



ADVENT - SCRIPTURE.JOURNAL.PRAYER

# ADVENT

Dear OneLife Community Church,

Welcome to Advent. This season reminds us to be both mindful of the past (backward), and thoughtful toward the future (forward). It draws us back two millennia to the birth of Christ, and points us toward the second coming of Jesus when all things will be under God's reign. No matter which direction you prioritize, Advent calls us to delayed gratification, a season of holy longing as we anticipate something/one better.

So may we learn to wait on the Lord, with joyous expectation.

For the next four weeks we want to invite you to take part in three formative spiritual practices as we wait upon the Christmas light together. Even as we disperse from Sundays, we join each other in Spirit throughout the week, united in these shared traditions:

- The reading of Scripture (via Daily Office)
- Journaling what God is revealing
- Prayer through the themes of advent

May we unite as one in single-minded pursuit of the God who — as Advent reveals — pursues us.

*Grace & peace,*

*OneLife Community Church Staff & Elders*

## Instructions...

Welcome to the OneLife Community Church Advent Devotional. For each day of this season we have prepared content for you to engage with together as a church community. Advent begins on Sunday, November 27, and runs through to Christmas Day on December 25. You will also notice a theme for each of the four weeks of Advent. Week 1 is Hope, Week 2 is Peace, Week 3 is Joy, and Week 4 is Love. Here is a quick overview:

| **Scripture** - First, each day includes four scripture readings taken from the Daily Office lectionary. Read through these at the beginning of your devotional time. Every day there will be a Psalm, a reading from the Old Testament, New Testament, and the Gospels.

| **Question** - Second, each day includes a question for you to reflect on related to the theme for the week (Hope, Peace, Joy, Love). Take some time to meditate on this question, and then write your response in the lined area on the right page.

| **Prayer** - Finally, each day includes a notable prayer written by a host of historical figures, Saints, leaders, and reformers. Once you have completed the readings, and written a response to the question, pray this prayer to conclude your devotional time.

# HOPE WEEK.01



## November 28

### | Scripture

Psalm: Psalm 146

Old Testament: Isaiah 1:1-9

New Testament: 2 Peter 3:1-10 Gospel: Matthew 25:1-18

### | Question

How would you describe the season of life in which you are now? What are its major opportunities and challenges?

### | Prayer

Govern everything by your wisdom, O Lord, so that my soul may always be serving you in the way you will and not as I choose. Let me die to myself so that I may serve you; let me live to you who are life itself. Amen.

— St. Teresa Of Avila

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## November 29

### | Scripture

Psalm: Psalm 1

Old Testament: Isaiah 1:10-20

New Testament: 1 Thessalonians 1:1-10 Gospel: Luke 20:1-8

### | Question

In which area of your life is your heart often led astray from God's purposes? Why?

### | Prayer

O teach us to despise all vanities, to fight the battles of the Lord manfully against the flesh, the world, and the devil, to spend our time religiously and usefully, to speak gracious words, to walk always in your presence, to preserve our souls and bodies in holiness, fit for the habitation of the Holy Spirit of God.

— John Cosin

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# November 30

**| Scripture**

Psalm: Psalm 5

Old Testament: Isaiah 1:21-31

New Testament: 1 Thessalonians 2:1-12 Gospel: Luke 20:9-18

**| Question**

Advent teaches us the discipline of waiting. How has God enlarged you through the practice of waiting?

**| Prayer**

Almighty God, our heavenly Father, who from your tender love towards us sinners has given us your Son, that believing in him we may have everlasting life; grant us your Holy Spirit that we may continue steadfast in this faith to the end, and may come to everlasting life; through Jesus Christ, your Son, our Lord.

— John Calvin

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# December 1

**| Scripture**

Psalm: Psalm 119:1-24

Old Testament: Isaiah 2:1-11

New Testament: 1 Thessalonians 2:13-20 Gospel: Luke 20:19-26

**| Question**

What makes it difficult for you to trust God? Why?

