



Advent

2024

A SPIRITUAL PRACTICE
GUIDE FOR THE SEASON
OF ADVENT



THE SEASON OF *Advent*

Advent is a season of anticipation and preparation—a time to pause and make room in our hearts and lives for the coming of Christ. During these weeks leading up to Christmas, we are invited to reflect on the hope, peace, joy, and love that the birth of Jesus brings into the world and into our lives.

This Spiritual Practice Guide follows along with the daily themes of the Advent resource that has been provided to our families by RaiseUp Faith. Each day, you'll find a Scripture reading, a prayer, and a brief reflection to help you centre your heart on the meaning of Advent. On Sundays, you will be invited into a time of restful Sabbath reflection.

Whether you engage with this guide while enjoying your morning coffee, during a quiet moment at the end of the day, or while gathered together with loved ones, our hope is that these daily practices will draw you closer to God and to one another during this season of joy and wonder.



*For a child is born to us,
a son is given to us.
The government will rest on his shoulders.
And he will be called:
Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God,
Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.
-Isaiah 9:6*



1



FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT: HOPE

Scripture: Hebrews 11:1

Now faith is confidence in what we hope for and assurance about what we do not see.

Reflection:

The Sabbath is a sacred rhythm. It's the practice of setting aside time to pause and rest in the truth that God is our provider. The Sabbath calls us into a posture of trust. When we practice Sabbath, we remember that we are not sustained by our own strength or striving, but by God's abundant provision.

As we enter into Sabbath rest on the first Sunday of Advent, we are invited to reflect on hope—the kind of hope that looks beyond what is seen and holds firm to God's promises. True hope is not just wishful thinking; it is anchored in faith and grounded in God's faithfulness.

Reflection Questions:

What does it feel like to rest in the hope of what is unseen? How might embracing this hope we have in Christ change the way you live on a day-to-day basis?

Spiritual Practice:

Set aside 10 minutes today to sit quietly and reflect on God's love and provision in your life. As you breathe deeply, silently repeat Psalm 33:22:

- Inhale: Let your unfailing love surround us, Lord
- Exhale: for our hope is in you alone.

Let this rhythm remind you of His faithfulness.

Prayer:

Faithful God, I rest in Your promises today. Teach me to trust in the hope of what I cannot yet see and to live from the abundance of Your provision. May my rest be an act of worship, and may my hope in You bring peace to my soul.
Amen.

2



MONDAY, DECEMBER 2ND

Scripture: Luke 2:28-32

Simeon took [Jesus] in his arms and praised God, saying: "Sovereign Lord, as you have promised, you may now dismiss your servant in peace. For my eyes have seen your salvation, which you have prepared in the sight of all nations: a light for revelation to the Gentiles, and the glory of your people Israel."

Reflection:

Simeon waited his entire life to see the fulfillment of God's promise—the Messiah. His hope wasn't passive; it was an active trust in God's faithfulness, nurtured through prayer, worship, and steadfast belief. When he held the infant Jesus in his arms, his hope was realized, and he praised God for the salvation and light Jesus would bring to all people. Simeon's story reminds us that hope is not idle, but anchored in God's unwavering promises. In this Advent season, we are invited to wonder at the same hope: Jesus, the Long-Awaited One, has come. His light shines in our waiting, His presence meets us in our longing, and His promises sustain us through every season.

Reflection Questions:

What does it mean to you that Jesus is the fulfillment of our hope? How can you actively live in the light of His promises today?

Spiritual Practice:

Set aside time today to reflect on Simeon's story (Luke 2:25-35). Imagine the moment he held Jesus and the joy of seeing God's promise fulfilled. Write down a promise from God's Word that brings you hope, and place it somewhere you'll see it daily as a reminder to trust Him in your waiting.

Prayer:

Jesus, You are the hope of the world. Teach me to wait with trust and to rest in the assurance of Your salvation. Fill me with Your light so I may bring hope to others. Amen.

3



TUESDAY, DECEMBER 3RD

Scripture: John 10:14-15

"I am the good shepherd; I know my sheep and my sheep know me—just as the Father knows me and I know the Father—and I lay down my life for the sheep."

