



CHRISTMAS *with CALVARY*

ADVENT DEVOTIONAL
THE NAMES OF JESUS





2025 Advent Devotional

The Names of Jesus

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For to us a child is born, to us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder, and his name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

Isaiah 9:6

Welcome to the Christmas season at Calvary Bible Church.

Each year, the Church enters a sacred rhythm of preparation and anticipation called **Advent**. The word “Advent” means *arrival* or *coming*. It is a season where we remember the first coming of Jesus in Bethlehem and His promised return. We slow down. We listen. We look again toward the manger and remember that God Himself stepped into our world. God is not distant, but near. Not silent, but speaking. Not passive, but saving.

This year, we will journey through Advent by reflecting on the **names of Jesus Christ**. Scripture gives Jesus many names, not simply titles, but revelations of His character. Every name tells us something true about who He is and what He offers to us today. Names such as **Immanuel, Prince of Peace, Mighty God, and Everlasting Father** invite us to see Jesus as the One who steps into our joys and sorrows, our celebrations and our longings.

These devotionals are written for you. For your home, your family, your quiet mornings, your late-night reflections, your dinner table conversations, your weary days, and your joyful ones. Some readings will lift your spirit. Others may gently confront. All of them point to the One whose birth changed the world forever.

As a church, we enter this season **together**.

Together we wait.

Together we worship.

Together we remember the story we belong to.

A story of a God who comes close.

Our prayer is simple:

That through these reflections, you would see Jesus clearly. That His presence would steady your heart. That His peace would rest upon your home. That His love would renew your hope in this season, and in the year to come.

May the Word who became flesh dwell richly with us this Advent.

Come, let us adore Him — Christ the Lord.

– Pastor Jay Ewing



Wonderful Counselor

November 30

Psalm of the Day: Psalm 16

For to us a child is born, to us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder, and his name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

Isaiah 9:6

There are times when we are unsure about what to do next, seasons when decisions feel heavy, unclear, or overwhelming. Sometimes the heart is full of emotion, yet direction seems distant. Into this fog of uncertainty, Isaiah gives us a name: Wonderful Counselor.

The word wonderful here does not mean just “impressive,” but rather something beyond human explanation, full of divine wisdom. The word counselor refers to the One who guides, leads, and rightly interprets the world.

Jesus is not just wise; He is wisdom itself (1 Corinthians 1:30). He doesn't merely give counsel; Jesus Christ is the counsel your heart is longing for.

When Christ enters the world at Christmas, He comes not only to save us from sin but also to guide us through life. He aims to lead us into truth, goodness, and a way of being human that reflects God's design.

The question for us this Advent is simple: Are we listening?

When everything in life urges us toward speed, the Wonderful Counselor invites us to slow down. When anxiety pushes us to grasp for control, He calls us to trust. When disappointment tries to shut our hearts, He teaches us how to hope again. Jesus does not rush you. He does not scold you for not knowing. He draws near. He speaks peace. He leads with gentleness.

*“Your ears shall hear a word behind you, saying,
‘This is the way, walk in it’” (Isaiah 30:21).*

Prayer

Lord Jesus, Wonderful Counselor, speak to my heart today. Guide me in the way I should go. Give me clarity, patience, and trust in Your voice. Teach me to walk in Your wisdom. Amen.

God

December 1

Psalm of the Day: Psalm 8

*In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God,
and the Word was God.*

John 1:1

Christmas begins with God.

Before there were lights, shepherds, or songs of angels, before the first star hung over Bethlehem, there was God. Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Perfect in love, complete in joy, eternal in being. All that we celebrate at Christmas begins not in a manger, but in the mystery of the eternal God who chose to reveal Himself through the Word made flesh.

The New City Catechism asks, “*What is God?*” The answer still stirs the heart: “*God is the creator and sustainer of everyone and everything. He is eternal, infinite, and unchangeable in His power and perfection, goodness and glory, wisdom, justice, and truth. Nothing happens except through him and by his will.*”

Stop for a moment and read that again. Eternal. Infinite. Unchangeable. The truest definition of perfection and power. Everything in this world exists because He spoke it into being. Even the Christmas season itself, our celebrations, our gatherings, our songs, are held together by His will and sustained by His grace.

John begins his Gospel with the same grand truth that echoes through creation: “*In the beginning...*” It reminds us that Christmas is not the start of Jesus’ story but the unveiling of God’s story. The Word who *was* with God *was* God. The Word took on flesh to dwell among us. The child wrapped in swaddling clothes is the same God who spoke galaxies into motion.

Throughout church history, believers have marveled at this wonder. The early church fathers called it the *incarnation*, a word that means “in the flesh.” Augustine wrote that God became what He created, so that we might be restored to our Creator. The carols we sing echo this same truth: *Veiled in flesh the Godhead see, Hail the incarnate Deity!*

In all your preparations this year: the lights, the lists, the laughter, I encourage you to pause to recognize His presence. Christmas is not something that happens apart from Him. It happens because of Him. Jesus Christ has full authority over the season you are living in this year.

Do you recognize His will?

Do you recognize His work?

Do you see Him?

I pray that you do.

As C. S. Lewis wrote in *The Last Battle*, “I have come home at last! This is my real country! I belong here. This is the land I have been looking for all my life, though I never knew it till now. ... Come further up, come further in!”

May this Christmas draw you further into the wonder, beauty, and glory of God Himself.

Reflection

Tonight, light a candle and read John 1:1 aloud. Think about how every word, every carol, every shining light reflects the God who was and is and is to come. How might your Christmas change if you began every celebration with the words, “*In the beginning was God*”?

1. How does knowing that Christmas began with God, and not just in a manger, change the way you think about and celebrate the season?
2. In what ways can we recognize and honor God’s presence in our preparations and celebrations this Christmas?

Immanuel, “God With Us”

December 2

Psalm of the Day: Psalm 139

“Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall call his name Immanuel” (which means, God with us).

Matthew 1:23

Our world is hurting. Many hearts are weary. Even as we enter a season of lights and laughter, there are moments when the joy of Christmas feels distant. Yet it is into this very world, this wounded, uncertain world, that God chose to come. There may be no name of God more comforting this Christmas than Immanuel, which means God *with us*.

The name first appeared centuries before Christ’s birth. During the days of Isaiah, around 734 B.C., Judah faced a terrifying war. Two neighboring nations, Syria and Israel, joined forces against them. King Ahaz, frightened and faithless, looked to Assyria for help instead of trusting God. Yet through the prophet Isaiah, God gave a promise: a virgin would bear a son, and his name would be Immanuel. This was a sign that God had not abandoned His people. Even in fear and conflict, He was still present.

When Matthew wrote his Gospel, he looked back at Isaiah’s prophecy and saw its ultimate fulfillment in Jesus. The Son of God entered the world through a miraculous birth, taking on human nature, bringing God’s redemptive presence to His people once again. In Jesus, God did not stay distant. He stepped into our pain, our confusion, and our history.

This year may have held uncertainty, loss, or longing, yet the story of Christmas reminds us that none of it surprises God. His name, Immanuel, is His promise that He will never leave us.

Hebrews 11:16 tells us, “They desire a better country, that is, a heavenly one. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for he has prepared for them a city.” Immanuel is the assurance that we are not alone on the journey to that better country.

Reflection

1. What does the name “Immanuel”—God with us—mean to you personally, especially during times when life feels difficult or uncertain?
2. Can you think of a time when you felt God’s presence during a challenging situation? How did it bring comfort or hope?
3. How can we remind each other that God is always with us, even when things aren’t going as planned?
4. What are some ways we can share the message and hope of “Immanuel” with others this Christmas season?

