



SOUL SISTERS W/PAM BAILEY

# COME LET US ADORE HIM

Advent Devotional



# Hey Sister!

## Let me introduce myself



I am Pam Bailey, a Bible teacher and mentor. I am also a wife and mother of 4 boys. Talking all things Jesus is my jam! I have a passion for the Word of God, teaching women to create holy habits, and finding joy in spending time with God. I love to do all of that with sisters in Christ!

Soul Sisters is a community of women from all over the world spending time in the Word together. The communities are held in private online groups. I love how my Soul Sisters challenge me, pray for me, and love me.

I do believe in the power of pom-poms and confetti. We all need a cheerleader in our corner and a friend who will celebrate the wins. If you are looking for a confetti throwing cheerleader to encourage you in Christ you've come to the right place!

### Find me online

FB @thepambailey  
IG @thepambailey  
<https://thepambailey.com>





# Why Advent?

It was around 10 years ago that I was introduced to the term advent and its practice. In full disclosure, I am not sure that I truly understood all that it entailed until several years ago. I have always loved Christmas. I have the fondest memories of Christmas as a child, and I have always been drawn to tradition. Burl Ives is still my go-to for Christmas music, and every year I watch "It's A Wonderful Life" at least once.

Twelve years ago, I gave birth to my oldest son just six weeks before Christmas. In the years following his birth, I began searching for a way to incorporate more of Christ and less commercialism into our family traditions. My husband and I knew before the kids were even born that Santa would not be coming down our chimney. Sure, Santa is fun and silly, but there would be no teaching that he was real and coming to visit us. This special time of year is nothing without Christ, and He would be the main focus in our home.

That's when I discovered Advent. The concept of focusing on Christ for weeks leading up to Christmas Day was exactly what I was searching for. My boys enjoy each evening as we focus on the story of Christ, light the advent wreath, and pray together. Advent has become our family tradition.

It is my prayer that you, too, will bring your family together during this season and focus on the birth of Christ and all that it entails. HE is the hope of the world.

Joy and Peace,

*Pam*



## Advent Traditions

There are many traditions found within the Advent celebration. For the purpose of this study, I will explore those that focus on Christ.

- Advent Wreath
  - A circle of evergreen branches is traditionally used for an Advent Wreath. Many families will use candles with this. Traditionally there are three purple candles, a rose/pink colored candle, and a white candle.
  - Each Sunday leading up to Christmas a new candle is lit.
    - Week 1 - purple candle. This candle represents Hope and is often referred to as the Prophecy Candle.
    - Week 2 - purple candle. This candle is the Bethlehem Candle and represents Peace.
    - Week 3 - rose/pink candle. This candle is the Shepherds Candle and represents Joy.
    - Week 4 - purple candle. The final weekly candle is referred to as the Angel's Candle and represents Love.
    - Christmas Day - white candle. Known as the Christ candle, this candle represents the life of Christ.
- Advent Calendar
  - Many families use a paper calendar and begin counting down the days until Christmas beginning December 1. Each day a scripture or prayer is revealed to focus on. Many people use different pieces of the nativity each day to focus on. The origins of this celebration date back to the 9th century in Germany. Many of these paper box-style calendars can be purchased online or in stores.
- Praying
  - Enjoy this time as a family to pray over the world, local communities, and your family/friends.
- Worship
  - Sing songs that represent the hope, peace, joy, and love of Christ.

## Advent Devotional

Whether you choose to partake in Advent activities or not, this devotional was created with the intention of being focused on scriptures during the weeks leading up to Christmas Day. The theme of this devotional includes traditional Christmas hymns. I have created a YouTube playlist that includes the songs in the devotional. You may access it by scanning the QR code with your smartphone.



<https://youtube.com/playlist?list=PLXauqDEmbYcH6YAkUHjCU-R3jkV36VMnL>



## Understanding the Season

CHRISTMAS (from Old English, *Christes mæsse*; literally, “Christ’s mass”). An annual holiday commemorating the birth of Jesus.

Christmas is traditionally celebrated in the West on December 25; this date was likely determined by the mid-to-late fourth century. Some groups, following the older Julian calendar, observe the holiday on December 25 of that calendar, which corresponds to January 7 in the Gregorian calendar.

By the late fourth century, Christmas had started to surface as a holiday in its own right, though in its early stages it was more of a prelude to the more established celebration of Epiphany (Kelly, *Origins*, 69–71). These holidays remain linked in both Eastern and Western traditions, with the Christmas season still ushering in Epiphany. Beginning in the ninth century, however—possibly as the result of the coronation of Emperor Charlemagne on Christmas Day in 800 A.D.—celebration of Christmas became a more prominent, distinguished, and public affair in the West (Murray, “Medieval,” 31–39). Much of what has today become common Christmas imagery (e.g., Santa Claus, Christmas trees) originated in the early modern era, with some traditions emerging as late as the 19th century.

*Copied from The Lexham Bible Dictionary*

Advent allows followers of Christ the opportunity to reflect on Jesus’ first and second coming. It is not simply just a Christmas story. Jesus is woven all throughout scripture from the beginning until the end. During Advent, allow your heart to reflect on the promised Messiah, his fleshly arrival, and the promised Hope of His return. In Him, we find salvation, mercy, grace, hope, peace, joy, and love. We are reconciled to the Father through the atonement of Christ.

If you have not yet asked Jesus to be the Master and Lord of your life, I pray this time in scripture will confirm His desire to offer you the incredible gift of His salvation. While we were dead in our sins, Christ offered us redemption through his life, death on the cross, and resurrection. He is the Way, the Truth, and the Life. No one gets to the Father, except through Jesus. He asks that we all come to Him, repent, and follow Him. Please message Pam if you ever have questions about having a relationship with Jesus.

Come, Sisters. Let us adore Him together in this season!



## O Come, O Come Emmanuel

O come, O come, Emmanuel,  
And ransom captive Israel,  
That mourns in lonely exile here,  
Until the Son of God appear.

Chorus:

Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel  
Shall come to thee, O Israel.  
O come, Thou Rod of Jesse, free  
Thine own from Satan's tyranny;  
From depths of hell Thy people save,  
And give them victory o'er the grave.

O come, O Dayspring,  
come and cheer  
Our spirits by thine advent here;  
And drive away the shades of night  
and pierce the clouds  
and bring us light.

O come, Thou Key of David, come  
And open wide our heav'nly home;  
Make safe the way that leads on high,  
And close the path to misery.

O come, O come, Adonai,  
Who in thy glorious majesty  
From Sinai's mountain,  
clothes in awe,  
Gavest thy folk the elder law.

One of the oldest Christmas carols in circulation, the author of "O Come, O Come Emmanuel" is unknown. Believing to be dated to 800 A.D. and penned by a monk or priest, the author was knowledgeable of scripture, and more than likely a biblical scholar. The original lyrics were written in Latin.