Reflection:

The image of Jesus as the Good Shepherd is a profound source of hope. A shepherd's role is to protect, provide for, and guide their flock, ensuring they are never left to wander alone. As our Good Shepherd, Jesus gives us the assurance that we are known, cared for, and deeply loved. His sacrificial love reminds us that our hope is secure in Him, no matter what uncertainties or challenges we face. In this season of Advent, we are invited to trust Him as we learn to follow His voice, knowing He leads us with wisdom and love.

Reflection Questions:

In what areas of your life do you need to trust Jesus as your Good Shepherd? How might following His lead bring peace to your journey?

Spiritual Practice:

Spend a few quiet moments reflecting on Psalm 23. As you consider the Shepherd's care described in the psalm, thank Jesus for specific ways He has provided for you this year. Write down one area where you're struggling to feel hopeful, and pray for His guidance and provision in that part of your life.

Prayer:

Jesus, my Good Shepherd, You are my hope and my guide. Thank You for walking with me, providing for me, and never leaving me to wander alone. Help me to trust Your voice and follow where You lead, especially when I feel uncertain. Fill me with hope and assurance as I rest in Your care. Amen.



WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 4TH

Scripture: Romans 8:24-25

For in this hope we were saved. But hope that is seen is no hope at all. Who hopes for what they already have? But if we hope for what we do not yet have, we wait for it patiently.

Reflection:

Advent is a season of anticipation—a time of active waiting, filled with the hope of what's to come. It mirrors the centuries-long anticipation of the world awaiting the birth of the Messiah, a longing fulfilled in the coming of Jesus. Today, we continue to live in hope, not just for His promises to unfold in our individual lives but also for the ultimate fulfillment of His kingdom. Anticipation stirs a unique blend of excitement, joy, and trust, reminding us of the certainty of God's faithfulness even in the face of uncertainty. This hope calls us to action, shaping how we live, how we trust in God's timing, and how we celebrate His presence in our lives. As we wait, Advent invites us to embrace the tension between what has been promised and what is yet to come, holding fast to the hope that God is always working for our good.

Reflection Questions:

What is one area of your life where you're waiting with hope? How does it feel to anticipate something God has promised but not yet fulfilled?

Spiritual Practice:

Go for a walk outside, and reflect on what you're most excited to see God do in your life or in the lives of others. When you get back home, spend some time journaling about your hopes for this season and beyond. Let your words become a prayer of trust, asking God to guide you as you wait in hopeful anticipation.

Prayer:

Jesus, You are the hope of the world. Teach me to wait with trust and to rest in the assurance of Your salvation. Fill me with Your light so I may bring hope to others. Amen.

5



THURSDAY, DECEMBER 5TH

Scripture: John 4:25-26

The woman said, "I know that Messiah" (called Christ) "is coming. When he comes, he will explain everything to us." Then Jesus declared, "I, the one speaking to you—I am he."

Reflection:

The word "Messiah" means "anointed one," a term rooted in the Hebrew Scriptures and signifying the one chosen by God to bring redemption and restoration. For generations, God's people waited with hope for this promised Saviour, the Long-Awaited One who would establish God's kingdom of peace and justice. In Jesus, this hope is fulfilled. As the Messiah, He not only brings salvation but also reveals God's generous and transformative love. Advent reminds us that this same Messiah continues to lead and guide us, inviting us to live as a people shaped by His hope and love.

Reflection Questions:

What do you think it meant to people in Jesus' time to understand His identity as the Messiah? What does it mean to you?

Spiritual Practice:

Spend time reflecting on the names of Jesus, especially *Messiah*, *Saviour*, and *Long-Awaited One*. Write down what these names mean to you personally. Then, consider how you can embody His love in a tangible way today—perhaps through an act of generosity, kindness, or reconciliation that reflects the hope Jesus brings to the world.