**| Prayer**

Lord God Almighty, shaper and ruler of all creatures, we pray that by your great mercy and by the token of the holy cross you will guide us to your will. Make our minds steadfast, strengthen us against temptation, and keep us from all unrighteousness. Shield us against our enemies, seen and unseen. Teach us to inwardly love you before all things with a clean mind and a clean body. For you are our Maker and Redeemer, our help and comfort, our trust and hope, forever. — King Alfred the Great

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## December 2

### | Scripture

Psalm: Psalm 18:1-20

Old Testament: Isaiah 2:12-22

New Testament: 1 Thessalonians 3:1-13 Gospel: Luke 20:27-40

### | Question

What do you hope for the most?

### | Prayer

O God, our Father, we are exceedingly frail, and indisposed to every virtuous and noble undertaking; Strengthen our weakness, we beseech you, that we may be valiant in this spiritual war; help us against our own negligence and cowardice, and defend us from the treachery of our unfaithful hearts; for the sake of Jesus Christ our Lord.

— St. Augustine

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## December 3

### | Scripture

Psalm: Psalm 16

Old Testament: Isaiah 3:8-15

New Testament: 1 Thessalonians 4:1-12 Gospel: Luke 20:41-21:4

### | Question

God's timing is perfect. What are you most impatient for?

### | Prayer

Take, Lord, and receive all my liberty, my memory, my understanding, and my entire will, All I have and call my own. You have given all to me. To you, Lord, I return it.

Everything is yours; do with it what you will. Give me only your love and your grace, that is enough for me.

— St. Ignatius

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# December 4

## | Scripture

Psalm: Psalm 20

Old Testament: Isaiah 4:2-6

New Testament: 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 Gospel: Luke 21:5-19

## | Question

Like Israel, we can be guilty of placing our hopes in various securities like wealth, status and appearance. What securities do you chase after?

## | Prayer

O Lord, to be turned from you is to fall, to be turned to you is to rise, and to stand in you is to abide forever. Grant us in all our duties your help, in all our perplexities your guidance, in all our dangers your protection, and in all our sorrows your peace; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

—St. Thomas Aquinas

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# PEACE WEEK.02



## December 5

### | Scripture

Psalm: Psalm 148

Old Testament: Isaiah 5:1-7

New Testament: 2 Peter 3:11-18 Gospel: Luke 7:28-35

### | Question

What is the greatest threat to peace in your life?

### | Prayer

O God, by thy mercy strengthen us who lie exposed to the rough storms of trouble and temptations. Help us against our own negligence and cowardice, and defend us from the treachery of our unfaithful hearts. Succour us, we beseech thee, and bring us to thy safe haven of peace and felicity.

— St. Augustine

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## December 6

### | Scripture

Psalm: Psalm 25

Old Testament: Isaiah 5:8-12, 18-23

New Testament: 1 Thessalonians 5:1-11 Gospel: Luke 21:20-28

### | Question

What do you do to find peace in the midst of the noise and compulsions of life?

### | Prayer

O Lord my God; Teach my heart this day where and how to see you; Where and how to find you. You have made me and remade me; And you have bestowed on me all the good things I possess; And still I do not know you. I have not yet done that for which I was made. Teach me to seek you; For I cannot seek you unless you teach me; Or find you unless you show yourself to me; Let me seek you in my desire; Let me desire you in my seeking; Let me find you by loving you; Let me love you when I find you.

— St. Anselm

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## December 7

### | Scripture

Psalm: Psalm 26

Old Testament: Isaiah 5:13-17, 24-25

New Testament: 1 Thessalonians 5:12-28 Gospel: Luke 21:29-38

### | Question

Spend 15 minutes in silence, surrendering yourself totally and unconditionally to the Lord, so that God's Word can take root in your heart. Journal about how God spoke to you during this time.

### | Prayer

Lord Jesus, let me know myself and know Thee, and desire nothing save only Thee. Let me hate myself and love Thee. Let me do everything for the sake of Thee. Let me humble myself and exalt Thee. Let me think nothing except Thee. Let me die to myself and live in Thee. Let me accept whatever happens as from Thee. Let me banish self and follow Thee, and ever desire to follow Thee.

— St. Augustine

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## December 8

### | Scripture

Psalm: Psalm 38

Old Testament: Isaiah 6:1-13

New Testament: 2 Thessalonians 1:1-12 Gospel: John 7:53-8:11

### | Question

Are your words and actions in agreement, or is there disharmony in your life? Are you the same person on Sunday afternoon as you are on Monday morning, or Saturday night?

