

FOR THE BEGINNING

ADVENT REMINDERS FOR NEW SEASONS

ADVENT 2024 DEVOTIONALS

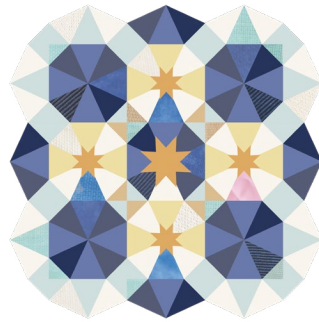
EAST END UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

**1212 HOLLY ST.
NASHVILLE, TN 37206**

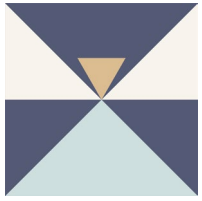
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East End United Methodist Church | Advent 2024 | Devotionals

DAY 1	Begin
DAY 2	Bless
DAY 3	Courage
DAY 4	Possibility
DAY 5	Remember
DAY 6	Marvel
DAY 7	Go
DAY 8	Together
DAY 9	Embrace
DAY 10	Journey
DAY 11	Peacemaker
DAY 12	Connection
DAY 13	Enough
DAY 14	Goodness
DAY 15	Worthy
DAY 16	Repair
DAY 17	Magnify
DAY 18	Mercy
DAY 19	Dream
DAY 20	Hope
DAY 21	Risk
DAY 22	Grace
DAY 23	Joy
DAY 24	Love
DAY 25	Amazement



Each day of Advent, you are invited to meditate on a different “word for the beginning.” Start by reading the word of the day. Next, find a comfortable posture for meditation and spend several minutes breathing in and out as you ponder the word. As you are ready, read the scripture for the day. Finally, reflect upon the questions that follow today’s scripture reading and close your time with prayer.



WORD FOR THE FIRST DAY OF ADVENT

BEGIN

SCRIPTURE LESSON

JOHN 1:1-5

In the beginning was the Word
and the Word was with God
and the Word was God.

The Word was with God in the beginning.
Everything came into being through the Word,
and without the Word
nothing came into being.

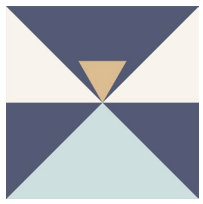
What came into being
through the Word was life,
and the life was the light for all people.

The light shines in the darkness,
and the darkness doesn't extinguish the light.

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

1. As we begin the Advent season, what feelings do you bring with you this season?
2. How can you make space for God's love to begin shaping your life this season?
3. What is ending in this season of your life and what is beginning?

CLOSE WITH PRAYER



WORD FOR THE SECOND DAY OF ADVENT

Bless

SCRIPTURE LESSON

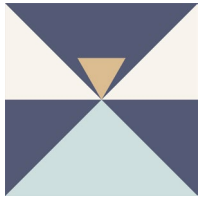
LUKE 1:39-42

Mary got up and hurried to a city in the Judean highlands. She entered Zechariah's home and greeted Elizabeth. When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the child leaped in her womb, and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit. With a loud voice she blurted out, "God has blessed you above all women, and he has blessed the child you carry."

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

1. How do you sense the blessing of God's love in your life today?
2. When Mary, Mother of Jesus, went to visit her cousin Elizabeth, the Mother of John the Baptist, there was a mutual blessing. Elizabeth was blessed by the visit from her cousin, someone who could understand her unique situation and vice versa. Each reminded the other of their blessedness in the eyes of God. Who can you bless with your presence today? Whose blessing do you need to be open to today?

CLOSE WITH PRAYER



WORD FOR THE THIRD DAY OF ADVENT

COURAGE

SCRIPTURE LESSON

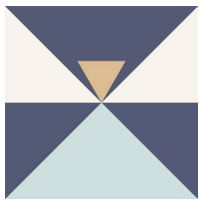
LUKE 1:30-33

The angel said, “Don’t be afraid, Mary. God is honoring you. Look! You will conceive and give birth to a son, and you will name him Jesus. He will be great and he will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of David his father. He will rule over Jacob’s house forever, and there will be no end to his kingdom.”

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

1. Where do you need courage in your life today?
2. How might God be inviting you to step into something new that might require bravery and trust on your part?
3. Who do you know that might need encouragement today and how might you provide it?