Prayer:

Jesus, You are the Messiah, the one who fulfills the hope of the world. Thank You for Your generous love, which transforms my life. Help me to trust in Your promises and to live as a reflection of Your hope. Teach me to wait with anticipation and to share the light of Your kingdom with those around me. Amen.

6



FRIDAY, DECEMBER 6TH

Scripture: Isaiah 9:6-7

For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the greatness of his government and peace there will be no end.

Reflection:

Jesus, the Prince of Peace, ushers in a kingdom unlike any other—a kingdom where peace reigns, not through force or power, but through love, justice, and reconciliation. The Hebrew word for peace is *shalom*, and it conveys a sense of wholeness and rightness. Shalom exists where things are as they should be - where people are flourishing, where communities function in alignment with the ways of God, and where relationships are characterized by love. We catch glimpses of God's kingdom of peace when we choose love over hate, forgiveness over resentment, and compassion over indifference. When we live as citizens of this kingdom, we participate in God's work of restoring all things.

Reflection Questions:

Where do you see signs of Jesus' peace in your life or the world around you? How can you actively participate in extending His Kingdom of Peace this Advent?

Spiritual Practice:

Reflect on an area of your life or community where peace feels absent. Ask Jesus, the Prince of Peace, to guide you in being a peacemaker there. Write down one action you can take this week to embody His peace and extend hope to others.

Prayer:

Jesus, You are the Prince of Peace, and Your kingdom brings hope to a weary world. Thank You for inviting me to be part of this kingdom, where Your love, justice, and peace transform all things. Help me to live as a faithful citizen of Your kingdom, sharing Your peace in both word and action. Amen.

7



SATURDAY, DECEMBER 7TH

Scripture: Psalm 27:13-14

I remain confident of this: I will see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living. Wait for the Lord; be strong and take heart and wait for the Lord.

Reflection:

Waiting is a central part of hope—it stretches our patience and stirs our anticipation. The experience of waiting can heighten the joy of fulfillment, but it can also challenge our faith when things don't turn out as we expected. Like the moment before tasting something sweet, hope invites us to imagine, to anticipate, and to trust in the goodness that is to come. Even when the outcome surprises us—whether it delights or disappoints—our waiting teaches us to savour the process and to anchor our trust in God's goodness, His timing and unfailing faithfulness.

Reflection Questions:

Think of a time when you eagerly hoped for something. How did the waiting shape your experience of joy or disappointment? Reflect on God's goodness, His timing, and His faithfulness in that situation.

Spiritual Practice:

Find a quiet moment and hold something small and edible in your hand—a piece of candy, fruit, or another simple object. Reflect on the experience of waiting: the anticipation, the questions, and the trust it requires. Take time to slowly savour the food as you eat, letting it remind you that God's goodness often unfolds gradually. Consider how this moment mirrors your spiritual journey of waiting and trusting.

Prayer:

Jesus, You know the challenges of waiting, yet You teach me to wait with hope. Thank You for the ways You meet my hopes, often in surprising and unexpected ways. Help me to trust You in the waiting and to savour the sweetness of Your presence in my life. Fill my heart with hope as I look forward to Your promises fulfilled. Amen.

8



SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT: PEACE

Scripture: 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.

Reflection:

Peace is more than the absence of conflict—it's a deep, abiding sense of calm and trust that comes from God's presence. In the busyness and stress of life, peace often feels elusive. Yet, Jesus invites us to experience peace even in the midst of challenges, offering us rest for our minds and hearts. As we light the Advent candle of peace, we are reminded that Jesus came to bring reconciliation, healing, and wholeness. His peace flows through us when we find our rest in Him and live as agents of His peace in our restless world.

Reflection Questions:

What is causing restlessness, anxiety, or stress in your life right now? How can you invite Jesus' peace into those areas?

Spiritual Practice:

Take 10-15 minutes to create a peaceful moment in your day. Find a quiet place, wrap yourself in a cozy blanket, or sit in stillness. As you breathe deeply, meditate on the phrase, "Jesus, You are my peace." Allow your worries to surface, and with each exhale, imagine handing them over to Him. As you breathe in, receive the calm assurance of His presence.