Son of God

December 3

Psalm of the Day: Psalm 2

*Nathanael answered him, "Rabbi, you are the Son of God!
You are the King of Israel!"*

John 1:49

During the Christmas season, we slow down to reflect on who Jesus truly is, His divine nature, His unique relationship with the Father, and His mission to bring salvation to the world. One of the most important titles given to Jesus in Scripture is "Son of God."

From the very beginning, followers of Jesus have confessed that He is not merely a teacher, prophet, or moral example, but the eternal Son, fully God and fully man. This truth was tested and defended throughout the history of the church. In 325 A.D., leaders of the early church gathered at the Council of Nicaea to clarify what Scripture taught about Jesus' nature. The central question was whether Jesus was of the same essence as God the Father. Using the Greek word *homoousios*, meaning "of one substance," Athanasius and other faithful believers boldly declared that Christ was not created but co-eternal and co-equal with the Father.

Their confession became part of what we now call *The Nicene Creed*:

We believe in one Lord Jesus Christ,
the only-begotten Son of God,
begotten of the Father before all worlds,
Light of Light, very God of very God,
begotten, not made,
being of one substance with the Father.

When we call Jesus the Son of God, we are proclaiming this same truth. The apostle John uses the phrase "only Son" several times to emphasize this divine relationship (John 1:14, 18; 3:16, 18; 1 John 4:9). In John 3:16, we hear the good news that God loved the world so much that He gave His "only Son."

Throughout His ministry, Jesus demonstrated divine power and knowledge. He knew Nathanael before meeting him (John 1:48), and He calmed the storm with a word (Matthew 14:33). His disciples recognized this and worshiped Him, saying, "*Truly you are the Son of God.*"

The arrival of the Son of God is more than a historical event; it is the unveiling of divine love. The Creator stepped into creation. The eternal Word took on flesh to redeem what was lost.

This Christmas, as you gather with loved ones and sing familiar carols, remember the confession of Nathanael and the church through the ages: *Jesus is the Son of God, the King of Israel.*

Reflection

1. What does it mean to call Jesus the “Son of God,” and why is that important for our faith?
2. How did Nathanael recognize Jesus as the Son of God, and what can we learn from his example?
3. How can remembering Jesus’ divine nature help us celebrate Christmas with deeper meaning?

Alpha and Omega, First and Last

December 4

Psalm of the Day: Psalm 121

*“Listen to me, O Jacob, and Israel, whom I called!
I am he; I am the first, and I am the last.”*

Isaiah 48:12

Who writes your story?

Who decided where it began?

Who will decide where it ends?

A few years ago, I walked through a quiet cemetery in the nearly forgotten town of Como, high in Colorado's mountains. Once a thriving coal-mining and railroad town in the late 1800s, Como, during this time, was a hub of energy and hope. It connected Denver to the mining towns of Leadville and Breckenridge. There were hotels, shops, a school, and a church. However, life in the high country was challenging, and winters were particularly harsh. One particular winter around the turn of the century, many townspeople fell ill and died, especially children.

As I read the names carved into the weathered stones, I could almost hear the stillness of that Christmas long ago. The joy of the season must have felt distant to those families. And yet, even there, in the shadow of sorrow, the message of Christmas still whispers hope: God is not absent. He is the beginning and the end.

In the book of Revelation, Jesus declares, *“I am the Alpha and the Omega”* (Revelation 1:8; 21:6; 22:13). In Greek, Alpha is the first letter of the alphabet, and Omega is the last. The title reminds us that Christ is both the origin and the completion of all things. He stands before creation and beyond time itself. Nothing begins or ends apart from Him.

This name, Alpha and Omega, reveals the vastness of God's sovereignty and the intimacy of His care. He is not only the Creator of the universe but the Author of your story. Every joy and sorrow, every beginning and ending, rests within His divine plan.

The prophet Isaiah echoes this same truth when God says, *“I am the first, and I am the last.”* These words call us to trust in God's faithful presence through every season of life, even the winters that feel long and lonely.

As you enter this Christmas season, perhaps your heart feels heavy or uncertain. Maybe this year has carried its share of loss or difficulty. Yet even in the stillness, the Alpha and Omega is with you. The same God who began your story will be faithful to complete it.

Let your heart rest in the assurance that Jesus holds every chapter of your life—from your first breath to the final word and beyond that, into eternity.

Reflection

1. What do you think it means that Jesus is called the “Alpha and Omega” or “the beginning and the end”?
2. Can you think of a time when you felt God was with you during a difficult season, like the families in the story of Como?
3. How can remembering God’s presence bring us hope during times that feel hard or uncertain, especially around Christmas?

Image of the Invisible God

December 5

Psalm of the Day: Psalm 19

He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation.

Colossians 1:15

When I think back to my childhood, I can still see myself lying in the backyard grass on a warm evening, looking up at the stars and wondering, *What does God look like?*

Maybe you've asked the same question.

What would it be like to see the face of God?

If we had asked the greatest storytellers in history to write the script of how God would appear on earth, no one would have imagined the Christmas story. The Almighty, wrapped in the soft folds of a blanket. The Creator of galaxies, resting in a feed trough. The Eternal Word, unable yet to speak. Christmas is where we see the invisible God become visible.

Paul's words in Colossians pull back the curtain: Jesus is the image of the invisible God. Everything God is, His mercy, His holiness, His steadfast love comes into focus in the person of Jesus.

And look at how God chose to reveal Himself. Not through power or spectacle, but through humility. The way God shows Himself to the world is the way He wants to shape our hearts. Jesus works slowly, gently, and near.

But not everyone noticed. In Bethlehem, most were too busy. In Jerusalem, too proud. Yet the outsiders, true outsiders, the shepherds, the Magi, the young couple from Nazareth saw Him for who He truly was. Paul later wrote, "None of the rulers of this age understood this, for if they had, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory" (1 Corinthians 2:8).

At Christmas, we are invited to see. To look beyond the glitter and noise and recognize the God who still chooses humility as His stage. Charles Wesley captured it so well in the carol, *Hark! The Herald Angels Sing*:

*Veiled in flesh, the Godhead see;
Hail th' incarnate Deity.*

Today, may you pause and notice the ways God is showing Himself to you in the quiet, ordinary, humble moments. For it is there, in the stillness of Christmas, that we behold the image of the invisible God.

Reflection

1. When you think about God being “invisible,” what comes to mind? How does it feel to know that Jesus shows us what God is like?
2. Why do you think God chose to reveal Himself through humility and gentleness, rather than power and spectacle?
3. Who were the people who recognized Jesus for who He truly was when He was born? What can we learn from their example?

Word/Logos

December 6

Psalm of the Day: Psalm 104

*In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God,
and the Word was God."*

John 1:1

This is the great opening of John's Gospel—the prologue of who we will encounter as we step into John's storytelling. From the opening line, John declares, "In the beginning was the Word." This word is translated in Greek as *logos*, which means "the logic of..." Now, the most interesting thing about John's use of the word is the capitalization of the Greek word, making it *Logos*. John is delving deeper into the words' meaning, exploring "the logic of everything."

Here is how this matters to you. This Advent season, as we take a moment each day to pause before Christ and remember this beginning story, we must realize that everything we experience, possess, and contemplate today is in Christ's view and control. For Jesus Christ reveals God's relationship to the world and the sovereign reign of Christ over this universe. He is the essence of human existence. He is the center of your story. He is the center of ALL stories. He is the Word. Amazingly enough, he moves into our world and points to the Father. Not only does he make us re-center our lives which seem so self-serviced, but he also invites us to step into an overwhelming abundance of grace and truth, more than we could ever imagine. To say it another way, he invites us to experience all the grace and truth we need. He is your Word, and that is all you need or could handle today. Be encouraged, my friend. "And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth" (John 1:14).