CLOSE WITH PRAYER



WORD FOR THE FOURTH DAY OF ADVENT

POSSIBILITY

SCRIPTURE LESSON

LUKE 1:31, 34-37

Look! You will conceive and give birth to a son, and you will name him Jesus.

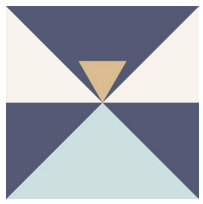
Then Mary said to the angel, “How will this happen since I haven’t had sexual relations with a man?”

The angel replied, “The Holy Spirit will come over you and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. Therefore, the one who is to be born will be holy. He will be called God’s Son. Look, even in her old age, your relative Elizabeth has conceived a son. This woman who was labeled ‘unable to conceive’ is now six months pregnant. Nothing is impossible for God.”

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

1. What seems impossible to you today? How might God help you see possibility even in this moment?
2. How might you provide a sense of possibility for someone else today? Who needs to know the hope of possibility?

CLOSE WITH PRAYER



WORD FOR THE FIFTH DAY OF ADVENT

REMEMBER

SCRIPTURE LESSON

MATTHEW 1:16-17

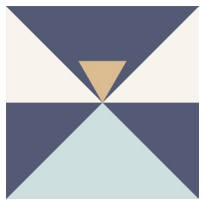
Jacob was the father of Joseph, the husband of Mary—of whom Jesus was born, who is called the Christ.

So there were fourteen generations from Abraham to David, fourteen generations from David to the exile to Babylon, and fourteen generations from the exile to Babylon to the Christ.

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

1. Think back to Advents and Christmases past...what are some of your favorite memories?
2. As you think back, who are the family or friends or loved ones who were present? Who was missing or not present? Remember where you come from and who has shaped you.
3. How do you remember God's presence in those moments?

CLOSE WITH PRAYER



WORD FOR THE SIXTH DAY OF ADVENT

MARVEL

SCRIPTURE LESSON

LUKE 1:46-49

Mary said,

“With all my heart I glorify the Lord!

In the depths of who I am I rejoice in God my savior.

He has looked with favor on the low status of his servant.

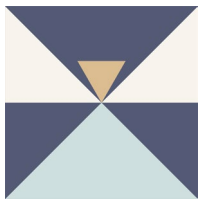
Look! From now on, everyone will consider me highly favored
because the mighty one has done great things for me.

Holy is his name.

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

1. When have you been truly amazed in your life?
2. What about your existence causes you to marvel?
3. How can you give thanks and glory today for the marvelous works of God?

CLOSE WITH PRAYER



WORD FOR THE SEVENTH DAY OF ADVENT



SCRIPTURE LESSON

LUKE 2:1-5

In those days Caesar Augustus declared that everyone throughout the empire should be enrolled in the tax lists. This first enrollment occurred when Quirinius governed Syria. Everyone went to their own cities to be enrolled. Since Joseph belonged to David's house and family line, he went up from the city of Nazareth in Galilee to David's city, called Bethlehem, in Judea. He went to be enrolled together with Mary, who was promised to him in marriage and who was pregnant.

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

1. Have you ever been called to go somewhere or some direction unexpectedly?
Remember that time. How did it shape your life?
2. Where is God calling you to go at this moment in your life?
3. How do you sense God going with you each and every day?

CLOSE WITH PRAYER



WORD FOR THE EIGHTH DAY OF ADVENT

TOGETHER

SCRIPTURE LESSON

LUKE 2:5-6

[Joseph] went to [Jerusalem to] be enrolled together with Mary, who was promised to him in marriage and who was pregnant. While they were there, the time came for Mary to have her baby.

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

1. Who are your companions on the journey of life? Say a prayer of thanks for them.
2. Who do you know that needs accompaniment or companionship? How might God be calling you to be there for them?
3. How does God join us when we are in caring and grace-filled relationship together with other persons?

CLOSE WITH PRAYER



WORD FOR THE NINTH DAY OF ADVENT

EMBRACE

SCRIPTURE LESSON

LUKE 2:7

She gave birth to her firstborn child, a son, wrapped him snugly, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the guestroom.

