

JESUS THE ANOINTED



LUKE 4:12-21 (NIV)

Jesus returned to Galilee in the power of the Spirit, and news about him spread through the whole countryside. He was teaching in their synagogues, and everyone praised him.

He went to Nazareth, where he had been brought up, and on the Sabbath day he went into the synagogue, as was his custom. He stood up to read, and the scroll of the prophet Isaiah was handed to him. Unrolling it, he found the place where it is written:

“The Spirit of the Lord is on me,

because he has anointed me

to proclaim good news to the poor.

He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners

and recovery of sight for the blind,

to set the oppressed free,

to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favor.”

Then he rolled up the scroll, gave it back to the attendant and sat down. The eyes of everyone in the synagogue were fastened on him. He began by saying to them, “Today this scripture is fulfilled in your hearing.”

WAREHOUSE 242 ADVENT DEVOTIONAL 2023

In the simplest of ways, Advent means “arrival” in Latin. The Advent season is marked by the four Sundays leading up to Jesus’ arrival on Christmas Day. Advent is actually the beginning of the church calendar year and it represents the years of yearning for a Messiah before Jesus’ birth. The church calendar begins in the darkness and the longing of a world waiting for life to be birthed. With this season comes an invitation for us to reorient our own lives. We don’t have to wait for the fanfare of the New Year. We can begin with a pregnant pause, waiting with hopeful anticipation.

During Advent, we are invited to practice hospitality and to make room. We do this within ourselves, our homes, our neighborhoods, and in the world. We believe that the advent of Jesus is something that has happened, is happening, and will happen again. In Advent, we enter into the story of God’s redemption. We have the chance to feel the need for a Savior as we wait to celebrate the birth of Emmanuel (God with us), as we long for Him to come again to make all things new, and in our desire to experience God in the everyday moments of our lives.

This invitation is not for us alone, but for us as a community, to wait, watch, and prepare together. During the Advent season, our Sunday morning worship will focus on *Jesus the Anointed One*, the one who came to fulfill scripture and proclaim good news to the poor, freedom for the prisoners, recovery of sight for the blind, to set the captives free, and to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favor (Luke 4).

The liturgies provided here are the prayers and scriptures we will use during our worship services. We invite you to return to these prayers and the prompts that follow throughout your week—perhaps that will be around your dinner table, by the quiet of the Christmas tree lights, or in a brief pause midday.

Let us say together, “O Come, O Come Emmanuel. May Jesus come in our lives, in our neighborhoods, in the nation, and in the nations.”

ADVENT LITURGY WEEK 1: HOPE

At last, our Savior's near
Let all who hear make way
And may these hearts
Prepare a place

Lord, help us to prepare our hearts for Christmas.
Our hope is in Jesus.

Jesus we long for you to shine
In our world and in our lives.

We are your people seeking the light.
To you we say "Come Lord Jesus"

Psalm 130 (NIV)

Out of the depths I cry to you, LORD;
Lord, hear my voice.

Let your ears be attentive
to my cry for mercy.

If you, LORD, kept a record of sins,
Lord, who could stand?

But with you there is forgiveness,
so that we can, with reverence, serve you.

I wait for the LORD, my whole being waits,
and in his word I put my hope.

I wait for the Lord
more than watchmen wait for the morning,
more than watchmen wait for the morning.

May Jesus our King bring hope
into the darkness of our world,
and to us, as we wait for his coming.
Amen

(These liturgies may be read as a call and response prayer)

PREPARING A PLACE IN OUR LIVES

REFLECT

How am I feeling as this season begins?

Is there something I am longing for or grieving?

Is there something I need to release or let go of in order to make room in my heart, home, or life?

Is there a fruit of the Spirit (love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, gentleness, faithfulness, self-control) that you want more of in this season?

PRACTICE

Spend a few minutes in silence.

Have a conversation with God about the things you have reflected on.

A PRAYER FOR CHRISTMAS PREPARATIONS

Lord Jesus,

Master of both the light and the darkness,

Send your Holy Spirit upon our preparations for Christmas.

We who have so much to do seek quiet spaces to hear

Your voice each day.

We who are anxious over many things look forward to

Your coming among us.

