

DECEMBER 3, 2017
FIRST SUNDAY
OF ADVENT



Advent is a time to be alert for the coming of Christ.

DAILY BIBLE READINGS

These passages are related to the Lectionary texts for this Sunday.

Sunday	Mark 13:24-37	The day and hour unknown
Monday	Isaiah 64:1-9	A communal prayer for help
Tuesday	1 Corinthians 1:3-9	God is faithful
Wednesday	Isaiah 9:1-7	The promised messiah
Thursday	Matthew 24:29-31	The coming of the Son of Man
Friday	Revelation 1:1-6	Christ sends a message
Saturday	Psalms 80:1-7, 17-19	Prayer for Israel's restoration
Sunday	Mark 1:1-8	The beginning of the good news

SCRIPTURE VERSE FOR THIS WEEK

Beware, keep alert; for you do not know when the time will come.
Mark 13:33 (NRSV)

PRAYERS AND BLESSING

A Prayer for the Week:

Gracious God, we thank you for your love that reaches out to us through Christ our Savior. Give us joy and gladness as we wait for his coming again. Amen.

Mealtime Prayer:

Lord God, thank you for giving us hope for the heart and food for the plate. For Jesus our Savior we watch and we wait. Amen.

A Blessing to Give:

May the God of grace and peace and the Lord Jesus Christ keep you strong in your faith until Jesus comes again. (1 Corinthians 1:8)



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HYMN OF THE WEEK
All Earth Is Hopeful



CARING CONVERSATIONS

Discuss in your home or small group:

- Talk about a time when you were waiting for something or someone.
- Advent begins with a focus on Christ's second coming. How does your Christian faith help you keep alert for Christ's return? Reflect on how waiting for Christ's return is an important part of the Christian faith.
- Jesus said, "my words will never pass away" (Mark 13:31). What words or stories of Jesus are especially important to you?

DEVOTIONS



December 3 is the first Sunday in Advent. Using four blue or purple candles and a white center candle, set up a home Advent Wreath. Light the first candle, and use the following words:

Say: The first candle on our Advent wreath is the hope candle. Long ago, God promised to send a Savior. God used prophets like Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Micah to give people hope for the future. [Light the first candle.]

Read: Isaiah 9:6. *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.*

Pray: **Lord God, thank you for keeping the promises you made through the prophets and sending us a Savior. Fill us with hope as we get ready to celebrate Jesus' birth. Amen.**

SERVICE



Part of Christian waiting for Christ's coming again is to care for others with loving service. Purchase nonperishable grocery items this week to donate to a local food shelf. Pray for the people who will receive this food.

RITUALS AND TRADITIONS



With the beginning of the new church year in Advent, we hear a new set of readings from the Bible. Most of the Gospel readings used this year will be from Mark. We remember that Jesus tells us that his words will never pass away (Mark 13:31). In honor of Jesus' message kept for us in the Bible, gather the Bibles and storybook Bibles in your home and say this prayer of blessing for their use:

Dear God, we thank you for the Bible, and especially for the good news of Jesus our Savior. As we read, listen to and think about what the Bible says to us, make us into people who are strong in our faith and full of love. Amen.



In addition to *Taking Faith Home*, celebrate milestones in your daily life as an effective faith formation tool. Go to: www.milestonesministry.org