

# journey

ADVENT 2010



The Episcopal Church  
*welcomes you*



# journey

ADVENT 2010

Young Adult and Campus Ministries  
at The Episcopal Church Center

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*for a daily meditation, please send an email  
with your e-mail address as the subject line  
and “join meditations” in the body  
to [mharewood@episcopalchurch.org](mailto:mharewood@episcopalchurch.org)*

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Almighty God,  
give us grace to  
cast away the works  
of darkness, and put  
on the armor of light,  
now in the time of this  
mortal life in which your  
Son Jesus Christ came to visit us  
in great humility; that in the last day, when  
he shall come again in his glorious majesty to  
judge both the living and the dead, we may  
rise to the life immortal; through him who  
lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,  
one God, now and for ever. Amen.

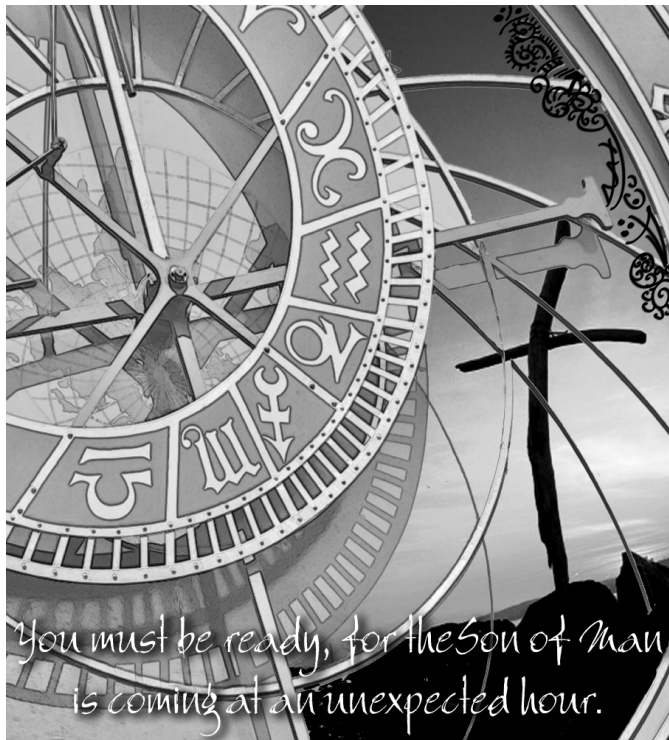
Greetings brothers and sisters! This year, Advent begins on November 28 and of course ends with the birth of Christ on December 25. This guide takes you through this season day by day with thoughts, hopes, and prayers of Episcopal Young Adults from all around the world.

The theme for this year's meditation guide is Advent as a Journey. Through each meditation I encourage you to keep that thought lingering, and reflect on what that means to you. The message of Advent is so quickly lost in today's culture; use this guide to focus on what you treasure most about this season of renewal and light.

To the young service women and men of the United States Military, take this guide as a small symbol of our gratitude for all that you are doing for our nation and the world. Please know that your daily sacrifices are known and sincerely appreciated and know that you are prayed for by Christians around the world. May your journey through Advent be armored by Christ's loving light.

Your sister in Christ,  
P'Tricia Egbert

*on behalf of the Committee for Young Adult Ministry  
of the Episcopal Church*



*You must be ready, for the Son of Man  
is coming at an unexpected hour.*

*Roger Speer, Diocese of Western North Carolina*

# advent: week one

*November 28-December 4*

*Almighty God, give us grace to cast away the works of darkness, and put on the armor of light, now in the time of this mortal life in which your Son Jesus Christ came to visit us in great humility; that in the last day, when he shall come again in his glorious majesty to judge both the living and the dead, we may rise to the life immortal; through him who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.*

Collect for the First Sunday of Advent  
The Book of Common Prayer, page 211



# The First Sunday of Advent

November 28, 2010

*Keep awake therefore, for you do not know on what day  
your Lord is coming. —Matthew 24:42*

When I hear this passage, I always think to myself, “Jesus wants me to stay awake until Christmas when we can celebrate his coming. If I put forth the spiritual effort, this Advent will be a period of great expectation and Christmas will be better than ever.” But Jesus didn’t have a church calendar when he said this to his disciples. “Keep awake” is not simply a method of spiritual preparation for Christmas. “Keep awake” is an exhortation that transcends liturgical seasons. “Keep awake” is a way of living a holy life. When we take Jesus’ words to heart, we are rewarded with spiritual riches. We begin to notice the unexpected miracles and the breathtaking flashes of grace that season our daily lives. When we keep awake on this journey called life, spiritual moments become disciplines that lead to a fuller, more intimate relationship with God.