The song was used each year by the Catholic Church during its Advent worship. One verse was recited or sung each day for seven days leading up to Christmas. The song represents a deep understanding of biblical knowledge and was able to be passed down during a time when most homes didn't have a Bible.

The song gained additional popularity when John Mason Neale translated the original Latin into English in the mid-1800s. The verses are representative of Isaiah 7:14 and Matthew 1:23; He shall be called Emmanuel, "God with us". The song references Isaiah 11, Malachi 4:2, and Isaiah 22:22.





## Day 1

## Week 1 - Hope

Over 2000 years ago, there was great anticipation of the long-awaited Messiah. Spoken about for hundreds of years by the prophets, God's people waited for the Righteous One.

Jeremiah 33:12-16

*"Thus says the Lord of hosts: In this place that is waste, without man or beast, and in all of its cities, there shall again be habitations of shepherds resting their flocks. In the cities of the hill country, in the cities of the Shephelah, and in the cities of the Negeb, in the land of Benjamin, the places about Jerusalem, and in the cities of Judah, flocks shall again pass under the hands of the one who counts them, says the Lord.*

*"Behold, the days are coming, declares the Lord, when I will fulfill the promise I made to the house of Israel and the house of Judah. In those days and at that time I will cause a righteous Branch to spring up for David, and he shall execute justice and righteousness in the land. In those days Judah will be saved, and Jerusalem will dwell securely. And this is the name by which it will be called: 'The Lord is our righteousness.'"*

"Man is not naturally righteous (Pss. 14:1; 53:1, cp. Rom. 3:10-18). Righteousness is not native to him but to God. In Jesus' teaching the righteousness of the Pharisees is not enough to gain entrance into the kingdom of God (Matt. 5:20; cp. 3:13, 21, 31). Paul argues in Rom. 3 that no man is naturally righteous. Even after conversion, Paul speaks of the struggle to follow the law of righteousness and not the law he finds in his "body of death" (Rom. 7:14-8:1). God credits righteousness to those who exercise faith in Him (Rom. 4:15). In Christ one becomes all that God requires (2 Cor. 5:21; cp. Rom. 4:6, 14). The result of becoming the righteousness of God is a life of righteousness before God. Paul urges believers to continue to offer up the members of their bodies as instruments of righteousness to God (Rom. 6:13). The Christian is urged to put on the breastplate of righteousness (Eph. 6:14). Timothy is exhorted to flee youthful lusts, call on God from a pure heart, and pursue righteousness (2 Tim. 4:8). Those trained through discipline produce the peaceful fruit of righteousness (Heb. 12:9-11)."

Copied: Mooney, J. (2003). Righteousness. In C. Brand, C. Draper, A. England, S. Bond, E. R. Clendenen, & T. C. Butler (Eds.), *Holman Illustrated Bible Dictionary* (pp. 1400-1401). Nashville, TN: Holman Bible Publishers.

## Family Focus

The theme of this week is prophecy or the HOPE of Christ. Spend time talking as a family about what it must have been like to wait hundreds of years for the Messiah (technically thousands since the Garden). In the years of silence between the prophecies of the Old Testament and the arrival of Jesus, do you think their hope was waning or strengthened? What would have kept their hope renewed?





## Day 2

## Week 1 - Hope

Isaiah 2:2-5

It shall come to pass in the latter days  
that the mountain of the house of the Lord  
shall be established as the highest of the mountains,  
and shall be lifted up above the hills;  
and all the nations shall flow to it,  
and many peoples shall come, and say:  
“Come, let us go up to the mountain of the Lord,  
to the house of the God of Jacob,  
that he may teach us his ways  
and that we may walk in his paths.”

For out of Zion shall go forth the law,  
and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem.  
He shall judge between the nations,  
and shall decide disputes for many peoples;  
and they shall beat their swords into plowshares,  
and their spears into pruning hooks;  
nation shall not lift up sword against nation,  
neither shall they learn war anymore.  
O house of Jacob,  
come, let us walk  
in the light of the Lord.

### Scripture Focus

- What part of the selection stood out for you?

---

---

---

---

- How does this reflect the Hope found in Christ?

---

---

---

---



## Day 3

## Week 1 - Hope

Isaiah 11:1-9

There shall come forth a shoot from the stump of Jesse,  
and a branch from his roots shall bear fruit.  
And the Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him,  
the Spirit of wisdom and understanding,  
the Spirit of counsel and might,  
the Spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord.  
And his delight shall be in the fear of the Lord.  
He shall not judge by what his eyes see,  
or decide disputes by what his ears hear,  
but with righteousness he shall judge the poor,  
and decide with equity for the meek of the earth;  
and he shall strike the earth with the rod of his mouth,  
and with the breath of his lips he shall kill the wicked.  
Righteousness shall be the belt of his waist,  
and faithfulness the belt of his loins.  
The wolf shall dwell with the lamb,  
and the leopard shall lie down with the young goat,

who gives breath to the people on it  
and spirit to those who walk in it;  
and the calf and the lion and the fattened calf 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.  
The nursing child shall play over the hole of the cobra,  
and the weaned child shall put his hand on the adder's  
den.  
They shall not hurt or destroy  
in all my holy mountain;  
for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord  
as the waters cover the sea.  
In that day the root of Jesse, who shall stand as a signal  
for the peoples—of him shall the nations inquire, and his  
resting place shall be glorious.

## Scripture Focus

- What part of the selection stood out for you?

---

---

---

---

- There is a theme of righteousness repeated in the prophecies. What does that mean to you?

---

---

---

---



## Lo, How A Rose E'Er Blooming

Lo, how a Rose e'er blooming  
From tender stem hath sprung!  
Of Jesse's lineage coming,  
As men of old have sung.  
It came, a flow'ret bright,  
Amid the cold of winter,  
When half spent was the night.

Isaiah 'twas foretold it,  
The Rose I have in mind;  
With Mary we behold it,  
The virgin mother kind.  
To show God's love aright,  
She bore to men a Savior,  
When half spent was the night.

This Flow'r, whose fragrance tender  
With sweetness fills the air,  
Dispels with glorious splendor  
The darkness everywhere.  
True man, yet very God,  
From sin and death He saves us,  
And lightens every load.

While the author is unknown, this hymn first appeared in a German hymnal in 1599, titled, *Es Ist ein Ros Entsprungen*. The original two stanzas depicted the prophecy in Isaiah 11 that the Messiah would be from the root of Jesse. Composer, Michael Praetorius, added harmonization to the original work 10 years later.

Over the years the hymn has been translated into various languages, and additional stanzas added.