Prayer:

Jesus, You are my source of peace. I bring my worries and restlessness to You, trusting in Your promise to guard my heart and mind. Help me to experience Your peace in the midst of life's difficulties and to share that peace with those around me. May my life reflect the calm and hope of Your presence. Amen.

9



MONDAY, DECEMBER 9TH

Scripture: Colossians 3:15

Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace. And be thankful.

Reflection:

The peace that comes from the deep, steady assurance of Christ's presence shapes how we live and how we relate to others. The world is crying out for this peace—a peace that brings healing where there is brokenness, reconciliation where there is division, and hope in the face of despair. In Colossians 3:15, Paul reminds us that peace is not just a gift to be received but a calling to be lived out. When we let the peace of Christ rule in our hearts, it transforms our perspective and invites us to live as part of one body, bound together by His love. This Advent, as we wait for Jesus, we are also called to reflect His peace to a world longing for wholeness and restoration.

Reflection Questions:

Where in your life or in the world around you do you see a need for the peace of Christ? How can you embody this peace in a practical way today?

Spiritual Practice:

Spend five minutes in stillness today, reflecting on the areas of your life or the world around you that feel restless or broken. As you breathe deeply, repeat this prayer: "Jesus, let Your peace rule in my heart." Afterward, consider one way you can actively bring peace into your relationships or community this week—a conversation, an act of kindness, or a step toward reconciliation.

Prayer:

Jesus, You are the peace our world so desperately needs. Let Your peace rule in my heart, calming my fears and guiding my actions. Show me how to live as an instrument of Your peace in a divided world. Help me to bring Your love, reconciliation, and hope to those around me, so that Your kingdom of peace may grow. Amen.

10



TUESDAY, DECEMBER 10TH

Scripture: Galatians 5:22-23

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. Against such things there is no law.

Reflection:

Peace creates space in our hearts and minds for the Spirit of God to work within us. When we still our anxious thoughts, release our need for control, and centre ourselves in God's presence, we make room for the fruit of the Spirit to grow. Love becomes more abundant, joy takes root, and patience becomes possible. Advent is a time to pause and reflect on what God's Spirit is cultivating in us. As we quiet ourselves and embrace the peace Jesus offers, we find more capacity to experience and share gentleness, kindness, and goodness. Peace is not an end in itself but a fertile ground where the Spirit's presence produces a life that reflects God's love and wholeness.

Reflection Questions:

What fruit of the Spirit feels most present in your life right now? Which one feels most difficult to nurture? How does God's peace make room for these qualities to grow in you?

Spiritual Practice:

Find a quiet place to reflect today. Take a deep breath and imagine yourself opening your heart to the peace of Christ. As you sit in stillness, consider which fruit of the Spirit you want to make more room for this Advent season. Write down your thoughts, and pray for God's Spirit to help this fruit grow in your life. Commit to one practical step this week to nurture it.

Prayer:

Jesus, help me to make room for Your Spirit to work in my heart, cultivating love, joy, and patience. Fill me with Your peace this season so that I may reflect Your goodness to others. Teach me to embrace the fruit of the Spirit and to live in a way that brings hope and healing to the world. Amen.



WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 11TH

Scripture: 1 Peter 5:7

Cast all your anxiety on Him because He cares for you.

Reflection:

Anxiety and worry often weigh heavily on us, leaving us restless and distracted. Yet in today's verse, Peter reminds us of a profound truth: we don't have to carry these burdens alone. Jesus invites us to cast our anxieties onto Him, trusting in His care and provision. To "cast" means to release fully, to let go of the things we cling to in fear, and to place them in the hands of the One who holds the whole world. Advent is a season of waiting, but it's also a season of trust. In the quiet of this season, we are reminded that Jesus' care is constant and His peace is available. When we release our worries to Him, we make room for the peace that surpasses understanding to calm our hearts and minds.

Reflection Questions:

What are the anxieties or burdens you are holding onto today? What might it look like to fully "cast" those worries onto Jesus?

