



EVERY
moment
HOLY

2022 ADVENT JOURNAL

READ: *A Liturgy to Mark the Start of the Christmas Season*

As we prepare our house for the coming Christmas season,
we would also prepare our hearts for the returning Christ.
You came once for your people,
O Lord, and you will come for us again.

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.

Our glittering ornaments and Christmas trees,
Our festive carols, our sumptuous feasts—
By these small tokens we affirm
that something amazing has happened
in time and space—
that God, on a particular night,
in a particular place, so many years ago,
was born to us, an infant King, our Prince of Peace.

Our wreaths and ribbons and colored lights,
our giving of gifts, our parties with friends—
these have never been ends in themselves.
They are but small ways in which we repeat
that sounding joy first proclaimed by angels
in the skies near Bethlehem.

In view of such great tidings of love announced
to us, and to all people, how can we not be moved
to praise and celebration in this Christmas season?
As we decorate our tree, and as we
feast and laugh and sing together,
we are rehearsing our coming joy!
We are making ready to receive the one
who has already, with open arms, received us!
We would prepare you room
 here in our hearts
 and here in our home,
Lord Christ.
Now we celebrate your first coming, Immanuel,
even as we long for your return.
O Prince of Peace, our elder brother,
return soon. We miss you so!

Amen.

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WEEK 1
NOVEMBER 27-DECEMBER 3

HOPE

AND THE ANGEL SAID
TO THEM, "FEAR NOT,
FOR BEHOLD, I BRING
YOU GOOD NEWS
OF GREAT JOY THAT
WILL BE FOR ALL THE
PEOPLE. FOR UNTO
YOU IS BORN THIS DAY
IN THE CITY OF DAVID
A SAVIOR, WHO IS
CHRIST THE LORD. AND
THIS WILL BE A SIGN
FOR YOU: YOU WILL
FIND A BABY WRAPPED
IN SWADDLING CLOTHS
AND LYING IN A
MANGER."
LUKE 2:10-12

RESPOND:

What does it look like to prepare your heart for the advent season?

How do you navigate the highs and the lows of a societal celebration in the daily rhythm of life?

How can you begin to set the table for the spiritual reverence of the coming weeks?

Optional: Use the liturgy writing supplement to respond with writing your own prayer.

READ: *A Liturgy for Missing Someone*

I willingly carry this ache.
I carry it, O Father, to you.

You created my heart for unbroken fellowship.
Yet the constraints of time and place, and the
stuttering rhythms of life in a fallen world
dictate that all fellowships in these days
will at times be broken or incomplete.

And so we find ourselves in this season,
bearing the sorrow of my separation from _____.

SPEAK THE NAME OF THE ABSENT PERSON HERE OR SPEAK THE NAME OF JESUS.

I acknowledge, O Lord, that it is
a right and a good thing to miss deeply
those whom we love but with whom
we cannot be physically present.
Grant me, therefore, courage to love well
even in this time of absence.

Grant me courage to shrink neither from
the aches nor from the joys that love brings,
for each, willingly received, will accomplish
the good works you have appointed them to do.
Therefore I praise you even for my sadness,
knowing that the sorrows I steward in
this life will in time be redeemed.

Use even this sadness to carve out spaces
in our souls where still greater repositories
of holy affection might be held, unto the
end that we might better love, in times of
absence and in times of presence alike.
We now entrust all to your keeping.
May our reunion be joyous, whether in this life
or in the life to come.
How I look forward, O Lord, to the day
when all our fellowships will be restored,
eternal and unbroken.

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WEEK 2
DECEMBER 4-10

FAITH

BLESSED ARE THOSE WHO
MOURN, FOR THEY WILL
BE COMFORTED.
MATTHEW 5:4

O come, O come, Emmanuel!
Christ our King, how I long for your return.
O come, O come, Emmanuel!
Christ our Shepherd,
how I pine for your voice.
O come, O come, Emmanuel!
Christ our older brother, how I miss you.
Make haste, O Lord. Return to us!
Amen.

RESPOND:

Holidays often remind us of grief and the loss of those who cannot celebrate with us. But we have faith that God will reunite us again. Reflect on the losses you are grieving this week, and share with God what you miss in their absence.