## Day 4

## Week 1 - Hope

Isaiah 42:1-9

Behold my servant, whom I uphold,  
my chosen, in whom my soul delights;  
I have put my Spirit upon him;  
he will bring forth justice to the nations.  
He will not cry aloud or lift up his voice,  
or make it heard in the street;  
a bruised reed he will not break,  
and a faintly burning wick he will not quench;  
he will faithfully bring forth justice.  
He will not grow faint or be discouraged  
till he has established justice in the earth;  
and the coastlands wait for his law.  
Thus says God, the Lord,  
who created the heavens and stretched them out,  
who spread out the earth and what comes from it,

"I am the Lord; I have called you in righteousness;  
I will take you by the hand and keep you;  
I will give you as a covenant for the people,  
a light for the nations,  
to open the eyes that are blind,  
to bring out the prisoners from the dungeon,  
from the prison those who sit in darkness.  
I am the Lord; that is my name;  
my glory I give to no other,  
nor my praise to carved idols.  
Behold, the former things have come to pass,  
and new things I now declare;  
before they spring forth  
I tell you of them."

## Scripture Focus

- What part of the selection stood out for you?

---

---

---

---

- How does this reflect the Hope found in Christ?

---

---

---

---



## Day 5

## Week 1 - Hope

Isaiah 9:1-7

But there will be no gloom for her who was in anguish. In the former time he brought into contempt the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, but in the latter time he has made glorious the way of the sea, the land beyond the Jordan, Galilee of the nations.

The people who walked in darkness  
have seen a great light;  
those who dwelt in a land of deep darkness,  
on them has light shone.  
You have multiplied the nation;  
you have increased its joy;  
they rejoice before you  
as with joy at the harvest,  
as they are glad when they divide the spoil.  
For the yoke of his burden,  
and the staff for his shoulder,

the rod of his oppressor,  
you have broken as on the day of Midian.  
For every boot of the tramping warrior in battle tumult  
and every garment rolled in blood  
will be burned as fuel for the fire.  
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.  
Of the increase of his government and of peace  
there will be no end,  
on the throne of David and over his kingdom,  
to establish it and to uphold it  
with justice and with righteousness  
from this time forth and forevermore.  
The zeal of the Lord of hosts will do this.

## Scripture Focus

- Which part of the selection stood out for you?

---

---

---

---

- How does this reflect the Hope found in Christ?

---

---

---

---



## Day 6

## Week 1 - Hope

Isaiah 55: 6-13

"Seek the Lord while he may be found;  
call upon him while he is near;  
let the wicked forsake his way,  
and the unrighteous man his thoughts;  
let him return to the Lord, that he may have  
compassion on him,  
and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.  
For my thoughts are not your thoughts,  
neither are your ways my ways, declares the Lord.  
For as the heavens are higher than the earth,  
so are my ways higher than your ways  
and my thoughts than your thoughts.  
"For as the rain and the snow come down from heaven  
and do not return there but water the earth,

making it bring forth and sprout,  
giving seed to the sower and bread to the eater,  
so shall my word be that goes out from my mouth;  
it shall not return to me empty,  
but it shall accomplish that which I purpose,  
and shall succeed in the thing for which I sent it.  
"For you shall go out in joy  
and be led forth in peace;  
the mountains and the hills before you  
shall break forth into singing,  
and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands.  
Instead of the thorn shall come up the cypress;  
instead of the brier shall come up the myrtle;  
and it shall make a name for the Lord,  
an everlasting sign that shall not be cut off."

## Scripture Focus

- Which part of the selection stood out for you?

---

---

---

---

- How does this reflect the Hope found in Christ?

---

---

---

---



## Joy to the World!

Joy to the world! the Lord is come;  
Let earth receive her King;  
Let every heart prepare him room,  
And heaven and nature sing,  
And heaven and nature sing,  
And heaven, and heaven, and nature sing.

Joy to the world! the Saviour reigns;  
Let men their songs employ;  
While fields and floods, rocks, hills, and plains  
Repeat the sounding joy,  
Repeat the sounding joy,  
Repeat, repeat the sounding joy.

No more let sins and sorrows grow,  
Nor thorns infest the ground;  
He comes to make His blessings flow  
Far as the curse is found,  
Far as the curse is found,  
Far as, far as, the curse is found.

He rules the world with truth and grace,  
And makes the nations prove  
The glories of His righteousness,  
And wonders of His love,  
And wonders of His love,  
And wonders, wonders, of His love.

Although not written as a Christmas carol, the collaboration of "Joy to the World" by Isaac Watts and Lowell Mason has stood the test of time in Christmas worship.

Neither collaborator knew the other and were separated by over 100 years! In 1674 Isaac Watts was born in Southampton, England, and although greatly rejected desired a revolution in the traditional worship hymns. He felt many of them were monotonous and lacked passion. Throughout his ministry as a pastor, he wrote poems, rewrote psalms, and penned hymns. Many of which were rejected by the church at that time. Yet he believed in more than the status quo and challenged the musical scene.

Born in New Jersey in the early 1800s, Lowell Mason also struggled with the musical offerings by the local churches. As a student of the composer Handel, Mason attempted to have his music and arrangements published. Years later he discovered his initially rejected pieces were indeed published and being ordered by the thousands.

In 1836 Mason wrote the musical composition "Antioch". It would be several years later that he discovered the lyrics of "Joy to the World!" by Watts and paired the two together.





## Day 7

## Week 1 - Hope

Isaiah 52:7-10

How beautiful upon the mountains  
are the feet of him who brings good news,  
who publishes peace, who brings good news of happiness,  
who publishes salvation,  
who says to Zion, "Your God reigns."  
The voice of your watchmen—they lift up their voice;  
together they sing for joy;  
for eye to eye they see  
the return of the Lord to Zion.  
Break forth together into singing,  
you waste places of Jerusalem,  
for the Lord has comforted his people;  
he has redeemed Jerusalem.  
The Lord has bared his holy arm  
before the eyes of all the nations,  
and all the ends of the earth shall see  
the salvation of our God.

### Scripture Focus

- Which part of the selection stood out for you?

---

---

---

---

- How does this reflect the Hope found in Christ?

