



# ADVENT *Longings*

**15 MINUTES WITH GOD IN PRAYER – 2017**

*As we enter Advent 2017 we are surrounded by messages telling us what we are longing for - more stuff, bigger stuff, newer stuff. Although there will be delight in many of the gifts received at Christmas there will still be in our hearts a longing for something more - something less transitory, something that feeds the heart and soul with a deep joy that will last far longer than the 'stuff'. We need to listen to those longings and listen to discover where we will find their fulfillment. Let this booklet of Advent reflections help you to seek and find the source of that gift. Then we will be ready for Christmas joy and delight!*

*In Christ,*

*Shirley Nicholson*

*As a deer longs for flowing streams, so my soul longs for you, O God. My soul thirsts for God, for the living God. When shall I come and behold the face of God? Psalm 42:1,2*



## *Advent Longings*

15 Minutes with God in Prayer - 2017

*As we stand at the gate of yet another liturgical year, have you ever noticed that there is something about beginnings that causes us to stop and reflect? The length of that pause may not be long, as many of us are chronically pressed for time especially in this pre-Christmas season, but intuitively we know that beginnings are often places of opportunities, of intentionality, of fresh starts. Yet even as we feel this inkling to pause, we simultaneously may feel within ourselves a reluctance to review, as serious reflection asks us to question our assumptions, and to test the well-tried and persistent routines of our lives. This can be challenging, and yet as Christians are we not to wonder and give space to consider to where God's Spirit is leading us next? For there lives deep within each of us a longing for connection and reconnection to the divine, but life with all of its rumblings and shakings can distract us. As it does, we find ourselves needing to stop to find again in the midst of the busyness of life that place of tranquility, of contentment, of confidence, of assurance and well-being; that place of rest in Christ. We know that in pausing to gaze upon the face of God we will be changed, for God's Spirit wishes to energize, refresh and direct us.*

*Thanks be to God.*

## *Suggested Reflection Focus:*

The "Trial" Sunday Collects and daily Scriptures offered in this resource. (Please see acknowledgements on back cover)



## *Getting Started:*

- Find a quiet place with no distractions. Have some paper and a pen or pencil for recording your thoughts.
- Deliberately put yourself into God's presence, saying something like:

*"Here I am God. Open my ears and prepare my heart that I may hear your voice, receive the word you have for me, and willingly follow the leading of your Spirit."*

## *Reading and Reflection:*

- Read through the suggested Collects and Scriptures.
- Re-read these, perhaps out loud the second time through.
- Jot down any thoughts or themes that come to mind.
- Sit quietly with these thoughts for another 5 minutes.
- Jot down any additional thoughts you may have.
- Read the passage a final time.

## *Closing in Prayer:*

You may choose to read again the Collect or use some simple phrases such as the following, as well as the Lord's Prayer or other prayers, as God leads you.

Lord God, thank you for \_\_\_\_\_

Gracious God, I am sorry that I \_\_\_\_\_

Heavenly Father, please \_\_\_\_\_

### The Lord's Prayer (Traditional)

*Our Father who art in Heaven: hallowed be thy name; thy kingdom come; thy will be done; on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen.*

## *First week of Advent*

### *Sunday Collect:*

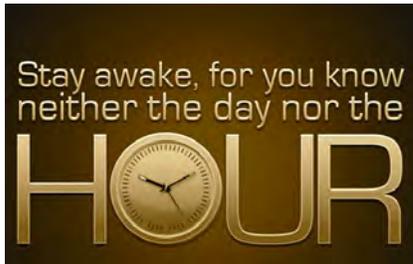
*O God of all the ages,  
rouse us from sleep,  
deliver us from our heedless ways  
and form us into a watchful people,  
so that, at the advent of your Son,  
we may be found doing what is right,  
mindful of all you command.  
We ask this through him  
whose coming is certain  
and whose day draws near,  
your Son, our Lord Jesus Christ,  
who lives and reigns with you  
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
God for ever and ever. Amen.*