Spiritual Practice:

Find a quiet place to sit. Close your eyes and take three slow, deep breaths. As you breathe in, feel the presence of Christ surrounding you. Turn your hands downward on your lap as a sign of releasing your burdens. As you exhale, imagine letting go of one worry or anxious thought, and pray aloud or silently: "Jesus, I release this burden to you." Once you've named and released each burden, turn your hands upward in a posture of receiving. Pray: "Jesus, I open myself to receive your peace." Spend a few moments resting in silence. Focus on the gentleness of Christ's invitation to trust in His care and experience His peace.

Prayer:

Jesus, thank You for inviting me to cast my anxieties onto You. Today, I give You my worries, trusting in Your love and faithfulness. Please fill my heart with Your peace and help me to rest in the assurance that You are with me. Amen.

12



THURSDAY, DECEMBER 12TH

Scripture: John 14:27

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.

Reflection:

The peace Jesus offers is unlike any peace the world can provide. It isn't dependent on external circumstances or fleeting comforts; it is a gift rooted in His presence and promises. This peace calms our fears, quiets our minds, and steadies our hearts, reminding us that we are deeply loved and never alone. In seasons of uncertainty or fear, it can be easy to seek peace in temporary solutions—distractions, control, or assurances from the world around us. But Jesus invites us to receive His peace, a peace that transcends understanding and fills us with the confidence that He is with us. During Advent, we are reminded that this gift is available to us each day if we choose to embrace it.

Reflection Questions:

What do you think is unique about the peace that Jesus offers? In what areas of your life do you most need His peace right now?

Spiritual Practice:

Find a quiet moment today to meditate on John 14:27. Close your eyes, and as you take a deep breath, imagine Jesus saying these words directly to you.

- As you inhale, pray: "Jesus, I receive Your peace."
- As you exhale, pray: "I release my fear to You."
- Repeat this for several breaths, allowing His words to sink into your heart.

Prayer:

Jesus, thank You for the gift of peace You offer—a peace the world cannot give. I bring my fears and worries to You, knowing that You are faithful and loving. Help me to rest in Your peace and to trust Your presence in every part of my life. Teach me to carry this peace into the world around me, sharing Your hope with others this Advent season. Amen.

13



FRIDAY, DECEMBER 13TH

Scripture: Philippians 4:7

And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

Reflection:

Peace is both a gift and a practice. While the world offers distractions to calm our minds temporarily, the peace that Jesus gives transcends understanding. It's a peace that quiets the noise within us, guards our hearts, and reassures us of God's presence. One way to nurture this peace is by taking time to step away from the demands of life and focus our minds on Him. Imagination is a tool God has given us to experience His peace in profound ways. Imagining a place of calm and beauty can help us become more aware of God's presence. By resting in Him during these moments, we allow His peace to ground and refresh our hearts.

Reflection Questions:

When life feels overwhelming, how do you find peace in God's presence? What would it look like to invite Jesus into your moments of chaos?

Spiritual Practice:

Take five minutes today to imagine a peaceful place. Sit quietly, close your eyes, and picture yourself in a location that feels calm and restful—perhaps by a river, in a garden, or a quiet room filled with light. As you rest there in your mind, imagine Jesus with you, offering His peace. Pay attention to the sights, sounds, and sensations of this moment. When you feel ready, thank Him for meeting with you and carry His peace into the rest of your day.

Prayer:

Jesus, thank You for Your peace that calms my heart and mind. In the midst of life's demands, help me to take time to rest in You. Remind me that Your peace is always available, no matter the circumstances. Teach me to trust in Your presence and carry this peace into my interactions with others. Amen.



SATURDAY, DECEMBER 14TH

Scripture: Matthew 11:28-30

Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light.

Reflection:

Life often fills us with worry and tension, leaving us stretched and on edge—much like a balloon filled to its limit. These burdens can feel overwhelming, but Jesus invites us to let them go and trust in Him. When we release our worries to Him, we create space for His peace to fill us. This peace isn't just a fleeting calm; it's a profound sense of assurance and rest that comes from knowing we are cared for by a loving and faithful God. Advent reminds us that Jesus, the Prince of Peace, came to bring this peace to our hearts, our relationships, and our world.