---

---

---

---





## Day 8

## Week 2 - Peace

Isaiah 61

The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me,  
because the Lord has anointed me  
to bring good news to the poor;  
he has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted,  
to proclaim liberty to the captives,  
and the opening of the prison to those who are bound;  
to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor,  
and the day of vengeance of our God;  
to comfort all who mourn;  
to grant to those who mourn in Zion—  
to give them a beautiful headdress instead of ashes,  
the oil of gladness instead of mourning,  
the garment of praise instead of a faint spirit;  
that they may be called oaks of righteousness,  
the planting of the Lord, that he may be glorified.  
They shall build up the ancient ruins;  
they shall raise up the former devastations;  
they shall repair the ruined cities,  
the devastations of many generations.  
Strangers shall stand and tend your flocks;  
foreigners shall be your plowmen and vinedressers;  
but you shall be called the priests of the Lord;  
they shall speak of you as the ministers of our God;

you shall eat the wealth of the nations,  
and in their glory you shall boast.  
Instead of your shame there shall be a double portion;  
instead of dishonor they shall rejoice in their lot;  
therefore in their land they shall possess a double portion;  
they shall have everlasting joy.  
For I the Lord love justice;  
I hate robbery and wrong;  
I will faithfully give them their recompense,  
and I will make an everlasting covenant with them.  
Their offspring shall be known among the nations,  
and their descendants in the midst of the peoples;  
all who see them shall acknowledge them,  
that they are an offspring the Lord has blessed.  
I will greatly rejoice in the Lord;  
my soul shall exult in my God,  
for he has clothed me with the garments of salvation;  
he has covered me with the robe of righteousness,  
as a bridegroom decks himself like a priest with a beautiful headdress,  
and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels.  
For as the earth brings forth its sprouts,  
and as a garden causes what is sown in it to sprout up,  
so the Lord God will cause righteousness and praise  
to sprout up before all the nations.

## Family Focus

The theme of this week is PEACE. Israel was a nation that experienced much turmoil as a result of disobeying God. When the prophets began to speak of the Messiah, he would offer peace in Him. As a family discuss what the peace of Christ looks like for each person. How is it different from worldly peace?



## Day 9

## Week 2 - Peace

John 14: 23-27

Jesus replied, "Anyone who loves me will obey my teaching. My Father will love them, and we will come to them and make our home with them. Anyone who does not love me will not obey my teaching. These words you hear are not my own; they belong to the Father who sent me.

"All this I have spoken while still with you. But the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you. Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.

John 16:33

"I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world."

### Scripture Focus

- Which part of the selection stood out for you?

---

---

---

---

- How does this reflect the Peace offered through Christ?

---

---

---

---



## Oh Come, All Ye Faithful

O come, all ye faithful, joyful and triumphant!

O come ye, O come ye, to Bethlehem  
Come and behold Him  
Born the King of Angels

Chorus:

O come, let us adore Him  
O come, let us adore Him  
O come, let us adore Him  
Christ the Lord!

True God of true God, Light  
from Light Eternal,  
Lo, He shuns not the Virgin's womb;  
Son of the Father,  
Begotten, not created;

Sing, choirs of angels, sing in exultation  
Sing, all ye citizens of heaven above!  
Glory to God  
All glory in the highest:

See how the shepherds,  
summoned to His cradle,  
Leaving their flocks,  
draw nigh to gaze:  
We too will thither bend  
our joyful footsteps;

Child, for us sinners poor  
and in the manger,  
We would embrace Thee,  
with love and awe;  
Who would not love Thee,  
loving us so dearly?

Yea, Lord, we greet Thee,  
born this happy morning  
Jesus, to Thee be glory given;  
Word of the Father now  
in flesh appearing

Roman Catholic priest, John Francis Wade, composed "Adeste Fideles". The original hymn was written in Latin, and published in his book, *Cantus Diversi*, in 1751. Wade fled from England to Douay, France in 1745 to escape religious persecution. While in France he researched and recorded historical church music. As he discovered interesting music, he would copy and distribute it to churches around the area. Wade preserved many of the sacred hymns that might have been lost. During this time, Wade also penned many of his own songs. One of those was "Adeste Fideles"; published in his book, "Cantus Diversi" in 1751.

The hymn was later translated from Latin to English by Frederick Oakley. Oakley translated the lyrics for his congregation, the Margaret Street Chapel in London.

"Oh Come, All Ye Faithful" has been translated into more than 100 different languages and referred to as one of the "greatest carols ever written."





## Day 10

## Week 2 - Peace

Colossians 3: 12-17

Put on then, as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, compassionate hearts, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience, bearing with one another and, if one has a complaint against another, forgiving each other; as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive. And above all these put on love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony. And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in one body. And be thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to God. And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

### Scripture Focus

- Which part of the selection stood out for you?

---

---

---

---

- How does this reflect the peace offered through Christ?

---

---

---

---



## Day 11

## Week 2 - Peace

Ephesians 1:3-14 NLT

All praise to God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly realms because we are united with Christ. Even before he made the world, God loved us and chose us in Christ to be holy and without fault in his eyes. God decided in advance to adopt us into his own family by bringing us to himself through Jesus Christ. This is what he wanted to do, and it gave him great pleasure. So we praise God for the glorious grace he has poured out on us who belong to his dear Son. He is so rich in kindness and grace that he purchased our freedom with the blood of his Son and forgave our sins. He has showered his kindness on us, along with all wisdom and understanding.

God has now revealed to us his mysterious will regarding Christ—which is to fulfill his own good plan. And this is the plan: At the right time he will bring everything together under the authority of Christ—everything in heaven and on earth. Furthermore, because we are united with Christ, we have received an inheritance from God, for he chose us in advance, and he makes everything work out according to his plan.

God's purpose was that we Jews who were the first to trust in Christ would bring praise and glory to God. And now you Gentiles have also heard the truth, the Good News that God saves you. And when you believed in Christ, he identified you as his own by giving you the Holy Spirit, whom he promised long ago. The Spirit is God's guarantee that he will give us the inheritance he promised and that he has purchased us to be his own people. He did this so we would praise and glorify him.

### Scripture Focus

- Which part of the selection stood out for you?

---

---

---

---

- How does this reflect the Peace offered through Christ?

---

---

---

---



## Day 12

## Week 2 - Peace

---

Galatians 4:4-7

But when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth his Son, born of woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons. And because you are sons, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, "Abba! Father!" So you are no longer a slave, but a son, and if a son, then an heir through God.

### Scripture Focus

- Which part of the selection stood out for you?

---

---

---

---

- How does this reflect the Peace offered through Christ?

---

---

---

---



# Silent Night

Silent night, holy night!  
All is calm, all is bright.  
Round yon Virgin, Mother and Child.  
Holy infant so tender and mild,  
Sleep in heavenly peace,  
Sleep in heavenly peace.

Silent night, holy night!  
Shepherds quake at the sight.  
Glories stream from heaven afar  
Heavenly hosts sing Alleluia,  
Christ the Saviour is born,  
Christ the Saviour is born

Silent night, holy night!  
Son of God love's pure light.  
Radiant beams from Thy holy face  
With dawn of redeeming grace,  
Jesus Lord, at Thy birth  
Jesus Lord, at Thy birth



In 1817 Joseph Mohr was the assistant priest at St. Nicholas in Oberndorf, Austria. As he was prepping for the Christmas Eve Midnight Mass, Mohr discovered the church's organ would not play. He had spent months preparing for the midnight worship service and without a functioning organ, he wasn't sure how the service would be held.