Jimmy Abbott, Diocese of Texas

**Almighty God, your grace breaks into the world at unexpected moments: Give us the courage and the will to steadfastly persevere until our journeys are over; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who is worshiped with you and the Holy Spirit forever and ever. Amen.**

## First Monday of Advent

November 29, 2010

*When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the child leaped in her womb. And Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit. —Luke 1: 42*

I remember the first time I placed my hands on the pregnant belly of a friend and felt her child kick. Startled at the life I felt within, my hand jumped back. My friend laughed and in her eyes I saw such profound joy. I could not help but share in her happiness. In that tiny movement, I felt God. We so easily see a spark of the Divine in infants. It is so much more difficult to notice it in others. What would it look like if we recognized each person as a gift from God, a glint of God's light come into our lives? We should dance in the street and greet each other as old friends from a Holy memory. It is in others that we can see another part of ourselves, reaching out for unity and kicking from the womb as if to say "I know you! And I am here as well!"

Elaine Warn, Diocese of Montana

**O God, who created all peoples in your image, we thank you for the wonderful diversity of races and cultures in this world. Enrich our lives by ever-widening circles of fellowship, and show us your presence in those who differ most from us, until our knowledge of your love is made perfect in our love for all your children; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

## First Tuesday of Advent

*November 30, 2010*

*“Entren por la puerta angosta. Porque la puerta y el camino que llevan a la perdición son anchos y espaciosos, y muchos entran por ellos; 14 pero la puerta y el camino que llevan a la vida son angostos y difíciles, y pocos los encuentran. —Mateo 7:13-14*

Bueno nos dice que busquemos la puerta estrecha no la ancha, porque la ancha es muy bella y linda, porque hay diversión y mucho más, pero es la que nos lleva al pecado. Pero la estrecha es difícil hallarla, pero cuando la encontramos, la miramos muy linda porque es bello seguir a Jesús y adorarle. Así que hay que irnos por la puerta estrecha y cuando la hallamos, otra vez nos sale la puerta ancha, pero no hay que caer en las tentaciones del mundo.

Ana Ruth Castellanos, Iglesia Anglicana de Honduras

## First Wednesday of Advent

December 1, 2010

*“Why, O Lord, do you stand far off? Why do you hide yourself in times of trouble? In arrogance the wicked persecute the poor. Let them be caught in the schemes they have devised.” —Psalm 10:1,2*

The Lord is not hiding in times of trouble, and if He were to never be far off then there would be no challenges for us as Christians. Part of being a follower of God is having faith even when it is not easy. The Lord has already made a plan for those in trouble, and those rich in faith will rely on him even more. I choose to believe that the Lord has a plan for us, and that simple belief allows me to always be close with God. Oftentimes, those who call themselves Christians are disliked because they appear to act as a god to the poor. They make harsh decisions and are arrogant, but if they were to let the plans God has work out, then there would be no schemes to get caught in.

Katharine Hoehne, Diocese of Idaho

**Dear God, please help me grow closer to you and find stronger faith. Please help me see you in times of trouble and become a more accepting person. Thank you for always watching me and being with me, help me be more like you. In Your name we pray, Amen.**

## First Thursday of Advent

December 2, 2010

*Jesus stood up and commanded the wind, “Be quiet!” and he said to the waves, “Be still!” The wind died down and there was a great calm. Then Jesus said to his disciples, “why are you frightened? Do you still have no faith?” —Mark 4.39-41*

Advent is a voyage. Like any trip, there can be periods of waiting and preparation. We will be called on, one day, when we least expect it. It's our responsibility to do what we can to make sure we are ready to answer the call. It is difficult not knowing where to begin or where we will end up. While out over the water, the disciples planned and made preparations for a safe journey yet despite that a sudden storm threatened their existence. They forgot to pack the most important item, their faith. Jesus reminds us to have faith, if we keep ours; even forces that are beyond our control will not be able to stop us. When we put our faith in Jesus the storm will be calm and there will be nothing to fear.