We who are blessed in so many ways long for the complete

Joy of Your kingdom

We whose hearts are heavy seek the joy of Your presence.

We are your people, walking in darkness, yet seeking the light.

To you we say, 'Come Lord Jesus!'

Amen

Written by Joel Mason

From *Celtic Daily Prayer Book Two*

ADVENT LITURGY WEEK 2: PEACE

At last, our Savior's near
Let all who hear make way
And may these hearts
Prepare a place

Lord, help us to prepare our hearts for Christmas.
Our hope is in Jesus.

Jesus we long for you to shine
In our world and in our lives.

We are your people seeking the light.
To you we say "Come Lord Jesus"

Lamentations 3:22-26 (The Voice)

22 How enduring is God's loyal love;
the Eternal has inexhaustible compassion.

23 Here they are, every morning, new!
Your faithfulness, God, is as broad as the day.

24 Have courage, for the Eternal is all that I will need.
My soul boasts, "Hope in God; just wait."

25 It is good. The Eternal One is good to those who expect Him,
to those who seek Him wholeheartedly.

26 It is good to wait quietly
for the Eternal to make things right again.

May Jesus our King bring hope and peace
into the darkness of our world,
and to us, as we wait for his coming. Amen

PREPARING A PLACE IN OUR NEIGHBORHOODS

REFLECT

How am I feeling as I move through this season?

Is there something I am longing for or grieving for my neighbors?

Our God is a God who moves toward people. How can I move toward people?

PRACTICE // PRAYER WALK

Spend time walking a portion of the city listening and talking to God.

ENGAGE

Join Warehouse 242's workday for Habitat for Humanity as a way to serve our neighbors.

More information here: <https://warehouse242.org/ways-to-connect/events/>

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING (for Before or After a Meal)

Lord God, Creator of All, in your wisdom, you have bound us together so that we must depend on others for the food we eat, the resources we use, the gifts of your creation that bring life, health and joy.

Creator God, we give thanks.

Holy be the hands that sew our clothes so that we do not have to go naked; sacred be the hands that build our homes so that we do not have to be cold; blessed be the hands that work the land so that we do not have to go hungry.

Creator God, we give thanks.

Holy be the feet of all who labor so that we might have rest, sacred be the feet of all who run swiftly to stand with the oppressed, blessed be the feet of all whose bodies are too broken or weary to stand.

Creator God, we give thanks.

Holy be the sound of children laughing to take away our sorrow, sacred be the sound of water falling to take away our thirst, blessed be the sound of your people singing to heal our troubled hearts.

Creator God, we give thanks.

Holy be the bodies of those who know hunger, sacred be the bodies of those who are broken. blessed be the bodies of those who suffer. In your mercy and grace, soften our callous hearts and fill us with gratitude for all the gifts you have given us.

In your love, break down the walls that separate us and guide us along your path of peace, that we might humbly worship you in Spirit and Truth. Amen.

From Common Prayer: A Liturgy for Ordinary Radicals

ADVENT LITURGY WEEK 3: JOY

At last, our Savior's near
Let all who hear make way
And may these hearts
Prepare a place

Lord, help us to prepare our hearts for Christmas.
Our hope is in Jesus.

Jesus we long for you to shine
In our world and in our lives.

We are your people seeking the light.
To you we say "Come Lord Jesus"

Romans 8:18-25 (The Voice)

Now I'm sure of this: the sufferings we endure now are not even worth comparing to the glory that is coming and will be revealed in us. 19 For all of creation is waiting, yearning for the time when the children of God will be revealed. 20 You see, all of creation has collapsed into emptiness, not by its own choosing, but by God's. Still He placed within it a deep and abiding hope 21 that creation would one day be liberated from its slavery to corruption and experience the glorious freedom of the children of God. 22 For we know that all creation groans in unison with birthing pains up until now. 23 And there is more; it's not just creation—all of us are groaning together too. Though we have already tasted the firstfruits of the Spirit, we are longing for the total redemption of our bodies that comes when our adoption as children of God is complete— 24 for we have been saved in this hope and for this future. But hope does not involve what we already have or see. For who goes around hoping for what he already has? 25 But if we wait expectantly for things we have never seen, then we hope with true perseverance and eager anticipation.