Mohr spent hours attempting to fix the organ without success. He prayed for God to help him find a way to bring music to the service. He remembered a poem that he had written several years earlier. He pulled out the six stanzas he had penned and knew the Lord was guiding him.

Mohr raced across town to ask his friend and church musician, Franz Gruber, if he could write a melody to the poem. Knowing they would only be able to use a guitar, Gruber accepted the challenge. Hours before the midnight service, Mohr and Gruber taught the simple song to the choir.

A month later, Mohr recounted the story to Karl Mauracher, an organ repairman. Mauracher was impressed with the song and wrote down lyrics and learned the melody. He began to share it with other churches, and the song began to gain popularity.

Mohr never received recognition for his writing until after his death. Yet his divine inspiration has become one of the most recorded songs in history.



## Day 13

## Week 2 - Peace

Isaiah 32:15-18

until the Spirit is poured upon us from on high,  
and the wilderness becomes a fruitful field,  
and the fruitful field is deemed a forest.

Then justice will dwell in the wilderness,  
and righteousness abide in the fruitful field.

And the effect of righteousness will be peace,  
and the result of righteousness, quietness and trust forever.

My people will abide in a peaceful habitation,  
in secure dwellings, and in quiet resting places.

### Scripture Focus

- Which part of the selection stood out for you?

---

---

---

---

- How does this reflect the Peace offered through Christ?

---

---

---

---





## Day 14

## Week 2 - Peace

Luke 1:26-38

In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a city of Galilee named Nazareth, to a virgin betrothed to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. And the virgin's name was Mary. And he came to her and said, "Greetings, O favored one, the Lord is with you!" But she was greatly troubled at the saying, and tried to discern what sort of greeting this might be. And the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. And the Lord God will give to him the throne of his father David, and he will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end."

And Mary said to the angel, "How will this be, since I am a virgin?"

And the angel answered her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be called holy—the Son of God. And behold, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son, and this is the sixth month with her who was called barren. For nothing will be impossible with God." And Mary said, "Behold, I am the servant of the Lord; let it be to me according to your word." And the angel departed from her.

### Scripture Focus

- Which part of the selection stood out for you?

---

---

---

---

- How does this reflect the Peace offered through Christ?

---

---

---

---



## Day 15

## Week 3 - Joy

---

Isaiah 35 NLT

Even the wilderness and desert will be glad in those days.

The wasteland will rejoice and blossom with spring crocuses.

Yes, there will be an abundance of flowers  
and singing and joy!

The deserts will become as green as the mountains of Lebanon,

as lovely as Mount Carmel or the plain of Sharon.

There the Lord will display his glory,  
the splendor of our God.

With this news, strengthen those who have tired hands,  
and encourage those who have weak knees.

Say to those with fearful hearts,

"Be strong, and do not fear,  
for your God is coming to destroy your enemies.

He is coming to save you."

And when he comes, he will open the eyes of the blind  
and unplug the ears of the deaf.

The lame will leap like a deer,

and those who cannot speak will sing for joy!

Springs will gush forth in the wilderness,  
and streams will water the wasteland.

The parched ground will become a pool,  
and springs of water will satisfy the thirsty land.

Marsh grass and reeds and rushes will flourish  
where desert jackals once lived.

And a great road will go through that once deserted land.

It will be named the Highway of Holiness.

Evil-minded people will never travel on it.

It will be only for those who walk in God's ways;  
fools will never walk there.

Lions will not lurk along its course,  
nor any other ferocious beasts.

There will be no other dangers.

Only the redeemed will walk on it.

Those who have been ransomed by the Lord will return.

They will enter Jerusalem[a] singing,  
crowned with everlasting joy.

Sorrow and mourning will disappear,  
and they will be filled with joy and gladness.

## Family Focus

Hebrews 12:1-2 reads, "Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God."

Jesus experienced joy even in his darkest hour. He is also the source of joy. Discuss what joy is. How is this different from happiness? How can we experience the joy of the Lord and how can we share that joy with those around us?



## The First Noel

The first Noel the angels did say  
Was to certain poor shepherds in fields as they lay  
In fields where they lay keeping their sheep  
On a cold winter's night that was so deep  
Noel, Noel, Noel, Noel  
Born is the King of Israel!

They looked up and saw a star  
Shining in the east beyond them far  
And to the earth it gave great light  
And so it continued both day and night  
Noel, Noel, Noel, Noel  
Born is the King of Israel!

And by the light of that same star  
Three Wise men came from country far  
To seek for a King was their intent  
And to follow the star wherever it went  
Noel, Noel, Noel, Noel  
Born is the King of Israel!

This star drew nigh to the northwest  
O'er Bethlehem it took its rest  
And there it did both stop and stay  
Right o'er the place where Jesus lay  
Noel, Noel, Noel, Noel  
Born is the King of Israel!

Then entered in those Wise men three  
Fell reverently upon their knee  
And offered there in His presence  
Their gold and myrrh and frankincense  
Noel, Noel, Noel, Noel  
Born is the King of Israel!

Then let us all with one accord  
Sing praises to our heavenly Lord  
That hath made heaven and earth of naught  
And with his blood mankind has bought  
Noel, Noel, Noel, Noel  
Born is the King of Israel!



The author of this popular Christmas carol is unknown, as well as the location of its inception. It is believed to have been written during the Middle Ages. The only Bibles in circulation during that time would have been in the local churches, and most of them were written in Latin. With a vast majority of people being illiterate, most Christ-followers were familiar with biblical stories based on hearing them repeated or passed down through the generations.

The song's author was slightly misrepresentative of scripture in a few of the lyrics. Yet, had enough knowledge to know that "noel" meant a "joyful shout expressing the exhilaration at the birth of Christ." The author was excited about the birth of Christ and the celebration or worship thereof.

This song was not part of a religious celebration in its origin. It would have been sung as a holiday celebration through family traditions. The song was published in 1833 by William Sandys. He researched and collected French and English folk songs, and included "The First Noel" in his book. It was already popular with the peasant class and began being used in worship in the Church of England soon after.



## Day 16

## Week 3 - Joy

Luke 1:39-45

In those days Mary arose and went with haste into the hill country, to a town in Judah, and she entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth. And when Elizabeth heard the greeting of Mary, the baby leaped in her womb. And Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit, and she exclaimed with a loud cry, "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb! And why is this granted to me that the mother of my Lord should come to me? For behold, when the sound of your greeting came to my ears, the baby in my womb leaped for joy. And blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfillment of what was spoken to her from the Lord."

