God doesn't invite us to a throne of judgment, or intimidation—He invites us to a throne of grace. A throne where the King Himself welcomes the weary, the broken, the doubting, and the hopeful. A throne where mercy is not withheld but freely poured out. A throne where grace is not earned but given.

## Prayer

Heavenly Father, we come before Your throne of grace today with humble and confident hearts. Thank You that we do not come on our own merit, but through Jesus—our great High Priest who knows our weaknesses, carries our burdens, and intercedes for us. Open doors this Christmas season to share this Good News! In Jesus' name. Amen.

## □ Reading: Isaiah 52:7

Isaiah paints a picture of a messenger running over the mountains, shouting news so good that even his dust-covered feet are called beautiful. Why? Because he brings the best message the world could ever hear: God reigns. Peace is coming. Salvation is here. The beauty isn't in the messenger—it's in the message. In a world weary from sin, exile, disappointment, and fear, God announces peace. Not a momentary calm, but shalom—wholeness, restoration, healing, and abundant life (John 10:10).

## Reflection

Though Isaiah was referring to those announcing the return of God's people from exile, this verse speaks to us today. As believers, we are called to be messengers — to carry and share the gospel, the ultimate good news. Our "feet" are beautiful when we are active in proclaiming peace and salvation to a hurting world.

## Prayer

Heavenly Father, You are the Source of all hope and salvation. Thank You for sending Your Son, Jesus Christ, to redeem us and for giving us the message of eternal life. Fill our hearts with boldness and love as we share the Good News with those around us. Help us be faithful witnesses of Your grace and truth. In Jesus' name. Amen.



## □ Reading: John 3:16-17

During this season of gift giving, we are reminded of the gospel of John chapter 3 verse 16. It begins with one of the most profound truths in the Bible: God's love for the world. This love is not casual or superficial; it is sacrificial and all-encompassing. God's love extends to everyone—all people, regardless of background, status or sins. It's a love that cost Him dearly, sending His only Son into a world full of sin and brokenness. God's love was expressed through giving — giving His only Son, Jesus Christ. This gift is unparalleled. Jesus came to bridge the gap between sinful humanity and a holy God caused by sin. The offer of eternal life is not earned but given freely through faith in Jesus. It's a gift that transforms lives, offering hope beyond this temporary world.

## Reflection

These verses highlight that whoever believes in Jesus will not perish but have eternal life. This is an open invitation. It's about trusting Jesus and His work on the cross. Belief here means more than intellectual agreement — it's a life-changing trust that leads to a new relationship with God. Have you trusted in Jesus?

How to Trust Jesus Today:

- Admit you are a sinner.
- Believe Jesus died and rose again for you.
- Ask Him to forgive your sins.
- Invite Him to be your Lord and Savior.

## Prayer

Dear Jesus, I know that I am a sinner and I need Your forgiveness. Thank You for dying on the cross for my sins and rising again. I believe that You are the Son of God. Right now, I invite You into my heart and life as my Lord and Savior. Please forgive me, save me, and help me to follow You every day. Thank You for Your grace and love. In Jesus' name, I pray, Amen.

### □ Reading: Luke 1:39-45

Once Mary recognized the miracle that God had worked in her, she packed her belongings and went to visit her relative Elizabeth, who was pregnant with her own child. According to Jewish custom, Elizabeth, being older, the daughter of a priest, and of the lineage of Aaron, would have been the honored guest during this visit. In contrast, Mary had no special social status and faced the added stigma of being pregnant out of wedlock, which was considered a public disgrace and could even lead to severe consequences, such as being stoned to death. Despite these challenges, Elizabeth expressed that she felt honored by Mary's visit. When she heard Mary's greeting, the baby in her womb leaped with joy. Filled with the Holy Spirit, Elizabeth declared in verses 42-43 (NIV), "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the child you will bear! But why am I so favored that the mother of my Lord should come to me? As soon as the sound of your greeting reached my ears, the baby in my womb leaped for joy." Both Elizabeth, who had miraculously conceived in her old age, and the baby she was carrying—who would become John the Baptist—recognized that the child Mary was bearing was their Lord. They understood how blessed Mary was to be chosen for such an honor. This child would grow up to bring redemption to mankind and fulfill God's plan of reconciliation. Even before His birth, they felt honored and humbled to be in His presence.