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

1. Remember a time when you were embraced, either physically or emotionally. Who offered the embrace? What did you feel and experience?
2. How does it shape your understanding of God to know that Jesus himself was once a helpless, baby boy in need of a mother's caring embrace?
3. How is God embracing you today? How are you embracing God? How are you embracing your neighbor? How are you embracing your enemy?

CLOSE WITH PRAYER



WORD FOR THE TENTH DAY OF ADVENT

JOURNEY

SCRIPTURE LESSON

LUKE 2:15-17

When the angels returned to heaven, the shepherds said to each other, “Let’s go right now to Bethlehem and see what’s happened. Let’s confirm what the Lord has revealed to us.” They went quickly and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby lying in the manger. When they saw this, they reported what they had been told about this child.

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

1. The shepherds journeyed to Jerusalem looking for Jesus. How have you journeyed in your life looking for the God known in Jesus Christ?
2. How has your journey of faith been uplifting? How has your journey of faith been challenging?
3. Where might your journey to find God be taking you next?

CLOSE WITH PRAYER



WORD FOR THE ELEVENTH DAY OF ADVENT

PEACEMAKER

SCRIPTURE LESSON

ISAIAH 9:6

A child is born to us, a son is given to us,
and authority will be on his shoulders.
He will be named
Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God,
Eternal Father, Prince of Peace.

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

1. Do you feel at peace today? If so, what is bringing you peace? If not, what is disturbing your peace?
2. How did Jesus demonstrate peacemaking?
3. How might God be calling you to be a peacemaker?

CLOSE WITH PRAYER



WORD FOR THE TWELFTH DAY OF ADVENT

CONNECTION

SCRIPTURE LESSON

LUKE 1:57-58

When the time came for Elizabeth to have her child, she gave birth to a boy. Her neighbors and relatives celebrated with her because they had heard that the Lord had shown her great mercy.

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

1. Elizabeth was surrounded by neighbors and family when she gave birth to John. Who are the people who surround you in times of joy or times of need?
2. Who do you know that might need a new point of connection? How might you provide that for them?
3. How do you sense your connectedness to God? What might you do to strengthen that sense of connection?

CLOSE WITH PRAYER



WORD FOR THE THIRTEENTH DAY OF ADVENT

ENOUGH

SCRIPTURE LESSON

LUKE 1:38

Then Mary said, “I am the Lord’s servant. Let it be with me just as you have said.” Then the angel left her.

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

1. Mary’s “yes” to God was enough to change the whole world. What might God be inviting you to say “yes” to?
2. What helps you remember you are enough for God and God’s purposes, just as you are?
3. How might you help others remember that they are enough in God’s eyes? How might you remind others of their belovedness?

CLOSE WITH PRAYER



WORD FOR THE FOURTEENTH DAY OF ADVENT

GOODNESS

SCRIPTURE LESSON

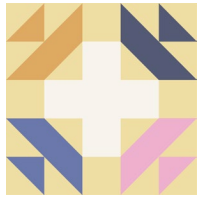
MATTHEW 1:19-21

Joseph her husband was a righteous man. Because he didn't want to humiliate her, he decided to call off their engagement quietly. As he was thinking about this, an angel from the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, "Joseph son of David, don't be afraid to take Mary as your wife, because the child she carries was conceived by the Holy Spirit. She will give birth to a son, and you will call him Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins."

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

1. How did Joseph's goodness create a loving environment for the work of God's Holy Spirit?
2. How can our own acts of goodness demonstrate God's love to the world?
3. What good are you being called to put into the world?
4. Where do you see God's goodness today?

CLOSE WITH PRAYER



WORD FOR THE FIFTEENTH DAY OF ADVENT

WORTHY

SCRIPTURE LESSON

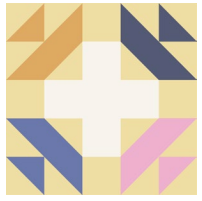
LUKE 1:49B-50

Holy is his name. He shows mercy to everyone, from one generation to the next, who honors him as God.

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

1. Mary declares that God “shows mercy to everyone.” How has God shown you mercy?
2. How can you show others that God finds them worthy of love?
3. What is God doing in the world that reminds you God is worthy to be praised?