Reflection

1. What does it mean that Jesus is called the “Word” (Logos)? How does this shape how we see him in our lives and stories today?
2. How would life look different if we truly believed Jesus is at the center of our story and of the whole world? Can you share a moment when you felt Jesus was guiding your actions or thoughts?
3. The passage says Jesus is “full of grace and truth.” How can we welcome more of Christ’s grace and truth into our home? What are practical ways we can show these qualities to each other?
4. The writing mentions that Jesus invites us into all the grace and truth we need. Where in life do you feel you need more grace or truth? How can we support and pray for each other as we experience this invitation from Jesus?



Mighty God

December 7

Psalm of the Day: Psalm 29

“For to us a child is born, to us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder, and his name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.”

Isaiah 9:6

Christmas is tender, but it is also triumphant. The child in the manger is not fragile in power or authority. He is the Mighty God, robed in humility and wrapped in swaddling clothes. The baby Mary holds is the One who holds all things together (Colossians 1:17).

He is the God who spoke galaxies into existence.

He is the God who parted seas and commanded storms.

He is the God whose power is unmatched, unshaken, unchanging.

And still Jesus draws near to you. The miracle of Christmas is not only God's power but His willingness to use His power for our good. Not to crush, but to rescue. Not to shame, but to save.

Perhaps this Advent finds you weary, carrying burdens that exceed your strength, wrestling with struggles that no one sees, and trying to hold things together that feel like they're coming apart. Hear this gently and clearly:

You are not the Mighty One.

You were never meant to be.

Jesus is. He is strong enough to redeem, restore, and renew all things.

Even you. Even now.

Prayer

Lord Jesus, Mighty God, be my strength today.

Where I am weak, show Your power.

Where I am weary, lift my heart.

Where life feels heavy, carry what I cannot.

I trust in Your strength, not my own. Amen.

King of Kings and Lord of Lords

December 8

Psalm of the Day: Psalm 15

*On his robe and on his thigh he has a name written,
King of kings and Lord of lords.*

Revelation 19:16

How does a white horse deepen your Christmas encounters with Jesus? I suspect we all should have at least one ornament on the family tree to remind us of how all of this ends. In Revelation 19:16, one of the most important names is “King of kings and Lord of lords.” This specific title signifies Jesus’ supreme and sovereign authority over all of creation, including even the angelic powers who minister before the living God today. This revelatory name of Jesus is the ultimate climax of the book of Revelation. Jesus, in the manger over 2,000 years ago, is the final King of kings arriving on a white horse. Historically, Roman princes rode white horses during military triumphs, but this image of Jesus subverts those earthly displays of power, showing that the bombastic claims of emperors are nothing compared to the true King of Christmas.

John’s vision of Jesus draws on multiple Old Testament prophecies, including Genesis 49:10, Psalm 2:6, and Daniel 7:13-14, which foretold that the Messiah would come from the tribe of Judah, be installed as King in Jerusalem, and have an everlasting dominion. This is why the early scenes of the Magi coming to Jesus and worshipping him are so important to the story. We see that the nations (represented by the wise men) come and worship. Don’t miss out on this worship, especially knowing that he will one day return riding on a white horse in glorious procession.

This Christmas, we see the end in full view, which helps draw our hearts to worship the abundance of his name and his love for all to be made right.

Reflection

1. What does it mean to you that Jesus is called the “King of kings and Lord of lords,” and how does this title change the way you see his birth at Christmas?
2. The white horse in Revelation is a symbol of victory. How can remembering Jesus’ ultimate victory help guide your hope and actions during this Christmas season?
3. The wise men traveled far to worship Jesus. In what ways can we worship and honor Jesus together, knowing he will one day return as King?

Messiah/Christ, “The Anointed One”

December 9

Psalm of the Day: Psalm 107

*He first found his own brother Simon and said to him,
“We have found the Messiah” (which means Christ).*

John 1:41

Simon Peter replied, “You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.”

Matthew 16:16

Who do we witness to during this Christmas season? Andrew (one of the very first disciples of Jesus) witnessed to his brother Peter. This wouldn't surprise the early readers because Andrew was one of John the Baptist's disciples before Jesus. He was always an early adopter of God's work and movement. Earlier in John's Gospel, we see Andrew connect the things he witnessed to his brother's understanding of who Jesus was in their midst. Ultimately, these two brothers become a witnessing community to his divine sonship and messianic mission. Throughout their time with Jesus they both declare, “Messiah/Christ.” They want others to see that Jesus is the “Anointed One.” Especially in the opening chapter of John's Gospel, we must realize that during a time when Jesus's messianic identity was a point of division, John's opening presents an ensemble of witnesses who attest to Jesus' unique relationship with God.

This Christmas season, many people who are unfamiliar with Jesus' story or identity still need to understand the meaning of Christmas and why we dedicate a whole month to celebrating this holiday. This is the moment we can become like Andrew and say to our world, “We have found the Messiah.”

Reflection

1. How can we, like Andrew, share the good news about Jesus with our family and friends during the Christmas season?
2. Why do you think it is important to help others understand the true meaning of Christmas and who Jesus is?
3. Who can we pray for today who needs to know about Jesus?

Son of David

December 10

Psalm of the Day: Psalm 98

*And the crowds that went before him and that followed him were shouting,
“Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed is he who comes in the name of
the Lord! Hosanna in the highest!”*

Matthew 21:9

One of my favorite traditions at Calvary is the candlelight service. It's so anchoring to my heart to be around the faithful people of God and declare at the end of the service with O Holy Night: *“Sweet hymns of joy in grateful chorus raise we; Let all within us praise His holy name. Christ is the Lord! O praise his name forever! His power and glory evermore proclaim!”* It reminds me of the worthy praise we fail to give most days to Jesus Christ. He is the Son of David. This title, Son of David, has huge messianic significance throughout Scripture. The title originates from the prophetic message delivered by Nathan to David. It is through Nathan's voice that God promises David offspring who will succeed him. Not only for one generation, but it will be the Lord who establishes that God “will be his father” and David's house and kingdom will be forever. As you read the Gospel, this Davidic title appears 15 times. Matthew uses it the most, citing it eight times, to be exact. The world was waiting for this title and person when Jesus walked into Jerusalem for one of the last times. The sad reality is that the first century world wanted to crucify him that same week. We are a fickle people and our hearts go from worship to crucifixion too. This Christmas, may we see the Son of David and bless the name that comes in the name of the Lord.

Reflection

1. Why do you think the title Son of David was so important to the people who welcomed Jesus into Jerusalem? What does this title mean for us today?
2. The crowds praised Jesus one moment but turned against him soon after. Why do you think people's hearts can change so quickly? Can you relate to moments where your own faith or devotion has changed?