### *Daily Scriptures*

Sunday, December 3

**Mark 13: 32-37**



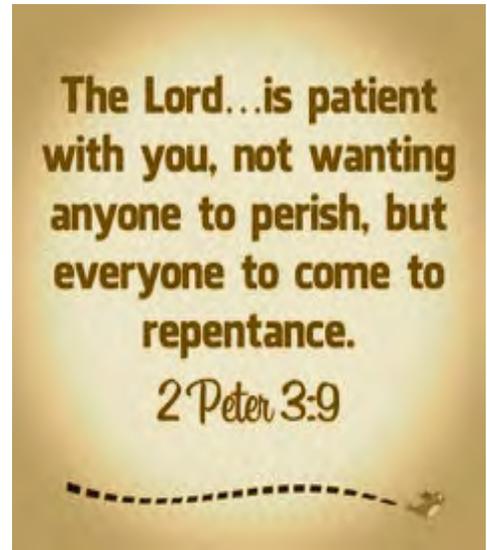
each with his work, and commands the doorkeeper to be on the watch. Therefore, keep awake—for you do not know when the master of the house will come, in the evening, or at midnight, or at cockcrow, or at dawn, or else he may find you asleep when he comes suddenly. And what I say to you I say to all: Keep awake.

But about that day or hour no one knows, neither the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. Beware, keep alert; for you do not know when the time will come. It is like a man going on a journey, when he leaves home and puts his slaves in charge,

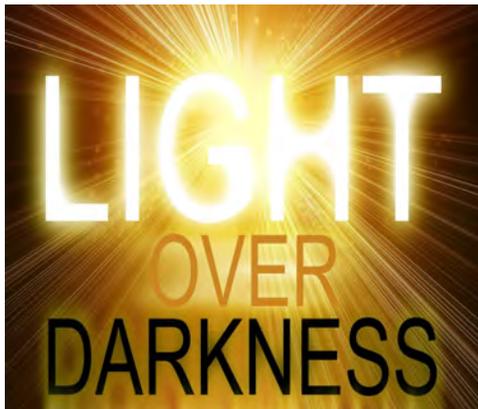


Monday, December 4  
**2 Peter 3: 8-13**

But do not ignore this one fact, beloved, that with the Lord one day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like one day. The Lord is not slow about his promise, as some think of slowness, but is patient with you, not wanting any to perish, but all to come to repentance. But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, and then the heavens will pass away with a loud noise, and the elements will be dissolved with fire, and the earth and everything that is done on it will be disclosed. Since all these things are to be dissolved in this way, what sort of persons ought you to be in leading lives of holiness and godliness, waiting for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be set ablaze and dissolved, and the elements will melt with fire? But, in accordance with his promise, we wait for new heavens and a new earth, where righteousness is at home.



Tuesday, December 5  
**Romans 13:11-14**



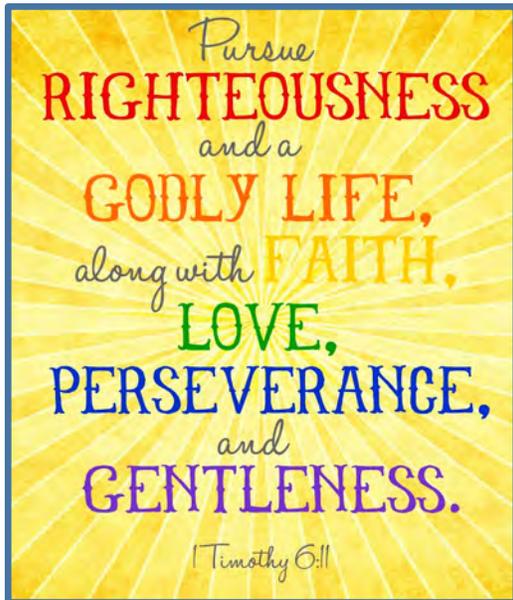
Besides this, you know what time it is, how it is now the moment for you to wake from sleep. For salvation is nearer to us now than when we became believers; the night is far gone, the day is near. Let us then lay aside the works of darkness and put on the armor of light; let us live honorably as in the day, not in reveling and drunkenness, not in debauchery and licentiousness, not in quarreling and jealousy. Instead, put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to gratify its desires.

Wednesday, December 6  
**Deuteronomy 6:18-19**

Do what is right and good in the sight of the Lord, so that it may go well with you, and so that you may go in and occupy the good land that the Lord swore to your ancestors to give you, thrusting out all your enemies from before you, as the Lord has promised.

Thursday, December 7

**1 Timothy 6:11-15**



But as for you, man of God, shun all this; pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, endurance, gentleness. Fight the good fight of the faith; take hold of the eternal life, to which you were called and for which you made the good confession in the presence of many witnesses. In the presence of God, who gives life to all things, and of Christ Jesus, who in his testimony before Pontius Pilate made the good confession, I charge you to keep the commandment without spot or blame until the manifestation of our Lord Jesus Christ, which he will bring about at the right time—he who is the blessed and only Sovereign, the King of kings and Lord of lords.