Shawn Andre Evelyn, Diocese of Los Angeles

**Lord be with us as we venture out. The roads may be broken and the seas may be rough, but with your guidance we will not fall. Help us to be strong in our faith so that we can be with you always. Amen.**

## First Friday of Advent

December 3, 2010

*“Get yourself ready! Stand up and say to them whatever I command you. Do not be terrified by them, or I will terrify you before them. They will fight against you but will not overcome you, for I am with you and will rescue you,” declares the Lord. —Jeremiah 1: 17&19*

Talking with complete strangers or even minor acquaintances without serious and obvious cause to do so makes many people very uncomfortable. However, because the nature of humanity is connected through community, everyone becomes a part of the journey. This society seems to be so obsessed with first impressions and maintaining images that it has lost the ability to be candid and honest. Speaking is a gift. Talk to that guy you ride in the elevator to work every day, or the girl in your group that always has the latest scoop on peoples' personal lives. Go at it with full confidence and fervid faith that the Father will protect and shield you.

Nathan Richardson, Diocese of Texas

**Gracious God, give us the ability to invite all your children into the greater community that has your son, Jesus Christ, as the ultimate example. Amen.**

## First Saturday of Advent

December 4, 2010

*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...and commands the doorkeeper to be on the watch.*

—Mark 13:33-34

Advent is about the journey of our lives and faith, just as the doorkeeper in the gospel of Mark probably had a long night ahead of him. How did he spend his time as he waited for his master's return, we have to wonder? It's a question that we're asked, in a larger sense, during Advent: how have we spent our time this Advent, last month, this year, throughout our lives? Are we satisfied that it's been time well spent? What would we change if we could? The great joy of our faith is our free will: we choose our actions, we choose to change, we choose our path – and through God's grace we know that no matter how many times we stumble, we are loved and accepted and encouraged.

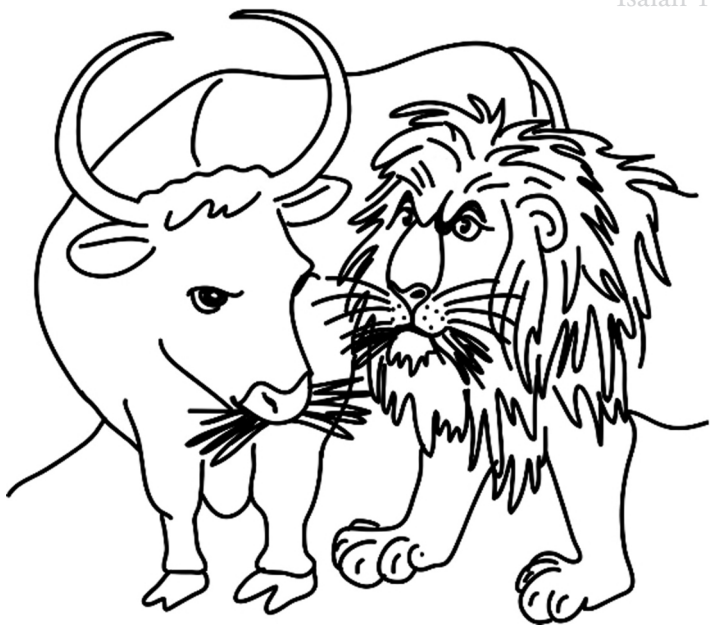
Nicole Seiferth, Diocese of New York

**O God, thank you for being with us and loving us through all our journeys, wise and foolish, good and bad. Amen.**

The wolf shall live with the lamb,  
the leopard shall lie down with the kid,  
the calf and the lion and the fatling together,  
and a little child shall lead them.

The cow and the bear shall graze,  
their young shall lie down together;  
and the lion shall eat straw like the ox.