Lion of the Tribe of Judah

December 11

Psalm of the Day: Psalm 5

*Judah is a lion's cub;
from the prey, my son, you have gone up.
He stooped down; he crouched as a lion
and as a lioness; who dares rouse him?
The scepter shall not depart from Judah,
nor the ruler's staff from between his feet,
until tribute comes to him;
and to him shall be the obedience of the peoples.*

Genesis 49:9, 10

*"Wrong will be right, when Aslan comes in sight,
At the sound of his roar, sorrows will be no more,
When he bares his teeth, winter meets its death,
And when he shakes his mane, we shall have spring again."*

— *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*

One of my favorite characters in all of literature is Aslan from C.S. Lewis' work, *The Chronicles of Narnia*. A central tension in *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* is the unending winter in Narnia—always winter, but never Christmas. This tension resonates with the characters as they wait for the great Lion to return, set things right, and bring about spring within Narnia. There is a deep longing throughout this endless winter. C.S. Lewis' depiction of Christ through fiction is intentional, reflecting scriptural themes. The title "Lion of the Tribe of Judah" is a messianic reference to Jesus Christ, combining imagery of strength, royalty, and divine purpose. As we explore the book of Genesis, Jacob blesses his son Judah with a messianic reference, describing Judah as a "lion's cub." This imagery was significant in the ancient Near East, as lions symbolized royalty and power. They still do in our culture with movies made for kids. The lion imagery contrasts with Jesus' other animal metaphor, the lamb. The lamb is more about his ultimate sacrifice in defeating sin, evil, and suffering. Both are true of Jesus.

As we read the last book of the Bible, the book of Revelation, we find that we are encouraged to stay faithful to God's work and his word by Jesus' title as Lion. "The Lion of the tribe of Judah," Jesus, possesses the authority to open the book of end-time judgment and overcome His enemies, where he will wipe every tear from our eyes, and we will enjoy an endless spring with him ruling on his throne.

This winter, let's prepare our hearts for Christmas and know that one day we will see new life again. "And one of the elders said to me, "Weep no more; behold, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has conquered, so that he can open the scroll and its seven seals" (Revelation 5:5).

Reflection

1. How does the theme of "hope in darkness" in *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* relate to our own experiences during difficult times? Can you think of a recent moment when hope made a difference for you?
2. In what ways do the images of the lion (strength, royalty) and the lamb (gentleness, sacrifice) help us understand different aspects of Jesus' character? Which resonates most with you and why?
3. As we prepare our hearts for Christmas, what are some ways we can experience or bring "spring"—new hope and joy—to others around us?
4. What does it mean to you to know that, as in Narnia, "winter will not last forever"? How can this message encourage us through tough seasons or challenges?

Son of Man

December 12

Psalm of the Day: Psalm 97:1–6

*I saw in the night visions,
and behold, with the clouds of heaven
there came one like a son of man,
and he came to the Ancient of Days
and was presented before him.*

Daniel 7:13

Does anyone know what wassail is? It's found in the familiar Christmas song, "Here We Come A-Wassailing." I never knew what his song meant or what wassail was until I married into my wife's family, where, lo and behold, they made wassail during Christmas. There are many different recipes online, but we had the one from her grandmother, which called for many way too expensive ingredients. The pot of wassail tastes good, but it is probably due to the high cost of its ingredients. I look forward to drinking it every year because it wouldn't be Christmas without it.

There are many titles of Jesus found in the Old Testament that the readers knew, however they didn't understand "how" these references would work out in fullness. These words and phrases foreshadowed what was to come, living up to their prophetic titles. The phrase "son of man" can be mysterious to us. It originates from ancient language and can simply mean a regular person, but it acquired a significant meaning after appearing in Daniel 7:13-14. In the book of Daniel, there is a description of someone who appears to be a human being brought before God, which later connects the dots in Jewish and Christian ideas about a person chosen by God to judge or lead. The unique presence of this Son of Man arriving in the first Advent teaches our hearts that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.

What is this Son of Man's mission, exactly?

How did Jesus define himself?

Jesus uses the term to describe his mission of seeking and saving the lost, and of serving and giving his life in such passages as, "For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost." (Luke 19:10.) How does this definition help us through Christmas? It was for his mission that Jesus took on flesh and came to seek and save. Aren't you glad you know the ingredients that make up Jesus? For me, it is a wonderful gift this Christmas.

The clouds that carried the Son of Man before the Ancient of Days are the same heavens that opened above Bethlehem. The Child in the manger is the King on the throne. As we sip our Christmas wassail, may we taste and see that the Lord is good, for the Son of Man has come to seek and to save us.

Reflection

1. What Christmas traditions does your family have that get you into the spirit of Christmas?
2. How do you see the meaning of the title “Son of Man” or “Son of God” influencing the way we celebrate Christmas together?
3. In what ways can you show love and kindness to others during the Christmas season, reflecting the mission of Jesus?

High Priest

December 13

Psalm of the Day: Psalm 85

*Steadfast love and faithfulness meet;
righteousness and peace kiss each other.
Faithfulness springs up from the ground,
and righteousness looks down from the sky.*

Psalm 85:10, 11

The Christmas season is filled with hope for reconciling relationships. Something about the season reminds us to ensure we are in good relationships with those around us. So many of the Christmas movies and shows are built around the tension of reconciliation. The season lends itself to families gathering and invitations to Christmas parties, which often bring high expectations. Yet, sometimes, it is the first time siblings reconcile and show forgiveness. Even within my family story, there is a sense where everyone tries to get along for the sake of the season and being together with so many family members. Many also experience the opposite. This season is marked by grief and shame over broken relationships, which aren't reflected in the Christmas trees and holiday specials. Why would we talk about this title, High Priest, when it comes to this season? Jesus, being the High Priest, connects to the Christmas season through His unique role as a divine mediator who bridges the gap between humanity and God.

The incarnation (Christmas) was intentional: Jesus became human to serve as a merciful and faithful High Priest, reconciling us to God, to one another, and to the world. By acting as the Great High Priest, Jesus perfectly completes the Old Testament priestly role. Jesus mediates between God and humanity, becoming the ultimate sacrifice for our reconciliation. He genuinely understands all aspects of human experience; He faced temptation, pain, hardship, and loss, yet remained without sin. Knowing this about Jesus, shouldn't we be invited to have him guide us through this season?

Since then we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus, the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin. Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

Hebrews 4:14-16

Reflection

1. Why do you think the Christmas season often brings up both joyful and difficult emotions about our relationships with others?
2. Is there someone in our family or circle of friends with whom we could try to reconcile or deepen our relationship this season? How might we begin that process?
3. In what ways does thinking of Jesus as our High Priest encourage or comfort you during the Christmas season?
4. How can we support and pray for each other to experience grace and forgiveness this Christmas?



Everlasting Father

December 14

Psalm of the Day: Psalm 103

“For to us a child is born, to us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder, and his name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.”

Isaiah 9:6

Christmas often stirs memories of family. Some memories bring warm comfort, laughter around a table, familiar songs, and the joy of being known. Others bring the ache of distance, loss, absence, or relationships that did not become what we hoped they would be.

Into a season where family can mean joy or longing, Isaiah gives us this name: Everlasting Father. The Scriptures clearly teach that Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are distinct and eternal in their unity. But Isaiah is describing the character trait of the Son toward His people.

Jesus is the One who cares for you as a father cares for his child. He is the One who protects, provides, nurtures, shields, and sustains. He is the One who will not abandon you. He is the One whose love does not depend on your performance. And Jesus is the One who does not come and go. He is everlasting.

A human father can be present or absent. Strong or weak. Tender or distant.

But Jesus is not limited by human imperfection. He does not grow tired of you. He does not withdraw His affection. He does not withhold His love until you get everything right. Psalm 103:17 reminds us, “The steadfast love of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting.”

Prayer

Everlasting Father, steady my heart in Your love today.

Where I feel empty, fill me.

Where I feel alone, draw near.

Where I feel forgotten, remind me that Your love endures forever.