Friday, December 8

**Proverbs 8:32-36**

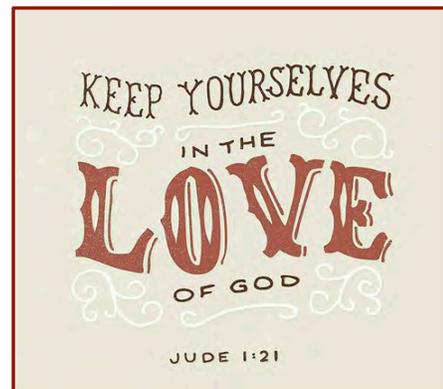
And now, my children, listen to me: happy are those who keep my ways. Hear instruction and be wise, and do not neglect it. Happy is the one who listens to me, watching daily at my gates, waiting beside my doors. For whoever finds me finds life and obtains favor from the Lord; but those who miss me injure themselves; all who hate me love death.

Saturday, December 9

**Jude 1:20-21; 24-25**

But you, beloved, build yourselves up on your most holy faith; pray in the Holy Spirit; keep yourselves in the love of God; look forward to the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ that leads to eternal life.

Now to him who is able to keep you from falling, and to make you stand without blemish in the presence of his glory with rejoicing, to the only God our Savior, through Jesus Christ our Lord, be glory, majesty, power, and authority, before all time and now and forever. Amen.



## *Second week of Advent*

### *Sunday Collect:*

*God of hope,  
you call us from the exile of our sin  
with the good news of restoration;  
you build a highway through the wilderness;  
you come to us and bring us home.  
Comfort us with the expectation of your saving power,  
made known to us in Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.*

### *Daily Scriptures*

Sunday, December 10

*Isaiah 40:3-5*

A voice cries out:

"In the wilderness prepare the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a highway for our God. Every valley shall be lifted up, and every mountain and hill be made low; the uneven ground shall become level, and the rough places a plain. Then the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all people shall see it together, for the mouth of the Lord has spoken."



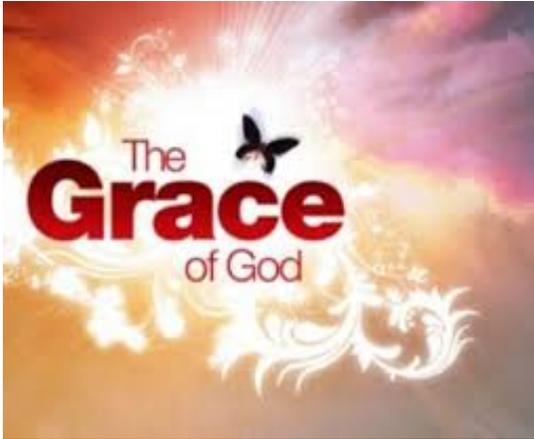
Monday, December 11

*Deuteronomy 30: 1-5*

## **Return to the Lord and He will restore you**

When all these things have happened to you, the blessings and the curses that I have set before you, if you call them to mind among all the nations where the Lord your God has driven you, and return to the Lord your God, and you and your children obey him with all your heart and with all your soul, just as I am commanding you today, then the Lord your God will restore your fortunes and have compassion on you, gathering you again from all the peoples among whom the Lord your God has scattered you. Even if you are exiled to the ends of the world, from there the Lord your God will gather you, and from there he will bring you back. The Lord your God will bring you into the land that your ancestors possessed, and you will possess it; he will make you more prosperous and numerous than your ancestors.

*Tuesday, December 12*  
*Titus 2:11-14*



For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all, training us to renounce impiety and worldly passions, and in the present age to live lives that are self-controlled, upright, and godly, while we wait for the blessed hope and the manifestation of the glory of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ. He it is who gave himself for us that he might redeem us from all iniquity and purify for himself a people of his own who are zealous for good deeds.

*Wednesday, December 13*  
*Hebrews 6:13-20*

When God made a promise to Abraham, because he had no one greater by whom to swear, he swore by himself, saying, "I will surely bless you and multiply you." And thus Abraham, having patiently endured, obtained the promise. Human beings, of course, swear by someone greater than themselves, and an oath given as confirmation puts an end to all dispute. In the same way, when God desired to show even more clearly to the heirs of the promise the unchangeable character of his purpose, he guaranteed it by an oath, so that through two unchangeable things, in which it is impossible that God would prove false, we who have taken refuge might be strongly encouraged to seize the hope set before us. We have this hope, a sure and steadfast anchor of the soul, a hope that enters the inner shrine behind the curtain, where Jesus, a forerunner on our behalf, has entered, having become a high priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek.