Isaiah 11





# advent: week two

*December 5-11*

*Merciful God, who sent your messengers  
the prophets to preach repentance and  
prepare the way for our salvation: Give  
us grace to heed their warnings and  
forsake our sins, that we may greet  
with joy the coming of Jesus Christ our  
Redeemer; who lives and reigns with  
you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now  
and for ever. Amen.*

Collect for the Second Sunday of Advent  
The Book of Common Prayer, page 211

## Second Sunday of Advent

December 5, 2010

*Pon tu confianza en Dios y no en lo mucho que sabes, Toma en cuenta a Dios en todas tus acciones y el te ayudara. —Proverbios 3:5-6.*

Cuántas veces hemos sentido que las puertas se nos cierran? Cuántas veces hemos sentido que estamos cansados de luchar, orar y Dios parece no escuchar? En muchas ocasiones aun viviendo una vida de cristiano tendemos a olvidar que tenemos un Dios que quiere guiar nuestros pasos y llenarnos de muchas bendiciones. En esos momentos en los cuales el nos sacude, y caemos de rodilla el nos recuerda que solo por medio de la fe y la oración tendremos respuesta a nuestras peticiones, y es cuando nos maravillamos con la grandeza de su bondad y amor para con nosotros. Amado Padre en estos momentos en los que los corazones del mundo brota la esperanza y el amor permítenos recordar darte gracias principalmente las fuerzas que tú nos brindas demostrándonos que para ti no hay nada imposible.

Wendy Barrett Buchanan, Iglesia Anglicana de Honduras

## Second Monday of Advent

December 6, 2010

*The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad, the desert shall rejoice and blossom; like the crocus it shall blossom abundantly and rejoice with joy and singing...they shall see the glory of the Lord, the majesty of our God. —Isaiah 35:1-3*

The season of Advent is one of expectant waiting and preparation for the coming of our Lord. Just as a desert anticipates the rain we await the coming of Christ to the world. Just as the desert celebrates the coming of the rain with blossoms and life, we celebrate the coming of Christ with the joyous celebration of Christmas. Like the crocus mentioned in Isaiah's lesson, the church blossoms abundantly during the season of Advent, with worship, song, and fellowship. During the season of Advent secular life can often overwhelm us, Christmas parties, shopping trips, and family visits make life hectic and stressful. On Christmas day we rejoice in the coming of the Lord and the end of the Advent season, we see the glory and majesty of God's love in sending his only son to be sacrificed for us.

Alexander Hecht, Diocese of Idaho

**Lord guide us on our advent journey so that we may see the glory of your love, Amen.**

## Second Tuesday of Advent

December 7, 2010

*Beloved...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.*

—2 Peter 3:8,9

God is patient with us because he knows that we don't always understand his plan for us. Some people are born with steadfast faith, but many people have times where they question God's intentions. God is tricky like that. The world isn't always an easy place to understand, and so it is important to have faith in God's plan. I think he never challenges us with trials that are greater than our abilities. Sometimes, we have too little faith in ourselves, but we must remember that God made us strong. When he tests or challenges us, it is so that our faith in him can grow. He loves us, but I think he wants to push us to be the best people we can be. He can be sly in revealing what is in store for us, what the meaning is in his design. But, if we have faith, it will eventually be clear.

Amy Rosenheim, Diocese of Idaho

**Dear God, help me to be courageous enough to have unquestioning faith in your plan for me. Help me to be as great as you made me. Help me to end suffering in others' lives. In your name we pray, Amen.**

## Second Wednesday of Advent

December 8, 2010

*But about that day and hour no one knows, neither the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. Therefore you also must be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an unexpected hour.*

—Matthew 24: 36 & 44

The element of surprise is not always welcome in our lives. In fact, it's only fun when related to gifts, parties, or the Spanish Inquisition sketch by Monty Python. Alas, most of the time life's surprises throw us into periods of uncertainty, at best. Advent is a time of preparation and we can use this time to prepare ourselves for the surprises (both good and bad) we are sure to receive in the upcoming year. We are asked to be in a constant state of readiness. Simply, this means that we must love God and our neighbors. Always ready to give and receive love. By being ready for the big surprises, say the Second Coming of the Son of Man, we can be sure we will be ready to deal with the smaller surprises life throws at us. Think about the last time life surprised you. What would have made you feel more prepared to cope? What do you need to do to get ready during this Advent season?

