



THE WORD
Advent Guide
BECAME FLESH

The Latin word *adventus*, from which we derive the word *advent*, is close to its Greek counterpart, *parousia*. *Parousia* has been used to describe both the arrival of God in the flesh and the Second Coming, thus making these two incarnational events the Church's focus during the advent season.

As Christians, we are exiles in this world, living in-between Christ's finished work on the cross and his prophesied triumphant return. At Advent, we contemplate the mystery of the incarnation: that God himself stepped into real human time, took on our likeness, and humbled himself to death on a cross for our salvation.

During these next few weeks, meditate on the magnitude of God taking on the form of a child, wrapped in swaddling clothes and laid in a manger. Contemplate the weight of our sin, the mercy and grace of Christ's death on our behalf, and the power of His resurrection. Consider the lovingkindness in Christ's promise to return and redeem creation.

The Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and will dwell among us yet. These are tidings of very great joy!

The Word from the beginning shows us the Father

READING

Sunday: John 1:1-4, Genesis 1:26 (The Word was in the Beginning)

Monday: John 8:58 (Jesus is the I AM)

Tuesday: Colossians 1:16,17 (All things were created by Him, and for Him)

Wednesday: Hebrews 1:1-14, Luke 2:8-21 (The heir of all things is born to us)

Thursday: 1 John 1:1-2, John 1:14, Luke 2:25-35 (the Word is made flesh)

Friday: Romans 1:3-4, Colossians 2:9-10 (Jesus is the Son of God)

Saturday: 1 John 4:2, John 14:9-11, Matthew 11:25-30 (The Father revealed in the Son)

HYMN: Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence

Let all mortal flesh keep silence,
and with awe and reverence stand;
ponder nothing earthly minded,
for with blessing in his hand
Christ our God to us approacheth
our full homage to demand.

King of kings, yet born of Mary,
as of old on earth he stood,
Lord of lords, in human vesture,
in the body and the blood,
he will give to all the faithful
his own self for heavenly food.

Rank on rank the host of heaven
spreads its vanguard on the way,
as the Light of light descendeth
from the realms of endless day,
that the powers of hell may vanish
as the darkness clears away.

At his feet the six-winged seraph;
cherubim with sleepless eye
veil their faces to the presence,
as with ceaseless voice they cry,
Hallelujah, hallelujah,
hallelujah, Lord Most High!

PRAYER:

THOU GREAT I AM,
Fill my mind with elevation and grandeur at
the thought of a Being
with whom one day is as a thousand years,
and a thousand years as one day,
A mighty God, who, amidst the lapse of worlds,
and the revolutions of empires,
feels no variableness,
but is glorious in immortality.
May I rejoice that, while men die, the Lord lives;
that, while all creatures are broken reeds,
empty cisterns,
fading flowers,
withering grass,
he is the Rock of Ages, the Fountain
of living waters.
Turn my heart from vanity,
from dissatisfactions,
from uncertainties of the present state,
to an eternal interest in Christ.

“The Infinite and the Finite”
from The Valley of Vision



The Word became flesh to be our example

READING

Sunday: 1 John 2:3-6, Ephesians 4:11-16 (We obey Jesus' commands out of love)

Monday: Colossians 3:1-4 (We set our hearts on things above)

Tuesday: John 15:5-8 (Jesus is the True Vine)

Wednesday: Hebrews 4:14-16, 1 Peter 2:21-25 (He knows our suffering and calls us to follow)

Thursday: John 13:15, Romans 15:1-7 (We love one another)

Friday: John 4:24 (We worship God in spirit and truth)

Saturday: Matthew 28:18 (All authority belongs to Jesus)

HYMN: Come, Thou Long Expected Jesus

Come, Thou long expected Jesus
Born to set Thy people free
From our fears and sins release us
Let us find our rest in Thee
Israel's strength and consolation
Hope of all the earth Thou art
Dear desire of every nation
Joy of every longing heart
Born Thy people to deliver
Born a child and yet a King

Born to reign in us forever
Now Thy gracious kingdom bring
By Thine own eternal spirit
Rule in all our hearts alone
By Thine all sufficient merit
Raise us to Thy glorious throne

PRAYER:

"Dear Heavenly Father, we sing with great enthusiasm 'Joy to the world, the Lord has come, let each receive her King.' Yet as we review the true desires of our hearts we would confess that we are more prone to seek the gifts and benefits that Christ can grant than actually receive Him deep within our lives. There are times when we are frightened by what might happen if we truly took Jesus seriously and resolved to invite him into all the diverse dimensions of our lives.

Lord, have mercy upon us and cleanse us. Forgive the distorted images we hold of Christ which prevent us from living with him with the same trust and obedience as Joseph and Mary. Renew your sustaining Spirit within us that we might truly know and live in your joy through Jesus' redeeming name. Amen!