### Scripture Focus

- Which part of the selection stood out for you?

---

---

---

---

- How does this reflect the Joy of the promised Messiah?

---

---

---

---



## Day 17

## Week 3 - Joy

Luke 1:46-56

And Mary said,

"My soul magnifies the Lord,  
and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior,  
for he has looked on the humble estate of his servant.

For behold, from now on all generations will call me  
blessed;

for he who is mighty has done great things for me,  
and holy is his name.

And his mercy is for those who fear him  
from generation to generation.

He has shown strength with his arm;

he has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their  
hearts;

he has brought down the mighty from their thrones  
and exalted those of humble estate;

he has filled the hungry with good things,  
and the rich he has sent away empty.

He has helped his servant Israel,  
in remembrance of his mercy,

as he spoke to our fathers,  
to Abraham and to his offspring forever."

And Mary remained with her about three months and  
returned to her home.

## Scripture Focus

- Which part of the selection stood out for you?

---

---

---

---

- How does this reflect the Joy of the promised Messiah?

---

---

---

---



## Day 18

## Week 3 - Joy

Luke 1:57-66

Now the time came for Elizabeth to give birth, and she bore a son. And her neighbors and relatives heard that the Lord had shown great mercy to her, and they rejoiced with her. And on the eighth day they came to circumcise the child. And they would have called him Zechariah after his father, but his mother answered, "No; he shall be called John." And they said to her, "None of your relatives is called by this name." And they made signs to his father, inquiring what he wanted him to be called. And he asked for a writing tablet and wrote, "His name is John." And they all wondered. And immediately his mouth was opened and his tongue loosed, and he spoke, blessing God. And fear came on all their neighbors. And all these things were talked about through all the hill country of Judea, and all who heard them laid them up in their hearts, saying, "What then will this child be?" For the hand of the Lord was with him.

### Scripture Focus

- Which part of the selection stood out for you?

---

---

---

---

- How does this reflect the Joy of the promised Messiah?

---

---

---

---



# O Holy Night

O holy night, the stars are brightly shining,  
It is the night of the dear Saviour's birth;  
Long lay the world in sin and error pining,  
'Till he appeared and the soul felt its worth.  
A thrill of hope the weary world rejoices,  
For yonder breaks a new and glorious morn;

Fall on your knees, Oh hear the angel voices!  
O night divine! O night when Christ was born.  
O night, O night, O night divine.

Led by the light of Faith serenely beaming;  
With glowing hearts by his cradle we stand:  
So, led by light of a star sweetly gleaming,  
Here come the wise men from Orient land,  
The King of Kings lay thus in lowly manger,  
In all our trials born to be our friend;  
He knows our need, To our weakness no stranger!  
Behold your King! Before Him lowly bend!  
Behold your King! your King! before him bend!

Truly He taught us to love one another;  
His law is Love and His gospel is Peace;  
Chains shall he break, for the slave is our brother,  
And in his name all oppression shall cease,  
Sweet hymns of joy in grateful Chorus raise we;  
Let all within us praise his Holy name!  
Christ is the Lord, then ever! ever praise we!

His pow'r and glory, evermore proclaim!  
His pow'r and glory, evermore proclaim!

Frenchman, Placide Cappeau, was asked by his parish priest to write a poem for their Christmas pageant. Cappeau found inspiration from the birth story in Luke, while on a business trip on December 3, 1847. Cappeau wrote the poem while traveling to Paris.

Upon completion he asked his composer friend, Adolphe Adam to add music to it. Within a few days, the accomplished composer added music to the poem. Soprano Emily Laury performed the hymn, *Noel d'Adam*, at midnight Mass on Christmas Eve 1847. The lyrics and musical composition were written within a month.

During the early years of its inception, *Cantique de Noel* was accepted by the church of France and various Catholic Christmas services. Cappeau eventually walked away from the church to join the socialist movement, and Adams was a Jew. The church renounced the song as unfit for service and worship.

A decade later, in 1855 *Cantique de Noel* was translated into English by a Unitarian Minister from Massachusetts.

On Christmas Eve 1906, Reginald Fessenden broadcast over the airwaves for the first time in history. He began with the reading of the birth story from Luke. Upon completion of the scripture, Fessenden picked up his violin and began playing "O Holy Night. This was the first song ever sent over radio waves.



## Day 19

## Week 3 - Joy

Luke 1:65-79

And his father Zechariah was filled with the Holy Spirit and prophesied, saying,

"Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, for he has visited and redeemed his people and has raised up a horn of salvation for us in the house of his servant David, as he spoke by the mouth of his holy prophets from of old, that we should be saved from our enemies and from the hand of all who hate us; to show the mercy promised to our fathers and to remember his holy covenant, the oath that he swore to our father

Abraham, to grant us that we, being delivered from the hand of our enemies, might serve him without fear, in holiness and righteousness before him all our days.

And you, child, will be called the prophet of the Most High; for you will go before the Lord to prepare his ways, to give knowledge of salvation to his people in the forgiveness of their sins, because of the tender mercy of our God, whereby the sunrise shall visit us[h] from on high to give light to those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace."

### Scripture Focus

- Which part of the selection stood out for you?

---

---

---

---

- How does this reflect the Joy of the promised Messiah?

---

---

---

---





## Day 20

## Week 3 - Joy

Luke 2:1-7

In those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be registered. This was the first registration when Quirinius was governor of Syria. And all went to be registered, each to his own town. And Joseph also went up from Galilee, from the town of Nazareth, to Judea, to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and lineage of David, to be registered with Mary, his betrothed, who was with child. And while they were there, the time came for her to give birth. And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in swaddling cloths and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.

### Scripture Focus

- Which part of the selection stood out for you?

---

---

---

---

- How does this reflect the Joy of the promised Messiah?

---

---

---

---



## Day 21

## Week 3 - Joy

Luke 2:8-20

And in the same region there were shepherds out in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. And an angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were filled with great fear. And the angel said to them, "Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. And this will be a sign for you: you will find a baby wrapped in swaddling cloths and lying in a manger." And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among those with whom he is pleased!"

When the angels went away from them into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let us go over to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has made known to us." And they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby lying in a manger. And when they saw it, they made known the saying that had been told them concerning this child. And all who heard it wondered at what the shepherds told them. But Mary treasured up all these things, pondering them in her heart. And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

## Scripture Focus

- Which part of the selection stood out for you?

---

---

---

---

- How does this reflect the Joy of the promised Messiah?

---

---

---

---



## O Little Town of Bethlehem

O little town of Bethlehem,  
how still we see thee lie!  
Above thy deep and dreamless sleep  
the silent stars go by.  
Yet in thy dark streets shineth  
the everlasting light;  
the hopes and fears of all the years  
are met in thee tonight.