### | Prayer

O Lord, we humbly beseech you to give us grace not only to be hearers of the Word, but also doers of the Word; not only to love, but also to live your gospel; not only to profess, but also to practice your blessed commandments, for the honor of your holy name.

— Thomas Becon

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## December 9

### | Scripture

Psalm: Psalm 37:1-18

Old Testament: Isaiah 7:1-9

New Testament: 2 Thessalonians 2:1-12 Gospel: Luke 22:1-13

### | Question

God calls us to intercede and pray for our leaders and earthly authorities. Which leaders do you believe God is calling you to pray for?

### | Prayer

O Almighty God, the Father of all humanity, turn, we pray, the hearts of all peoples and their rulers, that by the power of your Holy Spirit peace may be established among the nations on the foundation of justice, righteousness and truth; through him who was lifted up on the cross to draw all people to himself, your Son Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

— William Temple

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## December 10

### | Scripture

Psalm: Psalm 31

Old Testament: Isaiah 7:10-25

New Testament: 2 Thessalonians 2:13-3:5 Gospel: Luke 22:14-30

### | Question

God commands us to “fear not.” What fears about your future can you surrender to the Lord today?

### | Prayer

Fortify me with the grace of Your Holy Spirit and give Your peace to my soul that I may be free from all needless anxiety, solicitude and worry. Help me to desire always that which is pleasing and acceptable to You so that Your will may be my will.

— St. Francis Xavier Cabrini

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# December 11

**| Scripture**

Psalm: Psalm 30

Old Testament: Isaiah 8:1-15

New Testament: 2 Thessalonians 3:6-18 Gospel: Luke 22:31-38

**| Question**

Are you a good listener? Do you take time to listen carefully to others and to the voice of God?

**| Prayer**

Lord, make me an instrument of your peace. Where there is hatred, let me sow love,  
Where there is injury, pardon  
Where there is doubt, faith,  
Where there is despair, hope,  
Where there is darkness, light,  
Where there is sadness, joy.

O Divine Master, grant that I may not so much seek to be consoled as to console, not so much to be understood as to understand, not so much to be loved, as to love; for it is in giving that we receive, it is in pardoning that we are pardoned, it is in dying that we awake to eternal life.

— St. Francis Of Assisi

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# JOY WEEK.03

## December 12

### | Scripture

Psalm: Psalm 63:1-8

Old Testament: Isaiah 13:6-13

New Testament: Hebrews 12:18-29 Gospel: John 3:22-30

### | Question

What is most often the thief of joy in your life?

### | Prayer

O justice and innocence, fair and lovely, it is on you that I want to gaze with eyes that see purely and find satiety in never being sated. With you is rest and tranquil life. Whoever enters into you enters the joy of his Lord; there he will fear nothing and find his own supreme good in God who is supreme goodness. I slid away from you and wandered away, my God; far from your steadfastness I strayed in adolescence, and I became to myself a land of famine.

— St. Augustine

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## December 13

### | Scripture

Psalm: Psalm 41

Old Testament: Isaiah 8:16-9:1

New Testament: 2 Peter 1:1-11 Gospel: Luke 22:39-53

### | Question

What is Christ calling you to die to? How has suffering produced deep joy and renewal in your life?

### | Prayer

Give me to die with thee that I may rise to new life, for I wish to be as dead and buried to sin, to selfishness, to the world; that I might not hear the voice of the charmer, and might be delivered from his lusts. O Lord, there is much ill about me—crucify it, much flesh within me—mortify it.

— Puritan prayer

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## December 14

### | Scripture

Psalm: Psalm 45

Old Testament: Isaiah 9:1-7

New Testament: 2 Peter 1:12-21 Gospel: Luke 22:54-69

### | Question

What characteristic of God astounds you?

### | Prayer

Almighty God, who through the death of your Son has destroyed sin and death, and by his resurrection has restored innocence and everlasting life, that we may be delivered from the dominion of the devil, and our mortal bodies raised up from the dead: Grant that we may confidently and wholeheartedly believe this, and finally, with your saints share in the joyful resurrection of the just; through the same Jesus Christ, your Son, our Lord.