Optional: Use the liturgy writing supplement to respond with writing your own prayer.

READ: *A Liturgy for a Purposeful Gathering*

And so we will be gathered,
uniquely in all of history, we particular
people in this singular time and place.
Accomplish your purposes
among us, O God.
Tune our hearts to the voice of your Spirit.
Wake us to be present to you and to one
another in these shared hours we are given.
For it is you, O Lord, who have
so gathered us from our various places,
and you alone who know our hearts
and our needs.

Among us are some who arrive anxious,
some who are lonely,
some who suffer pain or sorrow.
May we in our joys find grace
to enter the sorrows of others.

Among us are some who arrive rejoicing,
Hearts made light by good news,
good health, glad anticipation.
May we in our sorrows find grace
to embrace the joys of others.

Let us prize these moments and care for one another deeply—
for each of us, and our relationships to one another,
are precious and eternal.

Breathe upon our gathering, O Spirit of God.
Grant each of us a place to humbly receive
and to faithfully serve, that we might know
in this brief gathering a foretaste
of that greater communion yet to come.

O Father, enlarge our hearts.
O Spirit, expand our vision.
O Christ, establish your kingdom among us.
Be at work even now, O Lord.
May your will, in us, in these hours,
be accomplished.

Amen.

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WEEK 3
DECEMBER 11-17

JOY

FOR WHERE TWO OR
THREE ARE GATHERED
IN MY NAME, THERE AM I
AMONG THEM.
MATTHEW 18:20

RESPOND:

Last week we acknowledged the losses that are felt, perhaps heavier than usual, during this season. But what about the gains from this year? Relationships, circumstances, community celebrations, laughter, events. List some things God has given you this year, no matter how small, and reflect on how the presence of those things can be celebrated with joy and thanksgiving during advent.

Optional: Use the liturgy writing supplement to respond with writing your own prayer.

READ: *A Liturgy for Setting Up a Christmas Tree*

O Immanuel, we would find in our traditions
these reminders of the wonders of your love:

First, let this fragrant tree, cut down
and then raised beneath our roof,
remind us how once upon a time,
the High King of Heaven consented to
be cut off from the glories that were his birthright,
and descended instead to
dwell with us in a broken world,
beset by harm and evil.

Praise to you, Immanuel!

Next, let the hard wood of the trunk
and the outstretched branches remind
us how that same Heavenly King who
had entered our world on that distant
night, would soon act to redeem his
creation and his people in it,
though it would require the stretching out of his
arms upon a cross of wood—
his death for our life.

Praise to you, Immanuel!

Then, let these evergreen boughs
be a reminder of his mighty triumph
over death and hell, of his resurrection
unto a life eternal which will never fade—
an eternal life which he has also secured
for us. There is no greater gift!

Glory to you, Immanuel!

**Worthy are you, O Lamb of God,
to receive all glory, honor, and praise!
Glory to you, Lord Christ!**

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WEEK 4
DECEMBER 18-24

PEACE

PEACE I LEAVE WITH YOU;
MY PEACE I GIVE YOU. I
DO NOT GIVE TO YOU AS
THE WORLD GIVES. DO
NOT LET YOUR HEARTS BE
TROUBLED AND DO NOT
BE AFRAID
JOHN 14:27

RESPOND:

In the “eye of the storm” of the Christmas season — somewhere in the midst of grief and loss, celebration and giving - there is quiet. Perhaps this was how Mary and Joseph felt the first time Jesus heard Mary’s heartbeat as he laid upon her chest and closed his eyes to sleep. The labor was over, the shepherds had yet to arrive — quiet was underscored with the hum of livestock settling into a night of rest. Have you found moments of quiet in these weeks? Maybe by the fire late at night, or sitting at the dinner table on a particularly calm evening, or just catching the lights of the Christmas tree in the corner and staring for a moment. What have you learned in the peace of quiet this year? This month?

Optional: Use the liturgy writing supplement to respond with writing your own prayer.

Liturgies contained in journal can be found in
Every Moment Holy, Volume I

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