

5 PRAY THE PSALM OF THE WEEK **Philippians 4:4-5; Psalm 85:1-2, 6, 8**

Rejoice in the Lord / always.*
Again will I / say, rejoice!
Let your gentleness be known to / all men.*
The Lord / is at hand.
Lord, You have been favourable / to Your land:*
You have brought back the captivity of / Jacob.
You have forgiven the iniquity of Your / people;*
You have covered / all their sin.
Will You not revive / us again,*
that Your people may re- / joice in You?
I will hear what God the / Lord will speak,*
for He will speak peace to His / people.

6 SAY TOGETHER THE VERSE OF THE WEEK **Matthew 11:4-6**

And Jesus answered them, "Go and tell John what you hear and see: the blind receive their sight and the lame walk, lepers are cleansed and the deaf hear, and the dead are raised up, and the poor have good news preached to them. And blessed is the one who is not offended by me."

7 READ THE SCRIPTURE AND DEVOTION (OTHER SIDE OF THE PAGE)

8 PRAY THE PRAYER OF THE WEEK

Lord, we implore You, give ear to our prayers and lighten the darkness of our hearts by Your gracious visitation; for You now live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

9 PRAYER FOR OURSELVES AND OTHERS

10 SING OR SAY THE HYMN OF THE WEEK
Ye Sons of Men, Oh, Hearken

TLH 75, LSB 345

Valentin Thilo, Jr.



1. Ye sons of men, oh, hearken:
Your heart and mind prepare,
To hail the almighty Savior,
O sinners, be your care.
He who of grace alone
Our Life and Light was given,
The promised Lord from heaven,
Unto our world is shown.

4. Prepare my heart, Lord Jesus,
Turn not from me aside,
And grant that I receive Thee
This blessed Advent-tide.
From stall and manger low
Come Thou to dwell within me;
Loud praises will I sing Thee
And forth glory show.



"The Lord Has Come As Long Promised"

1 BLESS YOURSELF WITH THE HOLY CROSS AND SAY:
In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

2 SAY THE APOSTLES' CREED
I believe in God, the Father Almighty,
Maker of heaven and earth.
And in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our
Lord, who was conceived by the Holy
Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered
under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died
and was buried. He descended into hell.
The third day He rose again from the
dead. He ascended into heaven and sits at
the right hand of God, the Father
Almighty. From thence He will come to
judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy
Christian church, the communion of
saints, the forgiveness of sins, the
resurrection of the body, and the life
everlasting. Amen.

3 PRAY THE LORD'S PRAYER
Our Father, who art in
heaven,
hallowed be Thy name,
Thy kingdom come,
Thy will be done on earth as it
is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily
bread;
and forgive us our trespasses
as we forgive those who
trespass against us;
and lead us not into
temptation,
but deliver us from evil.
For Thine is the kingdom and
the power and the glory
forever and ever. Amen.

4 PRAY THE MORNING OR EVENING PRAYER

Morning. I thank You, my
heavenly Father, through Jesus
Christ, Your dear Son, that You
have kept me this night from all
harm and danger; and I pray that
You would keep me this day also
from sin and every evil, that all my
doings and life may please You.
For into Your hands I commend
myself, my body and soul, and all
things. Let Your holy angel be with
me, that the evil foe may have no
power over me. Amen.

Evening. I thank you, my
heavenly Father, through Jesus
Christ, Your dear Son, that You
have graciously kept me this day;
and I pray that You would forgive
me all my sins where I have done
wrong, and graciously keep me this
night. For into Your hands, I
commend myself, my body and
soul, and all things. Let Your holy
angel be with me, that the evil foe
may have no power over me. Amen.

Around the Word Devotions + the week of December 11-17, 2016

THEME OF THE WEEK: The Lord Has Come As Long Promised

The final preparations are being made; we joyfully await a king who comes to us through the humble womb of the virgin Mary. Let us then heed the call of John the Baptizer; let us take warning from the creation which testifies to His goodness. Let us repent of our sins and acknowledge that we need a Savior. And then let us give thanks that God sent Him, born of a woman, to fulfill the promise made to Abraham. The Seed of Abraham, God promised, would be a blessing to all nations. Let us, with all creation, make a joyful noise.