— Martin Luther

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## December 15

### | Scripture

Psalm: Psalm 119:49-72

Old Testament: Isaiah 9:8-17

New Testament: 2 Peter 2:1-10a Gospel: Mark 1:1-8

### | Question

When was a prayer of yours answered? What was it?

### | Prayer

Give us grace, almighty Father, to address you with all our hearts as well as with our lips. You are present everywhere: from you no secrets can be hidden. Teach us to fix our thoughts on you, reverently and with love, so that our prayers are not in vain, but are acceptable to you, now and always, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

— Jane Austen

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# December 16

**| Scripture**

Psalm: Psalm 50  
Old Testament: Isaiah 9:18-10:4  
New Testament: 2 Peter 2:10b-16 Gospel: Matthew 3:1-12

**| Question**

Do you make comparisons with others on a spiritual level? Why or why not?

**| Prayer**

See, O merciful God, what return I, your thankless servant, have made for the innumerable favors and the wonderful love you have shown me! What wrongs I have done, what good left undone! Wash away, I beg you, these faults and stains with your precious blood, most kind Redeemer, and make up for my poverty by applying your merits. Give me the protection I need to amend my life. I give and surrender myself wholly to you, and offer you all I possess, with the prayer that you bestow your grace on me, so that I may be able to devote and employ all the thinking power of my mind and the strength of my body in your holy service, who are God blessed for ever and ever. Amen. — St. Peter Canisius

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# December 17

**| Scripture**

Psalm: Psalm 40  
Old Testament: Isaiah 10:5-19  
New Testament: 2 Peter 2:17-22 Gospel: Matthew 11:2-15

**| Question**

Are your eyes open to the burdens borne by others? In what ways can you share in God's restorative work in the OneLife community?

**| Prayer**

Merciful and most loving God, by whose will and bountiful gift Jesus Christ our Lord, humbled himself that he might exalt humankind; and became flesh that he might restore in us the most celestial image; and was born of the Virgin that he might uplift the lowly; grant us the inheritance of the meek, perfect in us your

likeness, and bring us at last to rejoice in beholding your beauty, and with all your saints to give glory to your grace, through the same Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen. — Gallican Sacramentary

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## December 18

### | Scripture

Psalm: Psalm 55

Old Testament: Isaiah 10:20-27

New Testament: Jude 17-25 Gospel: Luke 3:1-9

### | Question

For what are you most thankful to God?

### | Prayer

O Lord, renew our spirits and draw our hearts to yourself, that our work may not be to us a burden but a delight. Let us not serve you with the spirit of bondage like slaves, but with freedom and gladness, delighting in you and rejoicing in your work, for Jesus Christ's sake.

— Benjamin Jenks

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# LOVE WEEK.04

## December 19

### | Scripture

Psalm: Psalm 24

Old Testament: Isaiah 42:1-12

New Testament: Ephesians 6:10-20 Gospel: John 3:16-21

### | Question

Do you feel a part of the OneLife community? Why or why not? What strength or asset could you offer to our church community?

### | Prayer

You are holy, Lord, the only God, and your deeds are wonderful. You are strong. You are great. You are the most high. You are almighty. You, holy Father are the King of heaven and earth. You are three in one, Lord God, all Good. You are Good, all Good, supreme Good, Lord God living and true. You are love. You are wisdom. You are humility. You are endurance. You are rest. You are peace. You are joy and gladness. You are justice and moderation. You are all our riches, and you suffice for us. You are beauty. You are gentleness. You are our protector. You are our guardian and defender. You are our coverage. You are our haven and our hope. You are our faith, our great consolation. You are our eternal life, great and wonderful Lord, God almighty, merciful Savior. — St. Francis of Assisi

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## December 20

### | Scripture

Psalm: Psalm 66

Old Testament: Isaiah 11:10-16

New Testament: Revelation 20:11-21:8 Gospel: Luke 1:5-25

### | Question

Who are you trying to change? What would it look like if you loved them instead?

**| Prayer**

O Lord, who hast taught us that all our doings without love are nothing worth; send thy Holy Ghost, & pour into our hearts, that most excellent gift of love, the very bond of peace & all virtues, without which whosoever lives is counted dead before thee; grant us this for thy Son Jesus Christ's sake. — Thomas Cranmer

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## December 21

**| Scripture**

Psalm: Psalm 61

Old Testament: Isaiah 11:1-9

New Testament: Revelation 20:1-10 Gospel: John 5:30-47

**| Question**

We often “love” God when it’s convenient or when we need him, but what would it look like to love Him in your current circumstance?