CLOSE WITH PRAYER



WORD FOR THE SIXTEENTH DAY OF ADVENT

REPAIR

SCRIPTURE LESSON

LUKE 1:51-55

He has shown strength with his arm.

He has scattered those with arrogant thoughts and proud inclinations.

He has pulled the powerful down from their thrones
and lifted up the lowly.

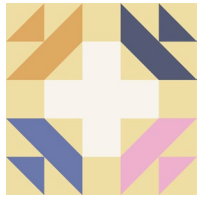
He has filled the hungry with good things
and sent the rich away empty-handed.

He has come to the aid of his servant Israel,
remembering his mercy,
just as he promised to our ancestors,
to Abraham and to Abraham's descendants forever."

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

1. Mary sings of God's care for those on the margins. Who needs God's care in our world today?
2. How is God calling you to be a part of the reparation of the world around you?
3. What situation or circumstance in your life needs to experience God's repairing grace and love?

CLOSE WITH PRAYER



WORD FOR THE SEVENTEENTH DAY OF ADVENT

MAGNIFY

SCRIPTURE LESSON

ISAIAH 9:2-4

The people walking in darkness have seen a great light.

On those living in a pitch-dark land, light has dawned.

You have made the nation great;
you have increased its joy.

They rejoiced before you as with joy at the harvest,
as those who divide plunder rejoice.

As on the day of Midian, you've shattered the yoke that burdened them,
the staff on their shoulders,
and the rod of their oppressor.

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

1. As Mary's song magnified the Lord, she followed other prophets like Isaiah who envisioned God's love being magnified and increasing. How do you see God's love being magnified today?
2. Where does God's love still need magnification in order to break the rods of oppressors?
3. How can you magnify God's love for those who need to see God's great light?

CLOSE WITH PRAYER



WORD FOR THE EIGHTEENTH DAY OF ADVENT

MERCY

SCRIPTURE LESSON

LUKE 1:68-73

Bless the Lord God of Israel

because he has come to help and has delivered his people.

He has raised up a mighty savior for us in his servant David's house,
just as he said through the mouths of his holy prophets long ago.

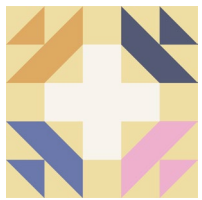
He has brought salvation from our enemies
and from the power of all those who hate us.

He has shown the mercy promised to our ancestors,
and remembered his holy covenant,
the solemn pledge he made to our ancestor Abraham.

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

1. Zechariah, the father of John the Baptist, sees God's mercy at work across generations. How have you known God's compassionate mercy in your own life? How has mercy been present through the generations in your own family of origin?
2. How do you see God's mercy at work in the world today? How is this connected to the past and to the future?
3. How might you demonstrate God's mercy to others?

CLOSE WITH PRAYER



WORD FOR THE NINETEENTH DAY OF ADVENT

DREAM

SCRIPTURE LESSON

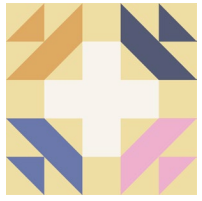
MATTHEW 1:18-20

When Mary his mother was engaged to Joseph, before they were married, she became pregnant by the Holy Spirit. Joseph her husband was a righteous man. Because he didn't want to humiliate her, he decided to call off their engagement quietly. As he was thinking about this, an angel from the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, "Joseph son of David, don't be afraid to take Mary as your wife, because the child she carries was conceived by the Holy Spirit."

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

1. The message of God for Joseph and his purpose came in a dream. Have you ever had a dream that gave you insight or clarity?
2. What dreams have you had for your life? Have they materialized as you expected? If so, how? If not, how? What have you learned from these realized and unrealized dreams?
3. What do you sense that God might be dreaming for you next?
4. What do you think are God's dreams for the world?

CLOSE WITH PRAYER



WORD FOR THE TWENTIETH DAY OF ADVENT

HOPE

SCRIPTURE LESSON

LUKE 2:10-12

The angel said, “Don’t be afraid! Look! I bring good news to you—wonderful, joyous news for all people. Your savior is born today in David’s city. He is Christ the Lord. This is a sign for you: you will find a newborn baby wrapped snugly and lying in a manger.”