The Services of the Christian Year (Vol. 5)
by Robert Webber

The Word became flesh to pay our debt

READING

Sunday: Isaiah 11:1-5, Micah 5:2-5 (The Redeemer, Jesus, prophesied)

Monday: Isaiah 53, 2 Corinthians 5:21 (Jesus is our Messiah)

Tuesday: John 12:27-33, John 10:17-18 (Jesus lays his life down in obedience to the Father)

Wednesday: Matthew 20:28, Philippians 2:1-11 (He emptied Himself as our ransom)

Thursday: Luke 23:33-46, Luke 24:1-12, 1 Peter 2:24 (Jesus' death and resurrection pay our debt)

Friday: Acts 1:6-11 (The Ascension)

Saturday: Romans 5:6-11, Romans 8 (Christ died for us. We are free in Him)

HYMN: O Come, O Come Emmanuel

O come, O come, Emmanuel
And ransom captive Israel
That mourns in lonely exile here
Until the Son of God appear
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
Shall come to thee, O Israel.

O come, Thou Rod of Jesse, free
Thine own from Satan's tyranny
From depths of Hell Thy people save
And give them victory o'er the grave
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
Shall come to thee, O Israel.

O come, Thou Day-Spring, come and cheer
Our spirits by Thine advent here
Disperse the gloomy clouds of night
And death's dark shadows put to flight.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
Shall come to thee, O Israel.

PRAYER:

Though there was no room at the inn
To receive you upon your first arrival
We would prepare you room
here in our hearts
And here in our home,
Lord Christ.

As we decorate and celebrate, we do so to mark
The memory of your redemptive movement into
Our broken world, O God.

"A Liturgy to Mark the Start of the Christmas Season"
from Every Moment Holy by Douglas McKelvey

The Word became flesh to return as our King

READING

Sunday: John 14:1-3, Matthew 25:31-40, Mark 13:32 (Jesus promises to return)

Monday: Hebrews 9:24-28, 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18, Titus 2:13

(Encourage each other about the promised return)

Tuesday: 1 John 3:2, 2 Peter 3:8-13 (We should live holy lives in anticipation)

Wednesday: Revelation 1:5-7, 1 Corinthians 15:22-28 (Jesus reigns now in dominion over all things)

Thursday: Philippians 3:20 (Our citizenship is in heaven)

Friday: 1 Peter 1:3-21 (Our living hope will be fulfilled)

Saturday: Revelation 21:1-6, 16-17, 22:20 (Jesus will make all things new)

HYMN: Joyful, Joyful

Joyful, joyful, we adore You,
God of glory, Lord of love;
Hearts unfold like flow'rs before You,
Op'ning to the sun above.
Melt the clouds of sin and sadness;
Drive the dark of doubt away;
Giver of immortal gladness,
Fill us with the light of day!

All Your works with joy surround You,
Earth and heav'n reflect Your rays,
Stars and angels sing around You,
Center of unbroken praise;
Field and forest, vale and mountain,
Flow'ry meadow, flashing sea,
Chanting bird and flowing fountain
Praising You eternally!

Always giving and forgiving,
Ever blessing, ever blest,
Well-spring of the joy of living,
Ocean-depth of happy rest!
Loving Father, Christ our Brother,
Let Your light upon us shine;
Teach us how to love each other,
Lift us to the joy divine.

PRAYER:

O SON OF GOD AND SON
OF MAN,
Thou wast incarnate, didst
suffer, rise, ascend
for my sake;
Thy departure was not a
token of separation
but a pledge of return;
Thy Word, promises,
sacraments, show thy death
until thou come again.
That day is no horror to me,
for thy death has redeemed
me,
thy Spirit fills me,
thy love animates me,
thy Word governs me.
I have trusted thee and thou
hast not betrayed
my trust;
waited for thee, and not
waited in vain.

Thou wilt come to raise my
body from the dust,
and re-unite it to my soul,
by a wonderful work of
infinite power and love,
greater than that which
bounds the oceans'
waters,
ebbs and flows the tides,
keeps the stars in their
courses,
and gives life to all
creatures.
This corruptible shall put
on incorruption,
this mortal, immortality,
this natural body, a
spiritual body,
this dishonoured body, a
glorious body,
this weak body, a body of
power.
I triumph now in thy
promises as I shall do
in their performance,

for the head cannot live if
the members are dead;
Beyond the grave is
resurrection, judgment,
acquittal, dominion.
Every event and
circumstance of my life
will be
dealt with —
the sins of my youth, my
secret sins,
the sins of abusing thee, of
disobeying thy Word,
the sins of neglecting
ministers' admonitions,
the sins of violating my
conscience —
all will be judged;
And after judgment, peace
and rest, life and service,
employment and
enjoyment, for thine elect.
O God, keep me in this
faith,
and ever looking for
Christ's return.

“The Second Coming”
from The Valley of Vision