### Reflection

God, in His kindness, often brings people into our lives at just the right moment—people who can see His hand at work in us even when others cannot. They may not have all the answers, but they understand the stirring of the Spirit, the quiet whispers of God's leading, and the faith that's growing within us. Their presence becomes a confirmation of what God has already spoken to our hearts. Just as Elizabeth affirmed Mary's faith when no one else fully understood what God was doing, the Lord still sends encouragers who recognize His work in our lives.

### Prayer

Heavenly Father, not my will, but Yours be done. Let every desire, dream, and plan in my heart bow to Your perfect wisdom and will. Thank You for confirming Your will in my life. Thank You for speaking clearly, gently, and faithfully. Thank You for every person You used to encourage me. In Jesus' name. Amen.

## □ *Reading: Isaiah 61:1-9, Luke 4:18-21*

In today's Scripture reading Jesus read from the scrolls. To the complete amazement of the people listening, Jesus says "Today the Scriptures have been fulfilled in your hearing". (Luke 4:21) What Jesus is basically saying is "the new era of God's revelation, the era of salvation from sin and death is now here, and it is found in Me". All who believe in Jesus are truly blessed. We are highly favored. Jesus tells us that He has come to bring good news to the "poor in spirit" and to give sight to the "spiritually blind." Jesus said, "It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick... I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners." Only those who know that they are spiritually bankrupt will seek the riches that Christ freely offers. Those individuals are truly blessed.

In the gospel of Matthew chapter 5, "BLESSED" is not what we think about in terms of a blissfully happy life. We are blessed because our sins have been forgiven by Christ and we now know Him as our personal Lord and Savior. Because we know Him, we are happy, and joyful – knowing we are found in a favorable standing before a holy God.

## *Reflection*

Joy is a powerful gift — when we embrace it, joy will overflow into how we treat others. Being blessed isn't just for ourselves; it's a call to share that blessing through kindness, encouragement, and love.

## *Prayer*

Heavenly Father, we come before You with a heart full of gratitude for Your amazing favor upon our life. Amen.

## □ Reading: Hebrew 1:1-8

In earlier times, God revealed Himself to His people through prophets—sometimes in visions, sometimes through words. But now, in “these last days,” He has spoken through His Son, Jesus Christ. Jesus isn’t just a messenger; He is the full and final revelation of God Himself. He is the exact image of God’s being. When we look at Jesus—His character, His love, His power—we see God clearly. In verse 3 the author of Hebrews says Jesus is “upholding (or sustaining) all things by the word of His power” (or by His powerful word). This is a beautiful reminder that Jesus is not only our Savior but also the One who holds everything together—our world, and our lives.

## Reflection

The season of Advent is such a powerful time of reflection. It prepares our hearts to celebrate the coming of Jesus, who truly is the perfect revelation of God. Through His life, teachings, and sacrifice, Jesus reveals God’s love, mercy, and truth. Advent reminds us not only to look back to His first coming as a humble baby but also to look forward with hope to His promised return.

## Prayer

Gracious Father, thank You for revealing Your glory and love through Your Son, Jesus Christ. We rejoice in this revelation and trust in Your unfailing love. In Jesus’ name, Amen.

## □ *Reading: Psalm 105:1-4*

MERRY *CHRISTMAS*!

At Christmas, we celebrate the greatest gift God has given to the world — Jesus Christ, His Son. Psalm 105 invites us to give praise and proclaim God's name by telling of His wonderful deeds. The coming of Jesus is the ultimate demonstration of God's love and faithfulness to His promises. Through the birth of Christ, God revealed Himself in a personal and powerful way to the nations.

## *Reflection*

As we reflect on this passage during Christmas, it calls us to rejoice in the Lord and to seek Him continually. The joy of Christmas is rooted in the presence of God with us — Immanuel. It is a season to remember how God's strength came to dwell among us in the form of a humble baby, bringing hope, joy, peace and love.

## *Prayer*

Lord Jesus, thank You for coming into the world as a tiny baby, bringing hope, joy, peace, and love to all. Help us to remember the true meaning of Christmas—not the gifts or the decorations, but Your love that changes hearts and brings joy that lasts forever. May Your presence fill our homes and our lives today. Give us the grace to share Your love with others, especially those who feel lonely or forgotten. Help us to be kind, generous, and thankful for every blessing You've given. In Jesus' name. Amen.



TODAY IN THE TOWN  
OF DAVID A *Savior*  
HAS BEEN *born* TO YOU  
HE IS THE *Messiah*, THE *Lord*.

LUKE 2:11

*Merry*  
**CHRISTMAS**