Reflection Questions:

What are the worries or burdens you've been holding onto lately? How might releasing those to Jesus create space for His peace and hope?

Spiritual Practice:

Take a moment to sit quietly and reflect on the things that have been weighing on your heart. Imagine each worry as an object you're holding in your hands. One by one, release these worries to Jesus in prayer. Once you've let go of your worries, spend a few minutes reflecting on the hope you long for this Advent. Breathe in and imagine Jesus filling you with peace, joy, and confidence in His promises. When you're ready, celebrate this act of trust by playing your favourite worship song, allowing joy and hope to renew your spirit.

Prayer:

Jesus, I release my worries and burdens to You, trusting in Your love and care. Thank You for the hope You bring—a hope that strengthens and sustains me. Fill my heart with Your peace and joy, and help me to live in the light of Your promises this Advent season. May Your hope overflow in my life so that I can share it with others. Amen.

15



THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT: JOY

Scripture: Psalm 16:11

You make known to me the path of life; you will fill me with joy in your presence, with eternal pleasures at your right hand.

Reflection:

Joy is a vibrant expression of God's presence in our lives. While hope and peace often require quiet patience, joy bursts forth as a celebration of God's love and faithfulness. Following Jesus is not only about perseverance and trust—it is also about experiencing the abundant joy that comes from walking with Him. This week of Advent, as we light the candle of joy, we are reminded that rest doesn't always mean stillness. Joyful rest is active—it can look like singing, dancing, serving, or simply pausing to recognize God's goodness. True joy springs from the unshakable foundation of God's love, inviting us to live fully and freely in His presence.

Reflection Questions:

How have you experienced joy in following Jesus? What will you do today to joyfully worship and express your gratitude for God's love?

Spiritual Practice:

Write down three things you are grateful for today, and let that gratitude spark joy in your heart. Then, engage in an activity that allows you to express this joy—whether it's singing your favourite song, dancing to a Christmas song, writing a note of encouragement to someone, or spending time in nature. Let this practice be a celebration of God's goodness and love.

Prayer:

God of joy, thank You for filling my heart with the assurance of Your love. Help me to experience and express the fullness of joy that comes from knowing You. Teach me to rest in Your presence in a way that is active, vibrant, and grateful. May my joy be a reflection of Your goodness and a light to those around me. Amen.

16



MONDAY, DECEMBER 16TH

Scripture: Romans 14:17

For the kingdom of God is not a matter of eating and drinking, but of righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit...

Reflection:

Joy is one of the most profound gifts Jesus offers—a joy that isn't fleeting or dependent on our circumstances, but one that is complete and rooted in Him. True joy stirs something deep within us, radiating outward in our words, actions, and relationships. As we prepare our hearts for Christmas, we are invited to embrace this joy and share it with others. Joy can be quiet, like a sense of calm contentment, or exuberant, bursting forth in celebration. It's also something we can see in others—a spark in their eyes, laughter, or acts of kindness. Advent invites us to not only feel joy but to look for it and reflect it in our daily lives as we anticipate the arrival of Christ.

Reflection Questions:

What brings you joy? How can you intentionally look for joy in the people, moments, and opportunities around you today?

Spiritual Practice:

Take a few moments to reflect on what brings you joy. Make a list of small and big moments that have brought joy into your life recently—perhaps a smile from a loved one, a favourite song, or a moment of stillness with God. Then, commit to sharing joy today. Look for an opportunity to brighten someone's day—a kind word, a small gift, or even a simple smile. As you do, reflect on how sharing joy deepens your own experience of it.

Prayer:

Jesus, You are the source of true and complete joy. Fill my heart with joy as I prepare for Christmas, and teach me to celebrate You with a heart full of gratitude. Help me to see and reflect Your joy throughout my day, bringing light and hope to those around me. Thank You for the joy You give so freely. Amen.

17



TUESDAY, DECEMBER 17TH

Scripture: Romans 15:13

May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in Him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.

