



Advent | December 8
Weekly Devotionals

If available, light your HOPE and PEACE candles on your Advent wreath. Take a moment to be still in the presence of God, inviting him to renew your peace.

Opening Prayer:

*God of timeless grace,
you fill us with joyful expectation.
Make us ready for the message that prepares the way,
that with uprightness of heart and holy joy
we may eagerly await the kingdom of your Son, Jesus Christ,
who reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, now and forever. Amen.*

Read Malachi 3:1-4

"I will send my messenger, who will prepare the way before me. Then suddenly the Lord you are seeking will come to his temple; the messenger of the covenant, whom you desire, will come," says the Lord Almighty. ²But who can endure the day of his coming? Who can stand when he appears? For he will be like a refiner's fire or a launderer's soap. ³He will sit as a refiner and purifier of silver; he will purify the Levites and refine them like gold and silver. Then the Lord will have men who will bring

offerings in righteousness,⁴ and the offerings of Judah and Jerusalem will be acceptable to the Lord, as in days gone by, as in former years.

Read Luke 1:68-79

“Praise be to the Lord, the God of Israel,
because he has come to his people and redeemed them.
⁶⁹ He has raised up a horn of salvation for us
in the house of his servant David
⁷⁰ (as he said through his holy prophets of long ago),
⁷¹ salvation from our enemies
and from the hand of all who hate us—
⁷² to show mercy to our ancestors
and to remember his holy covenant,
⁷³ the oath he swore to our father Abraham:
⁷⁴ to rescue us from the hand of our enemies,
and to enable us to serve him without fear
⁷⁵ in holiness and righteousness before him all our days.
⁷⁶ And you, my child, will be called a prophet of the Most High;
for you will go on before the Lord to prepare the way for him,
⁷⁷ to give his people the knowledge of salvation
through the forgiveness of their sins,
⁷⁸ because of the tender mercy of our God,
by which the rising sun will come to us from heaven
⁷⁹ to shine on those living in darkness
and in the shadow of death,
to guide our feet into the path of peace.”

Pause and Reflect:

How does knowing Christ has come to his people and redeemed them bring you peace? What phrase in the previous Scriptures stands out to you? Take a moment to pray through that phrase, inviting the Lord to remind you of his saving grace toward you. Ask for renewed peace in your life.

Read Luke 3:1-6

In the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar—when Pontius Pilate was governor of Judea, Herod tetrarch of Galilee, his brother Philip tetrarch of Iturea and Traconitis,

and Lysanias tetrarch of Abilene—²during the high-priesthood of Annas and Caiaphas, the word of God came to John son of Zechariah in the wilderness. ³He went into all the country around the Jordan, preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. ⁴As it is written in the book of the words of Isaiah the prophet:

“A voice of one calling in the wilderness,
‘Prepare the way for the Lord,
make straight paths for him.
⁵Every valley shall be filled in,
every mountain and hill made low.
The crooked roads shall become straight,
the rough ways smooth.
⁶And all people will see God’s salvation.”

Intercessory Prayer

*God of hope,
you raised up John the baptizer
as a herald who calls us to conversion.
As we joyfully await the glorious coming of Christ,
we pray to you for the needs of the church and the world.*

Prayers of the People—take some time to pray to Jesus about the needs of the church and the world.

*Hear our humble prayer
that we may serve you in holiness and faith
and give voice to your presence among us
until the day of the coming of your Son, Jesus Christ,
who lives and reigns for ever and ever. Amen.*

Concluding Scripture: Read Philippians 1:3-11

³I thank my God every time I remember you. ⁴In all my prayers for all of you, I always pray with joy ⁵because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now, ⁶being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus. ⁷It is right for me to feel this way about all of you, since I have you in my heart and, whether I am in chains or defending and

confirming the gospel, all of you share in God's grace with me. ⁸God can testify how I long for all of you with the affection of Christ Jesus. ⁹And this is my prayer: that your love may abound more and more in knowledge and depth of insight, ¹⁰so that you may be able to discern what is best and may be pure and blameless for the day of Christ, ¹¹filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ—to the glory and praise of God.

Concluding Prayer:

*Out of the embrace of mercy and righteousness,
you have brought forth joy and dignity for your people,
O Holy One of Israel.
Remember now your ancient promise:
make straight the paths that lead to you,
and smooth the rough ways,
that in our day
we might bring forth your compassion
for all humanity. Amen.*