Thursday, December 14

***Psalm 61:1-12***



For God alone my soul waits in silence, for my hope is from him. He alone is my rock and my salvation, my fortress; I shall not be shaken. On God rests my deliverance and my honor; my mighty rock, my refuge is in God. Trust in him at all times, O people; pour out your heart before him; God is a refuge for us. Those of low estate are but a breath, those of high estate are a delusion; in the balances they go up; they are together

lighter than a breath. Put no confidence in extortion, and set no vain hopes on robbery; if riches increase, do not set your heart on them. Once God has spoken; twice have I heard this: that power belongs to God, and steadfast love belongs to you, O Lord. For you repay to all according to their work.

Friday, December 15

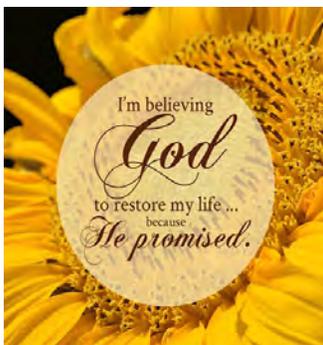
***Proverbs 4:20-27***

My child, be attentive to my words; incline your ear to my sayings. Do not let them escape from your sight; keep them within your heart. For they are life to those who find them, and healing to all their flesh. Keep your heart with all vigilance, for from it flow the springs of life. Put away from you crooked speech, and put devious talk far from you. Let your eyes look directly forward, and your gaze be straight before you. Keep straight the path of your feet, and all your ways will be sure. Do not swerve to the right or to the left; turn your foot away from evil.



Saturday, December 16

***Joel 2: 23-27***



O children of Zion, be glad and rejoice in the Lord your God; for he has given the early rain for your vindication, he has poured down for you abundant rain, the early and the later rain, as before. The threshing floors shall be full of grain, the vats shall overflow with wine and oil. I will repay you for the years that the swarming locust has eaten, the hopper, the destroyer, and the cutter, my great army, which I sent against you. You shall eat in plenty and be satisfied, and praise the name of the Lord your God, who has dealt wondrously with you. And my people shall never again be put to

shame. You shall know that I am in the midst of Israel, and that I, the Lord, am your God and there is no other. And my people shall never again be put to shame.

## *Third Week of Advent*

### *Sunday Collect:*

*God of light,  
who sent the Baptist to offer hope and to face the world's scorn:  
open our ears to hear the cries from the margins, exposing our fears,  
sharpening our vision and calling us to faith;  
through Jesus Christ, the one who is to come. Amen.*

### *Daily Scriptures*

Sunday, December 17

*Isaiah 61: 1-4*

The spirit of the Lord God is upon me, because the Lord has anointed me; he has sent me to bring good news to the oppressed, to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and release to the prisoners; to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor, and the



day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all who mourn; to provide for those who mourn in Zion— to give them a garland instead of ashes, the oil of gladness instead of mourning, the mantle of praise instead of a faint spirit. They will be called oaks of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, to display his glory. They shall build up the ancient ruins, they shall raise up the former devastations; they shall repair the ruined cities, the devastations of many generations.

Monday, December 18

*Micah 6:8*

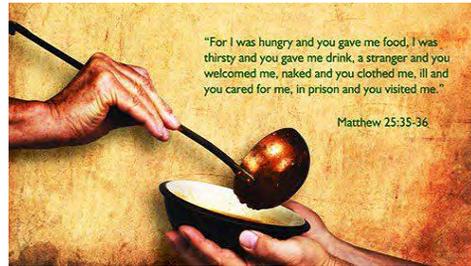
He has told you, O mortal, what is good; and what does the Lord require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?



Tuesday, December 19

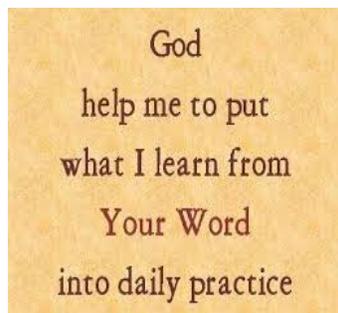
**Matthew 25:31-46**

“When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, then he will sit on the throne of his glory. All the nations will be gathered before him, and he will separate people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats, and he will put the sheep at his right hand and the goats at the left. Then the king will say to those at his right hand, ‘Come, you that are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world; for I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you gave me clothing, I was sick and you took care of me, I was in prison and you visited me.’ Then the righteous will answer him, ‘Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry and gave you food, or thirsty and gave you something to drink? And when was it that we saw you a stranger and welcomed you, or naked and gave you clothing? And when was it that we saw you sick or in prison and visited you?’ And the king will answer them, ‘Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me.’”