For Christ is born of Mary,  
and gathered all above,  
while mortals sleep, the angels keep  
their watch of wond'ring love.  
O morning stars, together  
proclaim the holy birth!  
And praises sing to God, the King,  
and peace on earth to men.

How silently, how silently,  
the wondrous gift is giv'n!  
So God imparts to human hearts  
the blessings of his heaven.  
No ear may hear his coming,  
but in this world of sin,  
where meek souls will receive him still  
the dear Christ enters in.

O holy Child of Bethlehem,  
descend to us we pray,  
cast out our sin, and enter in,  
be born in us today!  
We hear the Christmas angels  
the great glad tidings tell.  
O come to us, abide with us,  
our Lord Emmanuel.

Authored by one of the most influential American pastors of the 19th century, Phillips Brooks. "O Little Town of Bethlehem" was inspired by a much-needed sabbatical for Brooks on December 24, 1865.

Weary from the Civil War and pastoring a deeply saddened congregation during that time, Brooks realized several years after that he was in need of a soul-restoration for himself. After presiding over the burial service for Abraham Lincoln, Brooks ventured away from his home in Philadelphia to the Middle East.

On Christmas Eve, he saddled a horse and snuck away from the crowds and found himself journeying to Bethlehem in the evening. Struck with the awe of knowing Christ had been born in that area, he later reported to his friends and family that it left him with a "singing in my soul". He described the experience as overwhelming.

Years later he found himself having difficulty getting his congregation to understand the impact of his trip. He sat to write about the experience three years later and penned the lyrics of "O Little Town of Bethlehem". He immediately shared it with friend and church musician, Lewis Radner. The organist struggled to provide musical accompaniment to the poem. On December 24, Radner was awakened in the night with what he considered divine inspiration for the music of the writing.

The song was the most popular Christmas song for the church and surrounding Philadelphia congregations for six years. It was published by William Huntington in 1874 and spread throughout as one of the most popular Christmas carols of its time.





## Day 22

## Week 4 - Love

---

Isaiah 7:10-17

Again the Lord spoke to Ahaz: "Ask a sign of the Lord your God; let it be deep as Sheol or high as heaven." But Ahaz said, "I will not ask, and I will not put the Lord to the test." And he said, "Hear then, O house of David! Is it too little for you to weary men, that you weary my God also? Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign. Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name **Immanuel**. He shall eat curds and honey when he knows how to refuse the evil and choose the good. For before the boy knows how to refuse the evil and choose the good, the land whose two kings you dread will be deserted. The Lord will bring upon you and upon your people and upon your father's house such days as have not come since the day that Ephraim departed from Judah—the king of Assyria!"

### Family Focus

As we enter the final week of Advent, focus on the Love that came down. God in mercy, grace, and love gave us his Son. Immanuel means God with us. As flesh appeared over 2000 years ago, we were given the opportunity for redemption and reconciliation. What does that mean for your family? What does that mean for you?



## Day 23

## Week 4 - Love

Matthew 1:18-25

This is how Jesus the Messiah was born. His mother, Mary, was engaged to be married to Joseph. But before the marriage took place, while she was still a virgin, she became pregnant through the power of the Holy Spirit. Joseph, to whom she was engaged, was a righteous man and did not want to disgrace her publicly, so he decided to break the engagement quietly.

As he considered this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream. "Joseph, son of David," the angel said, "do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife. For the child within her was conceived by the Holy Spirit. And she will have a son, and you are to name him Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins."

All of this occurred to fulfill the Lord's message through his prophet:

"Look! The virgin will conceive a child!

She will give birth to a son,  
and they will call him Immanuel,  
which means 'God is with us.'"

When Joseph woke up, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded and took Mary as his wife. But he did not have sexual relations with her until her son was born. And Joseph named him Jesus.

## Scripture Focus

- Which part of the selection stood out for you?

---

---

---

---

- How does this reflect the Love God has given us?

---

---

---

---



## Day 24

## Week 4 - Love

Romans 1:1-7

This letter is from Paul, a slave of Christ Jesus, chosen by God to be an apostle and sent out to preach his Good News. God promised this Good News long ago through his prophets in the holy Scriptures. The Good News is about his Son. In his earthly life he was born into King David's family line, and he was shown to be the Son of God when he was raised from the dead by the power of the Holy Spirit. He is Jesus Christ our Lord. Through Christ, God has given us the privilege and authority as apostles to tell Gentiles everywhere what God has done for them, so that they will believe and obey him, bringing glory to his name.

And you are included among those Gentiles who have been called to belong to Jesus Christ. I am writing to all of you in Rome who are loved by God and are called to be his own holy people.

May God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ give you grace and peace.

### Scripture Focus

- Which part of the selection stood out for you?

---

---

---

---

- How does this reflect the Love God has given us?

---

---

---

---



## Angels We Have Heard On High

Angels we have heard on high  
Sweetly singing o'er the plains  
And the mountains in reply  
Echoing their joyous strains

Chorus:  
Gloria in excelsis Deo!  
Gloria in excelsis Deo!

Shepherds, why this jubilee?  
Why your joyous strains prolong?  
Say what may the tidings be,  
Which inspire your heavenly songs?

Come to Bethlehem and see  
Him whose birth the angels sing;  
Come, adore on bended knee,  
Christ the Lord, the newborn King.

See within a manger laid,  
Jesus, Lord of heav'n and earth!  
Mary, Joseph, lend your aid,  
With us sing our Savior's birth.

The author and date of this Christmas hymn are a mystery. Although many claim it as a traditional French hymn, there are clues that suggest it may be one of the oldest hymns ever recorded.

The chorus "Gloria in Excelsis Deo!" means "Glory to God in the highest". This Latin phrase dates back to the first century. Pope Telesphorus issued a decree around 130 A.D. that all churches would have a special Christmas service. The phrase "Gloria in Excelsis Deo!" was sung during the service and carried on through the third century.

The lyrics of "Angels We Have Heard On High" suggest a biblical scholar or monk would have inspired the poem or song. It depicts the sweet arrival of angels to shepherds nearby, representing that Christ had come for everyone.

Kenneth W. Osbeck once wrote, "The Bible teaches that angels are the ministering servants of God and that they are continually being sent to help and protect us, the heirs of salvation."





## Day 25

## Week 4 - Love

Luke 21:25-36

"And there will be signs in sun and moon and stars, and on the earth distress of nations in perplexity because of the roaring of the sea and the waves, people fainting with fear and with foreboding of what is coming on the world. For the powers of the heavens will be shaken. And then they will see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory. Now when these things begin to take place, straighten up and raise your heads, because your redemption is drawing near."