Meghan Holland, Diocese of Kentucky

**Heavenly Father, teach us to live in a state of heartfelt readiness – prepared to give love as freely as you do – even when we are faced with the unexpected. Amen.**

## Second Thursday of Advent

*December 9, 2010*

*Jacob's well was there, and Jesus, tired out by his journey, was sitting by the well. —John 4:6*

Even Jesus got tired. He was God, but he was also human. We all get tired, particularly on a journey – and our whole life of faith is a journey. Advent comes at a time of year when people tend to be tired – overworked trying to get ready for the holidays, sometimes by too much shopping, sometimes just missing the people they love who are far away. Advent invites us away from all those things into a quiet place to contemplate our faith, to sit quietly and prepare ourselves for the joy that is about to be unleashed on the world once again and yes, to recuperate and prepare for that joy.

Nicole Seiferth, Diocese of New York

**Oh Lord, help us to remember to rest our bodies and our minds when they need it, just as Jesus did. Amen.**

## Second Friday of Advent

*December 10, 2010*

*Do penance: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.*

*—Matthew 3:2*

Recently I was part of the planning team for a youth program called “HAPPENING,” which helps young people to have an experience of Christian renewal. Upon the arrival of these young people, I realized that they were like the land that Jesus spoke in his parable of the Sower. I knew that with some of these youths the seed would not show an immediate result, but I was sure that many had the seed inside them. The word of God is calling us, despite everything, to prepare these people to receive God in their life, although they reject or do not heed the gospel. As Christians we must sow the seed in their hearts and surely the Lord will do his work. At the end of this event, God touched many hearts, especially those who were covering with a shell, the seed was growing. In this time of Advent, as we prepare for the celebration of Christmas, we must ensure that Jesus is born in the hearts of many people, letting them know to turn to God and live according to the Gospel. I invite you to take this time to reflect and to prepare the way of the Lord, motivating others to do the same.

Moises Quezada Pringle, Diocese of Dominican Republic

**Father, make us your own instrument to help others know you and become like you. Amen.**

## Second Saturday of Advent

*December 11, 2010*

*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 —Romans 13:11*

In a time where one's life can change in a moment, where with a text message or an email our entire life can change, how nice is it to receive a warning?? This reading from Romans comes in the first Sunday of Advent, as if to rouse us out of the long season of Pentecost. Use this announcement of change to wake your own spiritual center and focus on your own path. Advent offers us an opportunity to stop, breathe and refocus on the coming journey. As you begin, take time to decide what you want to get out of Advent, whether it is to finish your yearly finances in the black or to not obsess over Christmas shopping, remember this call to focus and breathe.

P<sup>r</sup>Tricia Egbert, Diocese of Kentucky

**Creator of life, grant us serenity amongst chaos and give us clarity in the fog. In your name we pray. Amen.**







*Kim McElbenny, Diocese of Chicago*

# advent: week three

*December 12-18*

*Stir up your power, O Lord, and with  
great might come among us; and,  
because we are sorely hindered by our  
sins, let your bountiful grace and mercy  
speedily help and deliver us; through  
Jesus Christ our Lord, to whom, with  
you and the Holy Spirit, be honor and  
glory, now and for ever. Amen.*

Collect for the Third Sunday of Advent  
The Book of Common Prayer, page 212

## Third Sunday of Advent

December 12, 2010

*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 made low. The uneven ground shall become level, and the rough places a plain.*

—Isaiah 40: 3

God speaks to us in this reading, not of miracles or divine acts but of praise. It speaks to us of our praise toward God, praise not delivered by our words but by our actions. We are called to tear down the highest mountains and build up the lowliest valleys that they might all stand ready for our Lord. This speaks to us that our good will and our works of faith are not for the eye of man but for he who would watch over us in the wilderness, absent of human praise. A voice cries for us to be shepherds of his flock, our world, and leave grandeur only for his coming. Preach humbleness, this says, and make way for the Lord that all might rejoice.

