

Advent (from the Latin *adventus*, meaning “coming” or “arrival”) is the four-week season of preparation for the coming of Jesus at Christmas. A good celebration requires proper preparation for us to fully enjoy it. During December, however, we mostly confuse helpful readiness for the hustle of Christmas shopping, parties, and preparations. The Advent season, more reflective in nature, can feel out of sync with all this noise and busyness.

John the Baptist has always felt like the right person to get me ready for Christmas—he’s the anti-Santa needed for our day. Trade the jolly laugh for an in-your-face intensity, the twinkle in the eye for a wildness about to interrupt your life, commanding our attention but always redirecting it towards Jesus. “Prepare the way for the Lord” is the Advent call to get ready for the coming Messiah.

But how do you prepare for a surprise? More than just remembering Christ’s first arrival, Advent hopes for Christ’s second coming. Advent is a season of expectant waiting, tapping into the sense we have that all is not well, the longing for the world to be made right again. It’s a season for restless hearts and people weary of a broken world who want, with all our being, to know there’s more than this.

Advent cultivates in us a discerning eye, helping us to spot the sin that clutters our lives and notice all the ways we need to be saved. By helping us hope intensely for restoration, to feel our own need to be saved, Advent prepares us for genuine Christmas joy and faith in the One who saves us from our sin, Jesus.

Seeking God’s Face, Philip F. Reinders



Living Worship



Praise

“I Love You Lord”:

Psalm 95 and 96

**Lord of Bethlehem,
we acknowledge that in this season
we often keep you as a little baby.**

**We hold you captive in images
that are safe, secure, and warm.
And we delight in songs that say,
“No crying he makes.”**

**Remind us that you are more than a
baby.**

**Remind us again that you cannot be
held there;
In Bethlehem,
In your ministry,
On a cross,
Or in a tomb.**

Be for each of us today

A baby,

A man,

A king,

and a Messiah.

**Release us from whatever holds us
captive,**

As we wait for you to be born in us.

**We pray in the Name of the
Holy Spirit,
who has brought about your birth,
as well as ours. Amen.**

Marc Nelesen, Georgetown CRC

Looking Back

September

Petition

“Lord, Help Me”

October

Illumination

“I’m Listening”

November

Gratitude

“Thank You”

Looking Ahead

January

Blessing

“Bless You”

February

Lament

“Why?”

March

Confession

“I’m Sorry, Lord”

April

Service

“What Can I Do?”

Daily Scripture Readings to teach us about Praise "I Love you, Lord"

December, 2011

				1 <i>Luke 1:46-55</i>	2 <i>Luke 7:36-50</i>	3 <i>Luke 1:51-52</i>
4 <i>I Tim. 6:6-10, 17-19</i>	5 <i>Matt. 3:1-12</i>	6 <i>John 1:6-9</i>	7 <i>Luke 3:7-14</i>	8 <i>Luke 3:1-14</i>	9 <i>Zeph. 3:14-20</i>	10 <i>Psalms 24</i>
11 <i>John 1:14</i> <i>Matt. 2:1-12</i>	12 <i>Heb 2:14-18</i>	13 <i>Matt. 1:18-21</i>	14 <i>I Cor. 11:2-26</i>	15 <i>I Cor 15:12-20</i>	16 <i>Micah 5:1-5</i>	17 <i>Is. 40:1-11</i>
18 <i>John 3:16-18</i>	19 <i>Matt. 1:18-25</i>	20 <i>Matt. 9:14-15</i> <i>11:16-19</i>	21 <i>Titus 2:11-14</i>	22 <i>Titus 2:11-14</i>	23 <i>John 1:14-18</i>	24 <i>Luke 2:6-7</i>
25 <i>John 1:12-14</i>	26 <i>I Cor. 13:1-13</i>	27 <i>Eph. 1:3-1</i>	28 <i>Eph. 1:15-23</i>	29 <i>Phil. 1:3-11</i>	30 <i>I John 4:7-21</i>	31 <i>Phil. 3:12-14</i>

Questions for Reflection

As you prepare for Christmas, why would it be important to think about Christ's second coming?

Do you *really* expect Jesus to return?

If you are a Christian then you believe he will return. But do you *really* expect it?

Does the expectation of Jesus' return influence your life?

Expecting, Scott Hoezee

This month's newsletter was created to help connect the Living Worship topic with *Expecting: Devotions for Advent*

View the Present Through the Promise

View the present through the promise, Christ will come again.
Trust despite the deepening darkness, Christ will come again.
Lift the world above its grieving through your watching and believing

In the hope past hope's conceiving: Christ will come again.

Prove the present with the promise, Christ will come again.
Let your daily actions witness, Christ will come again.
Let your loving and your giving and your justice and forgiving
Be a sign to all the living: Christ will come again.

Match the present to the promise, Christ will come again.
Make this hope your guiding premise, Christ will come again.
Pattern all your calculating and the world you are creating
To the advent you are waiting: Christ will come again.

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