And he told them a parable: "Look at the fig tree, and all the trees. As soon as they come out in leaf, you see for yourselves and know that the summer is already near. So also, when you see these things taking place, you know that the kingdom of God is near. Truly, I say to you, this generation will not pass away until all has taken place. Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away."

"But watch yourselves lest your hearts be weighed down with dissipation and drunkenness and cares of this life, and that day come upon you suddenly like a trap. For it will come upon all who dwell on the face of the whole earth. But stay awake at all times, praying that you may have strength to escape all these things that are going to take place, and to stand before the Son of Man."

### Scripture Focus

- Which part of the selection stood out for you?

---

---

---

---

- How does this reflect the Love God has given us?

---

---

---

---





## Day 26

## Week 4 - Love

John 1:1-18

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through him, and without him was not anything made that was made. In him was life, and the life was the light of men. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.

There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. He came as a witness, to bear witness about the light, that all might believe through him. He was not the light, but came to bear witness about the light.

The true light, which gives light to everyone, was coming into the world. He was in the world, and the world was made through him, yet the world did not know him. 11 He came to his own, and his own people did not receive him. But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God, who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God.

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 bore witness about him, and cried out, "This was he of whom I said, 'He who comes after me ranks before me, because he was before me.'") or from his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace. For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. No one has ever seen God; the only God, who is at the Father's side, he has made him known.

### Scripture Focus

- Which part of the selection stood out for you?

---

---

---

---

- How does this reflect the Love God has given us?

---

---

---

---



## How Great Our Joy

While by my sheep, I watched at night  
Glad tiding brought an angel bright

"For you," he said, "this blessed morn  
In Bethlehem a child is born."

"Go where he lies within a stall  
The infant Redeemer of us all."

There in the stall he sleeping lay;  
There by his side I longed to stay.

Sweetly he gazed into my face:  
I in his hands my heart did place

Gently I kissed his tiny feet,  
Which to my lips were honey-sweet.

Then to my home I made my way:  
Yet still that Child with me did stay

Within my arms that Child did rest:  
Oh! how my heart with love was blest.

Close shall I guard this darling Boy,  
Thus shall my heart be filled with joy.

Although the author and date are unknown, there is the belief that the song has a German origin. It may date back to as early as the 1500's, and was modernized and given an echo section in 1623.

The song is rumored to have been created for a Christmas play. The shepherd's lines would have been echoed off stage.

The original poem contains nine stanzas however, only stanzas two through four are sung in traditional American choirs. The song is inspired by Micah 5:2 and Luke 2:8-20.





## Day 27

## Week 4 - Love

Psalms 96

Oh sing to the Lord a new song;  
sing to the Lord, all the earth!  
Sing to the Lord, bless his name;  
tell of his salvation from day to day.  
Declare his glory among the nations,  
his marvelous works among all the peoples!  
For great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised;  
he is to be feared above all gods.  
For all the gods of the peoples are worthless idols,  
but the Lord made the heavens.  
Splendor and majesty are before him;  
strength and beauty are in his sanctuary.  
Ascribe to the Lord, O families of the peoples,  
ascribe to the Lord glory and strength!

Ascribe to the Lord the glory due his name;  
bring an offering, and come into his courts!  
Worship the Lord in the splendor of holiness;[a]  
tremble before him, all the earth!  
Say among the nations, "The Lord reigns!  
Yes, the world is established; it shall never be moved;  
he will judge the peoples with equity."  
Let the heavens be glad, and let the earth rejoice;  
let the sea roar, and all that fills it;  
let the field exult, and everything in it!  
Then shall all the trees of the forest sing for joy  
before the Lord, for he comes,  
for he comes to judge the earth.  
He will judge the world in righteousness,  
and the peoples in his faithfulness.

## Scripture Focus

- Which part of the selection stood out for you?

---

---

---

---

- How does this reflect the Love God has given us?

---

---

---

---



# Jesus Refulsit Omnium Jesus, Light Of All The Nations

Jesus refulsit omnium  
Pius redemptor gentium  
Totum genus fidelium  
Laudes celebret dramatum

Quem stella natum fulgida  
Monstrat micans per authera  
Magosque duxit praevia  
Ipsius ad cunabula

Illi cadentes parvulum  
Pannis adorant obsitum  
Verum fatentur ut Deum  
Munus ferendo mysticum.

*\* lyrics in Latin*

*'Jesus, devoted redeemer of all nations, has shone  
forth,  
Let the whole family of the faithful celebrate the  
stories*

*The shining star, gleaming in the heavens, makes him  
known at his birth and, going before, has led the Magi  
to his cradle*

*Falling down, they adore the tiny baby hidden in rags,  
as they bear witness to the true God by bringing a  
mystical gift.'*

*\*English translation by  
Kevin Hawthorne, PhD*

Translated as "Jesus, Light Of All The Nations", it is believed that this is one of the oldest Christmas hymns. Historians have traced its origins to the 4th Century, recorded as a motet or epiphany. Written without musical accompaniment by St. Hilary of Poitiers between 310 – 367.

A motet is a short, sacred vocal composition. St. Hilary imagined what it would have been like for the Magi to arrive and meet Jesus after their long journey.





## Day 28

## Week 4 - Love

Titus 2:11-14

For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation for all people, training us to renounce ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright, and godly lives in the present age, waiting for our blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us to redeem us from all lawlessness and to purify for himself a people for his own possession who are zealous for good works.

### Scripture Focus

- Which part of the selection stood out for you?

---

---

---

---

- How does this reflect the Love God has given us?

---

---

---

---



## References/Sources

Collins, A. (2020). Stories behind the best-loved songs of Christmas. Zondervan.

Furstenberg, P. (2021, October 17). The oldest Christmas carol, Jesus Refulsit Omnium. Stories by Patricia Furstenberg. Retrieved November 7, 2021, from <https://alluringcreations.co.za/wp/oldest-christmas-carol-jesus-refulsit-omnium/>.

Gant, A. (2015). The Carols of Christmas: A celebration of the surprising stories behind your favorite holiday songs. Nelson Books.

How great our joy. Celebrating Holidays. (n.d.). Retrieved November 7, 2021, from [https://www.celebratingholidays.com/?page\\_id=10461](https://www.celebratingholidays.com/?page_id=10461).

Meyer, R. (2020, August 18). 'lo, how a rose e'er blooming' is a musician's Christmas carol. The Atlantic. Retrieved October 12, 2021, from <https://www.theatlantic.com/entertainment/archive/2015/12/lo-how-a-rose-eer-blooming/421518/>.

Renfrow, K. D., & Montgomery, J. C. (2003). Stories of the Great Christmas carols: Short sessions on the creation of the Great Christmas carols with simplified arrangements for Late elementary to early intermediate students. Alfred Publishing Co.

All scripture is ESV unless otherwise noted.