Alex Rastutis, Diocese of Idaho.

**I pray thee Lord our hands to take for those who wade through darkened ways, in our darkest hour that all would stand in heavens glow, as the coming of the dawn. Amen.**

## Third Monday of Advent

*December 13, 2010*

*Wait on the Lord; Be of good courage, And He shall strengthen your heart; Wait, I say, on the Lord! —Psalms 27:14*

Christmas today has become more about presents, eggnog, and days off from work. However, there is a movement to remind everyone that “Jesus Christ is the reason for the season.” We, as human beings, are at times forgetful that we are children of God. Therefore, we forget the real meaning of Christmas. In addition, we furthermore are not prepared for the celebration and joy that comes with the birth of baby Jesus; the true meaning of Christmas. As Christians, we must learn to listen, have courage, and wait on the coming of the Lord.

Lemuel R. Moncur, Diocese of Southeast Florida

**O Lord, hasten our hearts to accept you as our Savior. Teach us to listen, wait, and understand the true meaning of the Advent season. Teach us that we must prepare, prepare, and prepare for your coming. Amen.**

## **Third Tuesday of Advent**

*December 14, 2010*

Que la paz y el amor de Jesucristo este con cada uno de ustedes. He tenido problemas con mi cuenta de internet pero ya gracias a Dios estaremos en contacto. Les envio la reflexión, si hay que hacer otra no tengo ningun problema, el unico que tengo es con el video ya que no puedo subirlo, seguire intentando hasta que lo logre. Bendiciones.

Víctor Manuel Velásquez M., Iglesia Anglicana de Honduras

## Third Wednesday of Advent

*December 15, 2010*

*Welcome one another, therefore, just as Christ has welcomed you, for the glory of God. —Romans 15:5*

Humanity often gets bogged down in what makes sets us apart from each other. We obsess over minute details like where we live or who we like. We are constantly reminded to love one another as Christ loved us, yet we fight with our neighbors over insignificant things like the height of their trees and how their dog barks all day. If we love as Christ loves it would mean that we would have to let all this hate go. On this journey through Advent, try and work on the release of that frustration and anger by remembering your neighbors in prayer or mending a broken friendship. Leave the differences behind and love one another as Christ loves us.

P<sup>r</sup>Tricia Egbert, Diocese of Kentucky

**Almighty Lord, thank you for the important relationships in our lives. Please give us the grace to swallow our pride and help us hear the words of your son and welcome one another in this season of light and wonder. Amen.**

## Third Thursday of Advent

December 16, 2010

*I hereby command you: be strong and courageous; do not be frightened or dismayed, for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go. —Joshua 1:9*

Hallelujah, the Lord is with us. In this season we recognize God's presence in our world and in our hearts. And because God goes with us, we are able to walk where we must walk. Even in a place of exile where we find ourselves without the comforts of our home and traditions, we can step from the trail without fear. Not because God will come find us when we lose our way, but because God is already there, lost with us.

Elaine Warn, Diocese of Montana

**O Hidden Life vibrant in every atom; O Hidden Light! shining in every creature; O Hidden Love! embracing all in Oneness; May each who feels himself as one with Thee, Know he is also one with every other. —Annie Besant 195**



## Third Friday of Advent

December 17, 2010

*Hear, all you peoples! Listen, O earth, and all that is in it! Let the Lord God be a witness against you, The Lord from His holy temple. For behold, the Lord is coming out of His place; He will come down and tread on the high places of the earth. —Micah 1:2-3*

The season of Advent is a time of preparation for Christians around the world. It is a season filled with joy and celebration in anticipation of the first coming of Christ. We take the time during Advent to prepare and thank God for the birth of Jesus. With His birth, Jesus comes down from Heaven and walks, talks, and lives amongst us here on earth. While on earth, Jesus does his Father's work and teachings. Therefore, we as Christians should do our best to live our lives as Christ lived His life on earth.