Hold me close, and teach me to rest in You. Amen

Mediator

December 15

Psalm of the Day: Psalm 32

*“God is not dead, nor doth He sleep;
The wrong shall fail, the right prevail,
With peace on earth, goodwill to men.”*

— *I Heard the Bells on Christmas Day*, Henry W. Longfellow

*For there is one God, and there is one mediator between God and men,
the man Christ Jesus.*

1 Timothy 2:5

Imagine opening a present from last Christmas, the very thing you wanted before, simply rewrapped and presented again. The excitement would fade, for so much of Christmas joy is tied to newness and meaningful surprises. Christmas is a beautiful blend of cherished traditions and fresh, unexpected gifts. Andy Williams had it right: “It’s the most wonderful time of the year.”

But the greatest wonder of Christmas is not just in traditions or new presents, it’s that Jesus Himself is the living gift who bridges us to God. Hebrews 8:6 says, “But as it is, Christ has obtained a ministry that is as much more excellent than the old as the covenant he mediates is better, since it is enacted on better promises.” For centuries, people longed for closeness with God, trying different ways to approach Him, but only Jesus truly makes access possible. Being both fully God and fully human, He uniquely understands our struggles and welcomes us into a relationship with the Father.

This is the ultimate present: direct, daily, and living access to God, wrapped in the gift of Jesus’s love. Not only does He grant us access, but He invites us into intimacy, a depth of love and acceptance that every human soul desires. Through giving His life, Jesus carried away our sins and opened the path for lasting peace. This gift is not a recycled one, but ever-new; His mercies are fresh every morning (Lamentations 3:22-23). What an invitation! Not only are we forgiven, but we are also known and can have a deep, intimate knowledge of the living God.

During the Christmas season, let’s remember: There’s no other way to stand before God except through Jesus Christ.

Reflection

1. How does understanding Jesus as the one true mediator change the way you approach God in prayer and daily life?
2. In what ways can you intentionally “unwrap” and enjoy the ongoing gift of Jesus’s presence and mercy this Christmas season?
3. Reflect on a time when you experienced God’s peace in a new or unexpected way. How did that deepen your relationship with Him?

Advocate

December 16

Psalm of the Day: Psalm 61

*My little children, I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin.
But if anyone does sin, we have an advocate with the Father,
Jesus Christ the righteous.*

1 John 2:1

*But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name,
he will teach you all things and bring to your remembrance
all that I have said to you.*

John 14:26

During Christmas, we are drawn to pause and remember what truly matters the most—the presence of Jesus Christ in our lives. The wonder of Christmas is that we do not walk through these joys or struggles alone. Scripture assures us that Jesus is our advocate, and the Holy Spirit (our Helper) is always with us, sent by the Father to guide, comfort, and remind us of Jesus' teachings.

This means that every Christmas, we can lean on the promise that God's love and presence are constant. Salvation isn't a one-time gift; it's a continual blessing that shapes our lives and glorifies Jesus through ordinary moments.

This season, let us invite the Spirit to help us remember that Christ came not just to begin our faith but to carry us through every part of our journey. In every memory, joy, or grief, may we find hope and comfort in the advocate and Helper who is always with us, pointing us back to the real reason we celebrate: Jesus.

Reflection

1. How have you experienced Jesus as your advocate or the Holy Spirit as your Helper during past Christmas seasons?
2. What are some memories, joyful or sad, that stand out to you during Christmas? How can Jesus' presence bring comfort or deeper meaning to these moments?
3. In what ways can we invite the Holy Spirit to help us remember and live out Christ's teachings this Christmas?
4. How can we support and encourage each other to see God's love and work in both ordinary moments and special celebrations this holiday season?

Intercessor

December 17

Psalm of the Day: Psalm 86

Consequently, he is able to save to the uttermost those who draw near to God through him, since he always lives to make intercession for them.

Hebrews 7:25

As we reflect on Christmas, I often marvel at the moment when the Angel of the Lord visited Mary. Imagine her awe and wonder as the great rescue plan of salvation was revealed to her that holy night. The beauty of her response echoes through history: “Behold, I am the servant of the Lord; let it be to me according to your word” (Luke 1:38). Her faith marked the beginning of a story that would change the world, and God faithfully sustained her through each step.

At Christmastime, we remember that Mary was not alone. God provided her with a righteous husband, Joseph, and a supportive family (Elizabeth) who stood by her. In the same way, Jesus, whose coming we celebrate, never intended for us to walk this journey alone. Even now, Christ intercedes on our behalf.

Hebrews 7:25 reminds us that Jesus is able to completely save those who come to God through Him. This promise is the heart of the Christmas story—God sent His Son to rescue us, and that rescue is ongoing. Even now, Jesus sits at the right hand of the Father, speaking on our behalf, advocating for us out of His great love, a love first revealed in a Bethlehem manger. Because of His sacrifice and His continual intercession, we can have confidence that nothing and no one can separate us from God’s love. As we celebrate Christmas, let’s rest in the assurance that Jesus not only came for us, but He still stands with us, interceding and offering the gift of eternal hope.

Reflection

1. How does knowing that Jesus continually intercedes for us shape the way you approach God during this season?
2. In what ways have you experienced God’s provision of support—through people or circumstances—like Mary did?
3. As you reflect on the Christmas story, what does it mean to you personally that God’s rescue plan is ongoing and available today?

Shepherd

December 18

Psalm of the Day: Psalm 23

I am the good shepherd.

The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep.

John 10:11

We often display images of Christ, crosses, ornaments, and other faith-inspired symbols at Christmas. But before the cross became the defining image of our faith, Christ as the Shepherd held deep meaning in the Christian imagination. In the catacombs beneath ancient Rome, where Christians faced intense persecution, believers painted frescoes of Jesus as a young shepherd carrying a lamb on His shoulders. This was their secret confession of faith, expressed when gathering openly could mean death.

To early Christians, the image of the Shepherd was not just gentle but powerful, a declaration that Christ protects His followers, even through death. He is the Good Shepherd, who lays down His life for His sheep. Advent invites us to remember who that child truly is: the Shepherd-King. When Jesus proclaims in John 10, “I am the good shepherd,” He fulfills both the longings of Psalm 23 and the prophecy of Ezekiel 34, where God says, “I Myself will be the shepherd of My sheep.” The birth of Christ is God Himself coming to do what no earthly ruler could. Jesus is the only one who can rescue, restore, and reconcile His people.

Reflection

1. Why do you think early Christians found comfort in the image of Jesus as the Good Shepherd, especially during times of persecution?
2. How does understanding Jesus as both the Shepherd and King change the way we see the Christmas story?
3. In what ways do you feel God has guided, protected, or carried you through difficult times?
4. How can we follow Jesus’ example and care for others as a shepherd cares for their sheep, especially during Advent?

Lamb of God

December 19

Psalm of the Day: Psalm 110

*The next day he saw Jesus coming toward him and said,
“Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!”*

John 1:29

In the quiet wonder of Advent, we await not just the birth of a child but the coming of the Lamb of God. John the Baptist’s declaration opens John’s Gospel with stunning clarity: the long-awaited Messiah is not just a conquering king or a powerful prophet, He is a lamb.

For John’s original audience, this image was deeply familiar. Every morning and evening, a lamb was sacrificed in the Temple (Exodus 29:38–42) as a constant reminder of humanity’s sin and God’s mercy. The lamb symbolized innocence, purity, and substitution. Yet these endless sacrifices could never truly remove sin (Hebrews 10:1–4). They pointed ahead to one Lamb, the true and final sacrifice.