Wednesday, December 20

**James 1:22-25**

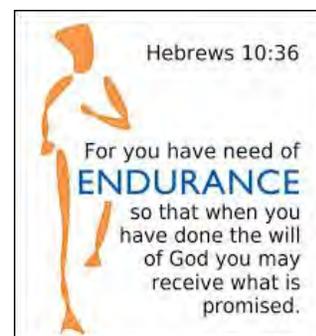


But be doers of the word, and not merely hearers who deceive themselves. For if any are hearers of the word and not doers, they are like those who look at themselves in a mirror; for they look at themselves and, on going away, immediately forget what they were like. But those who look into the perfect law, the law of liberty, and persevere, being not hearers who forget but doers who act—they will be blessed in their doing.

Thursday, December 21

**Hebrews 10:32-11:3**

But recall those earlier days when, after you had been enlightened, you endured a hard struggle with sufferings, sometimes being publicly exposed to abuse and persecution, and sometimes being partners with those so treated. For you had compassion for those who were in prison, and you cheerfully accepted the plundering of your possessions, knowing that you yourselves possessed something better and more lasting. Do not, therefore, abandon that confidence of yours; it brings a great reward. For you need endurance, so that when you



have done the will of God, you may receive what was promised. For yet "in a very little while, the one who is coming will come and will not delay; but my righteous one will live by faith. My soul takes no pleasure in anyone who shrinks back." But we are not among those who shrink back and so are lost, but among those who have faith and so are saved.



Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen. Indeed, by faith our ancestors received approval. By faith we understand that the worlds were prepared by the word of God, so that what is seen was made from things that are not visible.

Friday, December 22

***Ephesians 1:17-19***

I pray that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you a spirit of wisdom and revelation as you come to know him, so that, with the eyes of your heart enlightened, you may know what is the hope to which he has called you, what are the riches of his glorious inheritance among the saints, and what is the immeasurable greatness of his power for us who believe, according to the working of his great power.



Saturday, December 23

***Luke 1:67-79***



Then his father Zechariah was filled with the Holy Spirit and spoke this prophecy: "Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, for he has looked favorably on his people and redeemed them. He has raised up a mighty savior for us in the house of his servant David, as he spoke through the mouth of his holy prophets from of old, that we would be saved from our enemies and from the hand of all who hate us. Thus he has shown the mercy promised to our ancestors, and has remembered his holy covenant, the oath that he swore to our ancestor Abraham, to grant us that we, being rescued from the hands of our enemies, might serve him without fear, in holiness and righteousness before him all our days. And you, child, will be called the prophet of the Most High; for you will go before the Lord to prepare his ways, to give knowledge of salvation to his people by the forgiveness of their sins. By the tender mercy of our God, the dawn from on high will break upon us, to give light to those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace."



December 24 – Christmas Eve

*Collect:*

## Mary showed courageous obedience of faith

*God of scandalous love,*

*Mary consented to bear the shame and carry your Word within herself;  
may her courage give hope to women and men who yearn to sing  
new songs of justice and find the world a dwelling place for God;  
through Jesus Christ, the one who is to come. Amen.*

*Scripture:*

*Romans 16:25-27*

Now to God who is able to strengthen you according to my gospel and the proclamation of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery that was kept secret for long ages but is now disclosed, and through the prophetic writings is made known to all the Gentiles, according to the command of the eternal God, to bring about the obedience of faith— to the only wise God, through Jesus Christ, to whom be the glory forever! Amen



*As you spent time during Advent reflecting on the Collects and the Scriptures in this resource, we hope that you gained new assurance of God's love for you, new insight into the leading of the Holy Spirit, and new awareness that Christ is the One who can satisfy the longing soul.*

*As you move forward on your faith journey, we encourage you to continue the practice of spending 15 minutes each day with God in prayer, reflecting on all God has for you through the words of Holy Scripture, and following whatever path the Spirit sets before you.*

## Acknowledgements And Resource Links

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*The collects used in this resource are the product of the Liturgy Task Force of the General Synod of the Anglican Church of Canada, released for trial use and evaluation.*

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<http://www.anglican.ca/resources/trialuse/>

*This resource is available on-line in scroll down to read and ready to print booklet formats. Please visit one of the following sites:*

[www.abundantliferesources.ca](http://www.abundantliferesources.ca)

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