**May Jesus our King bring hope, peace, and joy
into the darkness of our world,
and to us, as we wait for his coming.
Amen**

PREPARING A PLACE IN THE NATION

REFLECT

How am I feeling as I move through this season?
Is there something I am longing for or grieving for the nation?
How can you help proclaim *Joy to the World*?

PRACTICE // CHRISTMAS LIGHT WALK

Take a walk or drive to look at the Christmas lights. Notice how the darkness does not overcome the light. What are ways we can look for light in our world?

ENGAGE

Sunday, December 17th during the service we will have a chance to hear about Rise Against Hunger and ways Warehouse will engage with this ministry in the new year. Learn more about this ministry here: <https://www.riseagainsthunger.org/>

PRAYER

Oh God, as if it couldn't be possible,
these are still darkening days. for our struggling earth,
for our countries and their leaders, our friends and families, and for ourselves.

Blessed are we with eyes open to see the world as it really is, who say:
Where are you God? and where are your people? the smart and sensible ones who fight for
good and have the power to make it stick?

Oh God, help us in our fear and confusion, amid so much uncertainty.
Shine your light upon us.

God have mercy.
Christ have mercy.
Spirit have mercy.

“The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world.” —John 1:9

Though now it is a place of hidden hope, we know that You are the anchor dropped into the
future—our future.
Come, Lord Jesus.
Shine on our darkness and show us the way.
Amen.

Written by Kate Bowler

ADVENT LITURGY WEEK 4: LOVE

At last, our Savior's near
Let all who hear make way
And may these hearts
Prepare a place

Lord, help us to prepare our hearts for Christmas.
Our hope is in Jesus.

Jesus we long for you to shine
In our world and in our lives.

We are your people seeking the light.
To you we say "Come Lord Jesus"

Isaiah 9:2 and 6

The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light;
those who lived in a land of darkness – on them light has shined.
For a child has been born for us, a son given to us;
authority rests upon his shoulders;
and he is named Wonderful Counselor,
Mighty God, Everlasting Father,
Prince of peace.

Jesus our King brings hope, peace, joy and love
into the darkness of our world,
and to us, as we celebrate his coming.
Amen

PREPARING A PLACE IN THE NATIONS

REFLECT

How am I feeling as I move through this season?

Is there something I am longing for or grieving for the nations?

Where does the world need a Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of peace?

PRACTICE // PRAYING FOR OUR PARTNERS

Day 1: By Grace Alone (Dominican Republic) bygracealoneministries.org
Congregation for Kids (Charlotte, NC) cfknc.org

Day 2: Hope for Kids Zimbabwe (Zimbabwe) hopeforkidszimbabwe.com
Kinship Plot (Charlotte, NC) kinshipplot.org

Day 3: Abara Borderland Connections (El Paso, TX // Ciudad Juárez, Mexico)
<https://www.abara.org>

Pray for the US and displaced brothers and sisters throughout the world.

Day 4: SentWell (Malaga, Spain) sentwell.org
Lorien Academy of the Arts (Charlotte, NC) lorienacademy.org

Day 5: Ravens Uganda (Uganda) ravensuganda.org
Young Life // Young Lives // Urban Young Life (Charlotte, NC) younglife.org

PRAYER

In this season of “Love come down,” take some time to read through this Prayer of Saint Augustine of Hippo and allow yourself to wonder, “what does love call for?”

If you keep silent, keep silent by love.

If you speak, speak by love.

If you correct, correct by love.

If you pardon, pardon by love.

Let love be rooted in you,

And from such a root

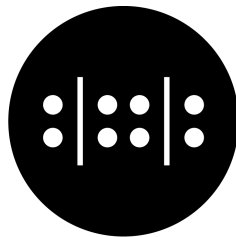
Nothing but good can grow.

May our love be loud.



Expand your Advent music by listening to different voices on this playlist created by Christian Community Development Association (find by clicking the QR code above or by going to this link: <https://ccda.org/playlists/>)

Part of the Advent Liturgy is adapted from the song *All Who Hear* by Young Oceans.



WAREHOUSE242
A CHURCH FOR THE CITY