During Advent, we often focus on the joy and light of Christ’s coming, and these are good things to reflect on. But it’s also important to remember that this joy is so deep precisely because of its cost. The infant Christ came to take away the sin of the world by His own blood. The cradle and the cross are carved from the same wood.

To behold the Lamb of God this Christmas is to see both humility and glory intertwined. It is to look at the manger and recognize that our redemption has already begun. This is the greatest gift of Christmas.

Reflection

1. What does it mean for Jesus to be called the Lamb of God? How does this differ from the typical image of a king or hero?
2. How does knowing that Jesus came not just to be born, but to die for us, change the way you think about Christmas?
3. When you look at a nativity scene or think of the manger, how can you remember both the joy of Jesus’ birth and the sacrifice He came to make?

Teacher/ Rabbi

December 20

Psalm of the Day: Psalm 25

*Jesus turned and saw them following and said to them,
“What are you seeking?” And they said to him, “Rabbi”
(which means Teacher), “where are you staying?”*

John 1:38

The season of Advent invites us to listen. Take a moment, be still, and listen. What do you notice? What makes silence uncomfortable? In the quiet waiting for Christ's coming, the title the first disciples used for Jesus was Rabbi, meaning “teacher,” which rings with gentle authority. Before Jesus worked miracles or gathered crowds, He was first recognized as one who taught.

This was a familiar title for people like Jesus in that day. In the ancient Jewish world, a rabbi was more than a lecturer. He was a guide, one whose life embodied the wisdom he spoke. His followers did not simply learn information; they learned a way of life. When Andrew and the other disciples called Jesus “Rabbi,” they expressed a desire not only to hear His words but also to be His students. They asked, “Where are you staying?” In essence, they wanted to dwell near wisdom itself.

Throughout history, the Church has cherished Jesus as the divine Teacher. St. Clement of Alexandria called Christ the “Instructor of the soul,” who trains his children in holiness and truth. For centuries, beginning in the fourth century, believers have gathered for Advent study and reflection, hearing again the voice of the One who teaches with grace and truth.

At Christmas, the eternal Word becomes flesh so that the voice of God can be heard in human tones. The baby who cries in Bethlehem is the same One who will say, “You have heard it said... but I say to you.” The One who learned the language of His mother will later reveal the language of heaven.

Advent reminds us that the Teacher has come not merely to give lessons, but to transform hearts. His teaching is not abstract; it is embodied. All great teachers embody their lessons. He teaches us humility in His birth, compassion in His ministry, and obedience in His death. Every word He speaks carries the authority of divine love.

Do you call him teacher or Rabbi? When you call him Rabbi, you are not just naming a role; you are confessing a relationship. He is the Teacher who invites us to sit at His feet and learn the ways of His Kingdom. A kingdom full of mercy, justice, and peace. In a world filled with noise and confusion, His voice still calls to us through Scripture: “Come and see.” At Christmas at Calvary, we hope you extend that invitation to others.

Reflection

1. Why do you think the first disciples called Jesus “Rabbi,” and what does that title mean in their context?
2. How does listening in silence help us notice God’s presence, especially during Advent?
3. In what ways can Jesus’ teachings shape the way you live day by day?
4. How can we invite others to “come and see?”

Prince of Peace

December 21

Psalm of the Day: Psalm 85

For to us a child is born, to us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder, and his name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

Isaiah 9:6

Isaiah speaks these words into a world filled with conflict, fear, and uncertainty. The people of God were surrounded by threats, worn down by instability, and longing for a leader who could bring peace. The peace was ultimately not only for their nation but for their souls.

In that longing, Isaiah gives a name: Prince of Peace.

Not a peace of distraction.

Not a peace of escape.

Not a peace that pretends everything is fine.

But the peace that comes from God Himself.

Peace that restores, steadies, and reconciles.

The Hebrew word here for peace is shalom, a word far richer than simply “calm” or “quiet.” Shalom means wholeness. Completeness. Everything is restored to its proper place. The Prince of Peace does not merely calm the storm; He makes creation right again.

And how does He arrive?

Not with armies.

Not with political power.

Not with a spectacle.

He comes as a child.

A child whose shoulder will eventually bear the weight of the world.

At Christmas, we remember that peace is not something we manufacture. Peace is a gift to receive. The peace your heart longs for, the peace your home aches for, the peace your mind searches for late at night, which is only found in Christ.

As Jesus Himself would later say, “Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. Not as the world gives do I give to you” (John 14:27).

This Christmas, pause long enough to notice where peace is already breaking. It is found in these quiet winter mornings, in a childlike whispered prayer, in a conversation that softens a relationship, in the stillness of a night lit by a Christmas tree.

The Prince of Peace has come.
He is coming again.
And even now, He is making all things new.

Prayer

Lord Jesus, Prince of Peace, rule in my heart today. Quiet what is anxious. Heal what is broken. Restore what has been scattered. Let Your peace reign in me, in my home, and in my relationships. Amen.



Light of the World

December 22

Psalm of the Day: Psalm 118

Again, Jesus spoke to them, saying, "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life."

John 8:12

When Jesus stood before the crowds and declared Himself the Light of the World, He was standing in the temple courts during the Feast of Tabernacles. This feast was known for its great lamps that illuminated the night sky over Jerusalem. These lights reminded Israel of the pillar of fire that led them through the wilderness. In that moment, Jesus was saying something staggering. He was not simply holding a light; He was the light.

The image of light has always shaped how Christians celebrate Advent and Christmas. In the early Church, believers celebrated Christ's birth during the darkest days of the year to proclaim that even in the longest night, light has come, and darkness cannot overcome it. The flicker of candles in Advent wreaths and the glow of Christmas lights on trees and homes are echoes of that ancient truth. Each small flame reminds us that Christ's presence still pierces the shadows.

For those walking through a dark season, this name of God offers deep comfort. "Light of the World" is not a title of distant brilliance; it is the promise of His nearness. Christ steps in. His light is not fragile. It burns steadily through sorrow and shines faithfully when joy feels far away.

Here is something to do this season. Turn off every light in your house, sit in darkness, and then light a single candle. Take a moment to reflect on how Jesus shines brightly in our darkest moments, giving us hope during these long December nights.

Reflection

1. What does it mean to you that Jesus is called the Light of the World? How does that help you when life feels dark or difficult?
2. Can you think of a time when you felt God's light or hope in a hard situation? How did that experience make a difference for you or your family?
3. What are some ways we can share the light of Jesus with others during this Advent and Christmas season?

Savior

December 23

Psalm of the Day: Psalm 40

*For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior,
who is Christ the Lord.*

Luke 2:11

The angel's announcement over the fields of Bethlehem pierced the stillness of the night with divine clarity. A Savior had come. For centuries, Israel had awaited deliverance. They waited for a redeemer who would free them from oppression and sin. In that single word, Savior, the deepest longings of humanity found their answer.

Throughout church history, believers have cherished this name as the heartbeat of the Gospel. The early Church Fathers spoke often of salvator mundi—"the Savior of the world." Athanasius, writing in the fourth century, declared, "He became what we are, that He might make us what He is." In that mystery of incarnation, God entered our story not as a distant ruler but as one who saves by sharing our humanity.

Even American Christmas pop culture, for all its glitter and overhyped commercialism, cannot escape the pull of this story. Songs like "Silent Night" and "Joy to the World" fill stores, unintentionally proclaiming the gospel to hurried shoppers. The word Savior still hovers in the air, calling hearts back to Bethlehem.