Lemuel R. Moncur, Diocese of Southeast Florida

**O God, help us in this time of preparation and joy, as we await the coming of the birth of Christ. Help us and teach us, O God to follow in His footsteps in becoming a better person in life and being more Christ-like. Amen.**

## Third Saturday in Advent

*December 18, 2010*

*Repite siempre lo que dice el libro de la ley de Dios, y medita en él de día y de noche, para que hagas siempre lo que este ordena. Así todo lo que hagas te saldrá bien. —Josué 1:8*

En este versículo nos dice que nunca apartemos el libro de la Ley (Biblia), que de día y de noche meditemos todo los consejos y palabras de aliento que Dios nos da por medio de su Palabra y no solo que leamos, si no que nos hace un llamado a guardarla en nuestro corazón, mediar lo que día a día nos quiere decir, también a que hagamos todo conforme a lo que está escrito, porque Dios en este versículo nos dice que si hacemos Su voluntad, haremos prosperar nuestro camino y todo nos saldrá bien, porque Dios estará con nosotros y nunca nos desampará y si caemos, está el Libro de la Ley, porque sólo ahí encontraremos todo lo que necesitamos: fuerza, ganas de seguir luchando para tener una vida eterna, en sí, encontramos todo. ¡Que Dios les bendiga!

Dania Corea Meza





*John Shorb, New York*

# advent: week four

*December 19-24*

*Purify our conscience, Almighty God, by  
your daily visitation, that your Son Jesus  
Christ, at his coming, may find in us a  
mansion prepared for himself; who lives and  
reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy  
Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.*

Collect for the Fourth Sunday of Advent  
The Book of Common Prayer, page 212

## Fourth Sunday of Advent

December 19, 2010

*Here is our bread; it was still warm when we took it from our houses as our food for the journey, on the day we set out to come to you, but now, see, it is dry and mouldy...and these garments and sandals of ours are worn out from the very long journey. —Joshua 9:12-13*

Advent can be a confusing time. It is the beginning of the church year, but it is also the end of the calendar year. Advent is all about preparation and part of preparing for any journey is marking where we've been – the past, good or bad, is part of us. What do we have to celebrate? What do we have to mourn? What did we miss? What were we fully present for? Even as we unpack where we've been on the journey of living for the past 12 months, we know that Advent is also God's invitation to begin fresh. We see it in Jesus' birth, his ministry, and his death and resurrection. So as we look back over the year, with reflection, we also look forward with joy.

Nicole Seiferth, Diocese of New York

**Oh God, give us the wisdom to balance our contemplation of the past with our joyous anticipation for the future and mindfulness of the gift of each present moment you give us. Amen.**

## Fourth Monday of Advent

December 20, 2010

*Therefore we do not lose heart though outwardly we are wasting away, yet inwardly we are being renewed day by day. So we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen. For what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal. —2 Corinthians 4:16-18*

For Christians, Advent is a time of meditation, devotion and prayer. Jesus doesn't walk with us in a physical sense, but while we cannot lay our eyes on Him in this life, He is eternal. When asked; "What is your journey through Advent?" we answer, "Renewing my faith with Christ and He will show me the way." Paul tells us that if we focus inward, on our faith in Christ, we are constantly reminded that Christ is always with us; we are His. Sometimes, in the busyness of our lives, we focus on the small things. We worry about money, school, family relationships, and friends, and we fill our time with things that will fall away. During this Advent, set your eyes on the One you cannot see. He will bring you a peace like nothing else can, and His peace lasts forever.

Amanda Laforet, Diocese of Texas

**Father God, we come to you each day to renew our faith and help guide us on this journey you have given us. For you will show us the way like a beacon of light. You will guide us to the everlasting life. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.**

## Fourth Tuesday of Advent

*December 21, 2010*

*But I tell you: Love your enemies and do pray for those  
who persecute you... —Matthew 5:44*

When I first really encountered these words of Jesus, I was in a rather unique situation. It was the summer of 2004, and I was sitting and reading during some down time. I was sitting on an olive-drab cot in a gritty makeshift barracks near the town of Baiji, Iraq. I was a soldier in the 1st Infantry Division, serving as a Humvee machine-gunner as part of OIF2. The words of the Messiah caught me completely off guard. I was reading “Love your enemies” and “Blessed are the peacemakers” with my M-16A2 rifle resting behind me! How could I follow the Messiah’s teaching—to love my enemy—with a rifle? I wrestled with the notion secretly for the rest of my deployment, becoming more critical of Just War Theory and adopting the Christian pacifism that Jesus represented. Eventually, I had to give up being a soldier to better follow Christ. His advent into the world marks a new way of Love, a new journey towards peace.