SUN

SCRIPTURE: Matthew 11:2-10: Faith Looks to Jesus Christ Alone

Believing in Christ does not mean we never doubt. Faith confesses in spite of doubt, in the face of doubt. Faith clings to Christ, even as we cry out, "I believe; help my unbelief." Whether John the Baptizer doubted or simply said these things to direct his disciples to Christ does not change the one to whom he turned in trial: Christ. He had done everything asked of him; he pointed and prepared for Christ; and yet, he rotted away in prison. It's easy to see how he might have doubted. Yet, his faith still clung to Christ who preached the good news to the poor, and that's where he pointed his disciples—to Jesus. *Heavenly Father, please keep our eyes ever turned to Christ and Him alone, especially in times of doubt. Amen.*

MON

SCRIPTURE: Psalm 4: Make Us to Dwell in Safety

During Christ's earthly life, there were moments when He called out to His Father to hear His prayer. The garden of Gethsemane is one example. Christ went to His suffering and death "in peace," for God alone brought Him safety. As the children of God, we can also pray this Psalm. Even though our prayers have been soiled with sin, even though our thoughts remain unworthy of the presence of God, yet we can say that we have offered right sacrifices and trusted in God. Why? Because Christ has given us His obedience and perfection. So we also lie down and sleep in peace. The Lord has made us to dwell in safety. *Heavenly Father, give us the peace of Christ that we might dwell in safety. Amen.*

TUE

SCRIPTURE: 1 Corinthians 4:1-5: Stewards of God's Mysteries

God's called and ordained servants steward His mysteries for His people. What a wondrous gift God has given to His church, that He calls and sets aside those who speak on His behalf and who hand out His gifts. You can be certain that when God's stewards speak to you, it is not they alone who speak, but God Himself who speaks to you. On the one hand, it frightens us when the servant must speak Law and warn us of sin. On the other hand, it's a great blessing and delight to hear from the mouth of Christ's servant: Your sins are forgiven you. Your sins are washed away. Take and eat; take and drink, for the forgiveness of all of your sins. *Almighty Father, thank You for giving us stewards to dispense Your gifts to Your church. Amen.*

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WED

SCRIPTURE: Malachi 3:1-6: Prepare to be Clean

Advent prepares us to receive our King. John the baptizer came to warn the people, for the coming King will be like the refiner's fire and the fullers' soap. The refiner's fire melts the metal to cleanse away impurities; the fuller would tread, stomp, and otherwise beat soap into the cloth to remove the oils and whiten the cloth. John the baptizer preached repentance. Today also we listen as God preaches repentance to us. And we give thanks for our Lord and Savior who came and endured the fire of refinement and the fullers' soap for us. He gives us repentant hearts, and He cleanses us with His preached Word. *Lord, prepare us this Advent to receive You as You come in Your Word. Amen.*

THU

SCRIPTURE: Luke 1:39-56: The Humble Will Be Exalted

Jesus entered humbly into the world through the womb of the virgin Mary. He who rules all creation came to earth to live and serve those who rejected Him. Not only did God look on the humble estate of man, but He entered into that humility; He showed mercy to us. This mercy transforms the people of God from enemies into children. It raises up the poor, and the proud, sinful, haughty man it destroys. He fills up the hungry and thirsty with the food of righteousness. He who suffered the humility of the cross and is now exalted at the right hand of God has joined Himself to us that we might be exalted with Him. *God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, we give You thanks for sending the promised seed and making us children of Abraham by faith. Amen.*

FRI

SCRIPTURE: Romans 1:16-25: Not Ashamed of the Gospel

The Gospel is "the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes." There are many who do not believe, who have rejected what God's Word speaks to them. While we may not worship physical idols, we must heed the call to examine our lives for spiritual idols. Do we worship prestige and honor that comes from a job promotion more than we are concerned about the gifts of God? Are we more concerned with filling up on happiness than living under the cross God has placed upon us? Let us therefore praise God the Father for the Gospel, that in Christ, all is forgiven and we are made His children. *Heavenly Father, thank You for the Gospel and make us bold in sharing it. Amen.*

SAT

SCRIPTURE: Psalm 98: Make a Joyful Noise

God promised Abraham the promised Seed. This Advent season, as we wait for the coming King, we do so in the joyful knowledge that Christ came as a child and revealed God's salvation to the world. He fulfilled the promise to Abraham, that all the nations of the earth would be blessed in Abraham's seed. So let us, nations of the earth that we are, make a joyful noise to the Lord. Let us join in the hymn of all creation and give Him thanks for all He has done for us. Let us join with angels and archangels and all the company of heaven—and earth. "Hosanna to God in the highest, and peace to His people on earth." *Saving Father, thank You for sending Your Son to suffer, die, and rise again for the salvation of the world. Amen.*

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