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

1. Hope for the salvation of the entire world came in the form of a gentle little baby. What does this tell you about the nature of hope?
2. Where do you find hope in your life today?
3. Where do you see signs of God’s hope in the world?

CLOSE WITH PRAYER



WORD FOR THE TWENTY-FIRST DAY OF ADVENT

RISK

SCRIPTURE LESSON

MATTHEW 2:1-4

After Jesus was born in Bethlehem in the territory of Judea during the rule of King Herod, magi came from the east to Jerusalem. They asked, “Where is the newborn king of the Jews? We’ve seen his star in the east, and we’ve come to honor him.”

When King Herod heard this, he was troubled, and everyone in Jerusalem was troubled with him. He gathered all the chief priests and the legal experts and asked them where the Christ was to be born.

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

1. Jesus’ birth, announced as the arrival of a heavenly king, threatened the kingdoms of power in this world, putting them at risk. This in turn put Jesus and his family’s lives at risk. Why do you think claiming Jesus as the one who reigns over of this world is risky business?
2. How have you stepped out in risky ways to claim the love of the God known in Jesus Christ?
3. What risks might God be inviting you to take to share God’s love with the world in the coming year?

CLOSE WITH PRAYER



WORD FOR THE TWENTY-SECOND DAY OF ADVENT

GRACE

SCRIPTURE LESSON

ISAIAH 40:10-11

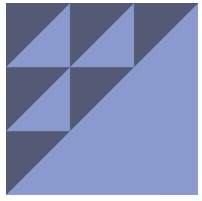
Here is the Lord God,
coming with strength,
with a triumphant arm,
bringing his reward with him
and his payment before him.

Like a shepherd, God will tend the flock;
he will gather lambs in his arms
and lift them onto his lap.
He will gently guide the nursing ewes.

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

1. In Jesus, we see what God's reigning power really looks like. It is mercy, forgiveness, and grace. How have you known God's grace in your life?
2. How can you share grace with others?
3. What would the world look like if it were truly ruled by God's grace? Imagine it, and pray for such a day.

CLOSE WITH PRAYER



WORD FOR THE TWENTY-THIRD DAY OF ADVENT

JOY

SCRIPTURE LESSON

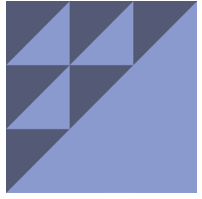
MATTHEW 2:7-10

Then Herod secretly called for the magi and found out from them the time when the star had first appeared. He sent them to Bethlehem, saying, “Go and search carefully for the child. When you’ve found him, report to me so that I too may go and honor him.” When they heard the king, they went; and look, the star they had seen in the east went ahead of them until it stood over the place where the child was. When they saw the star, they were filled with joy.

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

1. What is filling you with joy today?
2. How can you cultivate a sense of joy in the days ahead?
3. How might God be calling you to share joy with others?

CLOSE WITH PRAYER



WORD FOR THE TWENTY-FOURTH DAY OF ADVENT

LOVE

SCRIPTURE LESSON

MATTHEW 1:23

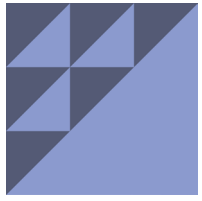
*Look! A virgin will become pregnant and give birth to a son,
And they will call him, Emmanuel.*

(Emmanuel means “God with us.”)

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

1. The promise of Christmas is that God loves us so much that God came to live among us. How do you sense God with you (and all of us) today?
2. How's does God's presence enable you to love others better?
3. Who needs to know God's love right now? How do you plan to share it with them?

CLOSE WITH PRAYER



WORD FOR THE TWENTY-FIFTH DAY OF ADVENT

AMAZEMENT

SCRIPTURE LESSON

LUKE 2:18-20

Everyone who heard it was amazed at what the shepherds told them. Mary committed these things to memory and considered them carefully. The shepherds returned home, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen. Everything happened just as they had been told.

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

1. People throughout the generations have been amazed at the arrival of Jesus. What continues to amaze you about the story of our Savior's birth?
2. In what ways are you being amazed by God's love on this Christmas Day?
3. How will you welcome others into your sense of godly amazement during these twelve days of Christmas?

CLOSE WITH PRAYER