The name Savior speaks of rescue. This title is not only for the rescue from sin's penalty. It points to the One who saves us from fear, from despair, and from our need to be our own gods. Jesus does not merely repair what is broken; He recreates it. The One born in David's city is the fulfillment of every promise, the embodiment of mercy, and the assurance that salvation is not something we must climb up to reach. For Jesus Christ has come down to us.

Today, linger on that name. Let Savior shape your prayers and soften your heart. Hear again the angel's declaration, not just to shepherds long ago, but to you: "Unto you is born this day a Savior."

Reflection

1. How does the story of Jesus being our Savior change the way we see Christmas and its traditions?
2. What are some fears or challenges you've faced this year, and how does knowing Jesus as your Savior encourage you in those moments?
3. Why do you think the angels announced Jesus' birth first to the shepherds, and what does that say about who the Savior came for?
4. How can you share the love and message of our Savior with others during this Christmas season?



Jesus

December 24

Psalm of the Day: Psalm 145

*And you shall call his name Jesus,
for he will save his people from their sins.*

Matthew 1:21

Tonight, we arrive at the name that brings the entire season into focus.
The name spoken by an angel.
The name chosen before time itself.
The name that tells us who He is and why He came.
Jesus.

In Hebrew, the name is Yeshua, which means, “The Lord saves.”
Not the Lord inspires.
Not the Lord encourages.
Not the Lord improves.
The Lord saves.
This is the heart of Christmas.
God has not simply sent us a teacher or a guide.
He has come Himself to rescue us.

When Jesus was born in Bethlehem, the world was not waiting for inspiration.
The world was waiting for a Savior. And so are we. The tensions we carry.
The mistakes we regret. The fears we cannot shake. The sin we cannot fix.
We do not need a reminder to try harder. We need Someone strong enough
to save us.

So on this Christmas Eve, slow your heart. Let the lights settle. Let the carols
soften. Let the world be still for a moment. Whisper His name.

Speak it with gratitude and wonder. Jesus.

Prayer

Lord Jesus, on this holy night we give thanks that You have come to save us.
Where we are broken, bring healing. Where we are restless, bring peace.
Where we are lost, draw us home. You are our Savior. You are our hope.
You are our joy. We welcome you again this night with wonder and worship.
Amen.

The Resurrection and the Life

December 25

Psalm of the Day: Psalm 48

*Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life.
Whoever believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live."*

John 11:25

Advent is the season when the Church leans forward in hope, remembering the first coming of Christ while longing for His return. It is the season of candles and carols, of waiting and wonder, when we pause to remember that life itself is found in the One who came wrapped in flesh and swaddling cloths. Among all the names given to Christ, "The Resurrection and the Life" reveals the mystery that the Child in the manger was born to conquer the grave.

When Jesus spoke these words to Martha outside the tomb of Lazarus, He did not simply speak of future hope but of present reality. He was declaring Himself to be the living power of God breaking into human history. The eternal life of God had stepped into time and space, and in Him, death itself began to unravel. Advent reminds us that this same miracle begins in Bethlehem, where eternal life was cradled in a feed trough.

Many of our hymns carry this truth in melody. Charles Wesley's "Hark the Herald Angels Sing" proclaims, "Born that man no more may die, born to raise the sons of earth."

The Church proclaims that darkness will not have the last word. The Christ who came to us in Bethlehem and who conquered death in Jerusalem will come again to make all things new. He is not only the hope of resurrection after death but the living power that renews us now.

Reflection

1. How does knowing Jesus is the Resurrection and the Life encourage you in your day-to-day life?
2. In what ways can you celebrate the hope and renewal that Christ brings, both now and in the future?
3. As you reflect on Advent, how do the themes of waiting and wonder shape your relationship with God?
4. What are some practical ways you can share the light and hope of Christ with others during this season?
5. How does connecting the birth of Jesus with His resurrection deepen your understanding of God's promise for you?

Bread of Life

December 26

Psalm of the Day: Psalm 63

Jesus said to them, "I am the bread of life; whoever comes to me shall not hunger, and whoever believes in me shall never thirst."

John 6:35

Advent is the season of holy hunger. It is the quiet ache for fulfillment. Creation yearns for its Redeemer. Around every table and under every string of lights, we sense this longing. We hope and desire for something deeper than the feasts and gifts can satisfy. Into this hunger, Jesus speaks: "I am the Bread of Life."

When Jesus first said these words in John 6, He had just fed five thousand with loaves and fish. The crowd wanted more, but He offered something far greater. He revealed that the true nourishment for the soul is not found in bread that perishes but in the living Bread that came down from heaven. Advent reminds us that this Bread was laid in a manger. From the first moments of His earthly life, Jesus came to feed the world with Himself.

Throughout the centuries, Christians have celebrated Advent and Christmas with food that points to spiritual truth. In Italy, the Feast of the Seven Fishes reminds families of the abundance of God's provision. In Germany, they bake stollen, a sweet bread filled with fruit and dusted with sugar. This sweet bread symbolizes the Christ Child wrapped in cloths. In American homes, gingerbread cookies and warm rolls shared around candlelight echo a deeper truth: if we are paying attention, the Bread of Life has come to feed His people.

Advent calls us to come hungry. The Bread of Life still offers Himself today. The food that he provides can satisfy any soul. In a world that feeds on distraction, He alone sustains. To receive Him is to find rest for the restless, hope for the weary, and joy that no feast can surpass.

Reflection

1. How does the image of Jesus as the Bread of Life inspire you to seek deeper fulfillment in your daily life?
2. In what ways have you experienced God's abundance during this Advent season?
3. How can your celebration and gathering around food become a more intentional reminder of Christ's presence?
4. What moments or traditions help you recognize your spiritual hunger and point you toward Christ as your true nourishment?
5. How might you share the hope, rest, and joy of the Bread of Life with someone else this Advent?

Living Water

December 27

Psalm of the Day: Psalm 1

Jesus answered her, "If you knew the gift of God, and who it is that is saying to you, 'Give me a drink,' you would have asked him, and he would have given you living water."

John 4:10

In the chill of December, when the world is wrapped in twinkling lights and steaming mugs of cocoa, we remember the One who came to quench the deepest thirst of our souls. Amid all the shimmer of the Christmas season, the name Living Water reminds us that God's greatest gift is not wrapped in paper or ribbons, but in grace.

When Jesus met the Samaritan woman at the well, He offered her something no bucket could draw and no stream could provide. He offered Himself. In that simple moment of conversation, the world changed. He revealed the true water. This water was the kind that revives a weary heart, which comes from knowing Him and drinking from his words.

This Advent, pause amid the wrapping paper and carols. Picture the manager as a well, dug deep into the earth of human need. From it, Living Water flows. A clear, pure, endless stream of Jesus Christ. The infant Christ who once cried in Bethlehem's night now calls to each of us, "Come, drink, and never thirst again."

A Family Practice

Gather around your table tonight with a glass of water for each person. Before you eat, let every family member share one way they feel "thirsty" this season. These can include qualities such as peace, patience, forgiveness, and so on. Then read John 4:10 together and thank Jesus for being your Living Water, the One who satisfies forever.

Reflection

1. How can we recognize when our souls are "thirsty" in the midst of the busy holiday season?
2. In what ways do you see Jesus meeting people's needs today, just as He did for the Samaritan woman?
3. How can others in seeking and sharing Christ's Living Water this Advent?