**| Prayer**

Dear Jesus, help us to spread your fragrance everywhere we go. Flood our souls with your spirit and life. Penetrate and possess our whole being so utterly, that our lives may only be a radiance of yours. Shine through us, and be so in us, that every person we should come in contact with may feel your presence in our soul. Let them look up and see no longer us, but only Jesus. Stay with us, and then we shall begin to shine as you shine; so to shine as to be a light to others; the light, Jesus, will be all from you. None of it will be ours. It will be you shining on others through us. Let us thus praise you in the way you love best, by shining on those around us. Let us preach you without preaching: not by words, but by our example, by the catching force, the sympathetic influence of what we do, the evident fullness of the love our hearts bear for you. Amen. — Mother Teresa

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## December 22

**| Scripture**

Psalm: Psalm 72

Old Testament: Isaiah 28:9-22

New Testament: Revelation 21:9-21 Gospel: Luke 1:26-38

**| Question**

In what tangible way has God demonstrated his love for you?

**| Prayer**

Write your blessed name, O Lord, upon my heart, there to remain so indelibly engraved, that no prosperity, no adversity shall ever move me from your love. Be to me a strong tower of defense, a comforter in tribulation, a deliverer in distress, a very present help in trouble and a guide to heaven through the many temptations and dangers of this life.

— Thomas A Kempis

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## December 23

**| Scripture**

Psalm: Psalm 80

Old Testament: Isaiah 29:13-24

New Testament: Revelation 21:22-22:5 Gospel: Luke 1:39-48a(48b-56)

**| Question**

Who in your life keeps you accountable? Do you allow friends to speak difficult truth to you? If not, to whom can you make yourself accountable?

**| Prayer**

Almighty God, Father of all mercies, we thine unworthy servants do give thee most humble and hearty thanks for all thy goodness and loving-kindness to us, and to all men; We bless thee for our creation, preservation, and all the blessings of this life; but above all, for thine inestimable love in the redemption of the world by our Lord Jesus Christ; for the means of grace, and for the hope of glory. And, we beseech thee, give us that due sense of all thy mercies, that our hearts may be unfeignedly thankful, and that we shew forth thy praise, not only with our lips, but in our lives; by giving up ourselves to thy service, and by walking before thee in holiness and righteousness all our days; through Jesus Christ our Lord, to whom with thee and the Holy Ghost be all honor and glory, world without end. Amen. — Edward Reynolds

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## December 24

**| Scripture**

Psalm: Psalm 89:1-29

Old Testament: Isaiah 50:15b-21

New Testament: Philippians 2:5-11

**| Question**

Christ has freed us from the power of sin, giving us the grace to overcome. What changes can you make to boldly enact the renewal that Christ has brought?

**| Prayer**

Our Father, you called us and saved us in order to make us like your Son, our Lord Jesus Christ. Day by day, change us by the work of your Holy Spirit so that we may grow more like him in all that we think and say and do, to his glory. — Soren Kierkegaard

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## December 25

**| Scripture**

Psalm: Psalm 2

Old Testament: Zechariah 2:10-13

New Testament: 1 John 4:7-16 Gospel: John 3:31-36

**| Question**

Christ has freed us from the power of sin, giving us the grace to overcome. What changes can you make to boldly enact the renewal that Christ has brought?

**| Prayer**

Dear Jesus, help us to spread your fragrance everywhere we go. Flood our souls with your spirit and life. Penetrate and possess our whole being so utterly, that our lives may only be a radiance of yours. Shine through us, and be so in us, that every person we should come in contact with may feel your presence in our soul. Let them look up and see no longer us, but only Jesus. Stay with us, and then we shall begin to shine as you shine; so to shine as to be a light to others; the light, Jesus, will be all from you. None of it will be ours. It will be you shining on others through us. Let us thus praise you in the way you love best, by shining on those around us. Let us preach you without preaching: not by words, but by our example, by the catching force, the sympathetic influence of what we do, the evident fullness of the love our hearts bear for you. Amen. — Mother Teresa

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