Dillon Warn, Diocese of Montana

**“Grant, O God, that your holy and life-giving Spirit may so move every human heart that barriers which divide us may crumble, suspicions disappear, and hatreds cease; that our divisions being healed, we may live in justice and peace; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.” BCP-p.823**



## Fourth Wednesday of Advent

December 22, 2010

*Do not worry; our child will leave in good health and return to us in good health. Do not fear for them, my sister. For a good angel will accompany him; his journey will be successful, and he will come back in good health. —Tobit 5:21-22*

Journeys are frightening. Sometimes exhilaratingly so, but sometimes they're just plain scary. Even if it's a road, physical or spiritual that you've traveled before, no one can predict what might happen on a journey. We travel through Advent, heading toward that angel who encourages the shepherds and, really all of us, with a bold "Fear not!" Trusting that all will be well is about far more than just believing in your own good luck. For Christians, it's about knowing that God provides us with the strength and wisdom we need to handle any given situation – even if we don't recognize that strength and wisdom at the time.

Nicole Seiferth, Diocese of New York

**Lord, who sent an angel to calm frightened shepherds, help us to remember with joy and peace that you are with us on all our journeys. Amen.**

## Fourth Thursday of Advent

December 23, 2010

*You must make every effort to support your faith with goodness, and goodness with knowledge, and knowledge with self-control, and self-control with endurance, and endurance with godliness, and godliness with mutual affection, and mutual affection with love. —2 Peter 1:5-7*

It all comes back to love. Faith supported by love. Sure it takes a few steps to get there, but it ends up there all the same. There are steps along the way, and skipping them is usually never helpful for the one on the journey through them. The progression along the way is just as important as the beginning and the end of any journey. Without the in between moments, we're left with just a reaction. But, with the progression, the Faith and Love mean so much more and the space between is filled with understanding that can only come through goodness, knowledge, self-control, endurance, godliness, and mutual affection. The steps between Faith and Love are many, but every step is worth it. The way isn't always easy, but it sure is worth it. Christ is in the steps it takes to get there, and Christ is in the journey just as much as the beginning and end.

Max Williams, Diocese of Texas

**God of All Creation, thank you for our journeys, even when we think it too hard to give thanks for them. Give us strength to take every step we need to and to be able to rejoice in your presence in each of those steps. The Kingdom is near! Amen.**

## Fourth Friday of Advent

*Christmas Eve, December 24, 2010*

*God is love, and those who abide in love abide in God,  
and God abides in them. —1 John 4:16b*

On this night, our journey through Advent ends with the birth of Christ. While there is no doubt that your next 24 hours will be filled with action, shuttling between familial celebrations and other social obligations, I encourage you to spare some time for personal reflection. Take a moment and remember the reason for the season, remember that Christ's entrance into the world is an outward and visible sign of God's love for the world, a tangible way of saying "I love you, and so I am here with you." In each act of love we give to one another there is a small rebirth of Christ into the world.

P'Tricia Egbert, Diocese of Kentucky

**O God, you have bound us together in a common life. Help us, in the midst of our struggles for justice and truth, to confront one another without hatred or bitterness, and to work together with mutual forbearance, respect and communal love; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**



# **Young Adult and Campus Ministries**

at The Episcopal Church Center

The Office of Young Adult and Campus Ministries at the Episcopal Church Center is committed to supporting individuals 18-30 years old and those who minister to them throughout the Episcopal Church and beyond, with resources, relationships and advocacy. To explore opportunities and resources available through our office please contact us directly. Many blessings this Advent.

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*for a daily meditation, please send an email  
with your e-mail address as the subject line  
and “join meditations” in the body  
to [mharewood@episcopalchurch.org](mailto:mharewood@episcopalchurch.org)*

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