The Way, the Truth, and the Life

December 28

Psalm of the Day: Psalm 119:1-16

*Jesus said to him, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life.
No one comes to the Father except through me."*

John 14:6

As we step into Christmastide, we get to celebrate the coming of the One who is not merely a teacher of truth but Truth itself, not simply a guide to life but Life itself. In John 14:6, Jesus makes one of the most beautiful and bold claims in all of Scripture. He declares that He is the way, the truth, and the life.

When Jesus said I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life, He invited us into a relationship. He did not point toward a map or a philosophy; He pointed toward Himself. This Christmas, as you walk through the beauty and busyness of the holiday season, take time to remember that Jesus is the Way when you feel lost, the Truth when the world seems confusing, and the Life when your spirit feels weary.

Reflection

1. What do you think it means when Jesus says He is the Way? How can we follow Him in our daily lives?
2. Where have you been seeking direction or clarity in your life?
3. Why do you think Jesus called Himself the Truth? How can we know the truth in our world today?
4. What does it mean to you that Jesus is the Life? How does believing this change the way we live?
5. How can you remember and celebrate that Jesus is the Way, the Truth, and the Life this new year as you prepare to step back into rhythms and schedule in January?

The Door of the Sheep

December 29

Psalm of the Day: Psalm 121

So Jesus again said to them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, I am the door of the sheep. All who came before me are thieves and robbers, but the sheep did not listen to them. I am the door. If anyone enters by me, he will be saved and will go in and out and find pasture.

John 10:7-9

Christmas is a season of anticipation and celebration. Families hang wreaths on doors, children count the days on their calendars, and homes are filled with the gentle glow of candlelight. In the midst of all these traditions, we are invited to consider a name of God that reminds us of safety, guidance, and welcome: the Door of the Sheep.

In John 10, Jesus describes Himself as the door. A door is not just an entrance; it is protection. Shepherds in ancient Israel knew that sheep without a door were vulnerable. Wolves and thieves would attack, and the sheep would scatter. By calling Himself the door, Jesus assures us that He is our safe passage. Those who enter through Him find life, nourishment, and belonging.

The imagery of the shepherd and the door stretches back into the Old Testament. In Psalm 23, the Lord is our shepherd who leads us beside still waters and restores our souls. Ezekiel speaks of a shepherd who searches for the lost and brings them back into the fold. The story of the Israelites in Egypt also shows God as a door; during the first Passover, the blood on the doorposts protected families from death. Even then, God's design was clear: the door is the way of safety, life, and hope.

Reflection

1. What does Jesus mean when He calls Himself the Door of the Sheep in John 10:7-9, and what does this reveal about His role in your life?
2. How can recognizing Jesus as the Good Shepherd deepen your trust in His guidance, protection, and care each day?
3. According to John 10:10, Jesus offers that we may “have life, and have it abundantly.” What does abundant life look like for you personally, and where do you see evidence of it?
4. Reflect on a time when you felt lost or uncertain. How did Christ, as your Shepherd, lead or comfort you in that season?

I Am

December 30

Psalm of the Day: Psalm 139

Jesus said to them, “Truly, truly, I say to you, before Abraham was, I am.”

John 8:58

As we end our Christmas season, our hearts and minds have prepared and celebrated the miracle of God’s presence among us. This season has been full of light, music, and anticipation, and it also invites us to reflect on the names of God. One of the most powerful names is simply I Am.

In John 8:58, Jesus says, “Truly, truly, I say to you, before Abraham was, I am.” In this short yet profound statement, Jesus connects Himself to the God of Israel who revealed Himself to Moses at the burning bush, saying, “I am who I am.” God’s name in the Old Testament was not just a label; it was a declaration of His eternal presence, unchanging character, and faithful love.

Christians have proclaimed that the One who says I Am is present in every season of life. In the Psalms, we read, “God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble,” echoing that same eternal I Am who walks with His people.

Old Testament stories remind us of God’s enduring faithfulness. Abraham waited for promises he could not yet see. Moses led a wandering people, yet God’s presence never left them. The Israelites found their hope not in their own strength but in the I Am who delivers. As we sing about the Christ child in Christmas carols such as “Silent Night” or “O Come, All Ye Faithful,” we remember that God, who was with His people in the past, has now come to dwell among us.

As we celebrated, we paused to remember that the God who says, “I Am” is the same God who comes into our homes, hearts, and lives today. Whether we gather to sing carols, hang ornaments, light candles, or read Scripture together, we are participating in a story that has been told for thousands of years. A story where the eternal I Am came to meet us in the humblest of places.

Prayer

Lord, You are I Am, the God who was, who is, and who will always be. Help us see Your presence in our homes, in our families, and in our hearts this next year. May we rejoice in Your Second coming, and may Your light shine brightly in all we do. Amen.

Reflection

1. In what ways did you experience God's presence during this Christmas season?
2. How has reflecting on the name I Am deepened your understanding of who God is?
3. What Old Testament story of faithfulness resonated most with you, and why?
4. How can you carry the assurance of God's unchanging presence into the new year?
5. As you look ahead, what steps can you take to make space for God's light and love in your daily life?

God

December 31

Psalm of the Day: Psalm 150

*In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God,
and the Word was God.*

John 1:1

As our Advent journey comes to a close and we step from the waiting of the season toward the joy of celebration, we return to the foundational truth that begins and ends our faith: Jesus is God.

Everything we have reflected on throughout this season depends on this one truth. He is not merely a wise teacher or a compassionate healer. He is not simply a moral example or a spiritual leader among others. He is God Eternal. God with no beginning. God with no end. The One who called galaxies into existence. The One who spoke light into darkness. The One who holds all things together by the power of His Word.

And yet, He came to us as a child.

The One who formed the stars was held in the arms of a young mother. The One who has no limits took on the limits of time and flesh. This is the mystery and glory of Christmas. The God who is beyond all understanding has made Himself known. Made Himself near. He came because of his great love for you.

We began Advent remembering that we are a people who wait. We end Advent remembering that we are a people who are never alone.

So now we lift our eyes and our hearts and our voices to the One who is worthy of all praise.

Prayer

Almighty God,
Father, Son, and Holy Spirit,
we come to the end of this Advent season with gratitude and wonder.
You did not leave us to ourselves.
You came to us.
You drew near in Jesus Christ.

You are the God who speaks and the God who saves.
You are the God who sees and the God who stays.
You are the God who holds the universe,
and yet You hold us with tender care.

Today we rest in Your presence.
Where our hearts feel worn, bring peace.
Where we feel anxious, bring calm.
Where we feel alone, remind us that You are near.

We confess our need for You.
We confess that we cannot save ourselves.
We confess that our hope, our joy, and our life are found in Christ alone.

Lord Jesus, God made flesh,
Lead us into the days ahead with renewed faith.
Teach us to walk in Your light.
Teach us to love others with Your compassion.
Teach us to behold Your glory in the ordinary moments of our lives.

Holy Spirit, dwell in us richly.
Strengthen the weak places.
Heal what is wounded.
Restore what is broken.
Open our eyes to see the beauty of Christ in every season.

And as we step beyond this Advent season,
Keep our hearts anchored in the truth that You are God,
Eternal, unchanging, sovereign, and good.
You are our refuge and our joy, our beginning and our end.

We give You our gratitude.
We give You our worship.
We give You our lives.

In the name of Jesus Christ, God with us,
Amen.



A Final Word from Pastor Jay

Thank you for journeying with me in this project. Your trust and time are a great honor as we walked together this Christmas. I'm thankful that we experience these seasons together, never alone. Calvary is a special place. In 2026, let us spur one another on with faith and good deeds. I look forward to you pointing me to Jesus this next year.

Always praying,

j.

And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works.

Hebrews 10:24



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