Reflection:

Is joy something we feel, or is it something we do? The truth is, joy can be both. Joy often begins as a feeling—a spark of delight or gratitude in the moment. But joy is also an intentional response, something we can practice. Jesus offers us joy that isn't tied to circumstances but to His unchanging presence in our lives. This joy sustains us through trials, giving us the strength to persevere. And it's not meant to be kept to ourselves. By noticing how joy is expressed in our relationships—through laughter, encouragement, or acts of kindness—we see how it can be a gift we give to others. As we reflect on joy this Advent, let's ask ourselves how we can embrace it more fully in both our hearts and our actions, choosing to let it flow into the lives of those around us.

Reflection Questions:

How does joy show up in your daily life—through feelings, actions, or both? Who in your life might need the gift of joy today, and how can you offer it to them?

Spiritual Practice:

Take a slow, mindful walk outside. As you walk, intentionally look for signs of joy - smiling faces, vibrant colours, the sound of birds chirping, the sunshine. Pay attention to the ways creation reflects God's goodness and joy. As you walk, think about how these moments of joy connect to God's character. How do they remind you of His love, creativity, and presence? Let each observation bring a smile to your heart.

Prayer:

Jesus, thank You for the gift of joy that comes from Your presence. Even on the hardest days, You offer me joy that can sustain and encourage me. Teach me to share Your joy with those around me, so that my life reflects the hope and love You bring to the world. Amen.

18



WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 18TH

Scripture: 1 Peter 1:8-9

Though you have not seen him, you love him; and even though you do not see him now, you believe in him and are filled with an inexpressible and glorious joy, for you are receiving the end result of your faith, the salvation of your souls.

Reflection:

Joy is a gift that can take many forms—it might look like laughter shared with friends, the beauty of a winter sunrise, or a sense of peace in God's presence. Sometimes joy can feel abstract, but when we pause to imagine it, we begin to see how God weaves joy into our lives in tangible and beautiful ways. Joy is not only something we experience; it's also something we can share. When we picture joy, we can ask how God might invite us to bring that vision to life for others. Advent is a time to reflect on how the joy of Jesus' birth fills us and overflows into the world around us.

Reflection Questions:

If joy were a picture, what would it look like in your life today? How can you bring that picture to life for someone else this week?

Spiritual Practice:

Close your eyes and take a deep breath. Picture what joy looks like to you today. Is it a warm embrace, a bright sunrise, or a moment of laughter and connection? Let the image come alive in your mind. What does your image of joy teach you about God's blessings in your life? How does it inspire you to share joy with others?

Prayer:

Jesus, thank You for the joy You bring into my life. Help me to see joy clearly and to celebrate the great things You have done. Show me how to share that joy with others, turning it into actions that reflect Your love and light. May my life be a picture of Your joy, bringing hope and peace to those around me this Advent season. Amen.

19



THURSDAY, DECEMBER 19TH

Scripture: Romans 12:12

Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer.

Reflection:

Waiting is often one of the hardest things we do. Whether it's waiting for answers, for healing, or for a long-anticipated event, the time in between can feel uncertain and difficult. In seasons of waiting, patience and joy can seem like opposites. How can we hold on to joy in the midst of affliction? Advent reminds us that God's promises are worth the wait. The world waited centuries for the Messiah, and when Jesus arrived, He brought hope, peace, and joy. Now, even in our waiting, we don't wait alone. Jesus is with us, giving us strength and joy as we trust in Him. This Advent, as we wait for Christmas and for God's ongoing work in our lives, we are invited to practice joyful anticipation, rooted in the assurance of God's faithfulness.

Reflection Questions:

What are you waiting for right now? How does that waiting feel? How can you practice joy and patience together during this Advent season?

Spiritual Practice:

Prepare a Joyful Waiting Jar:

- Find a jar/container and some strips of paper.
- Take a moment to reflect on something you're waiting for in your life right now. Name it before God as you acknowledge your feelings.
- Write down one thing you're joyful for today. Place the paper in the jar as a symbol of how joy can coexist with waiting.
- At the end of the week, open the jar and read through the joyful moments you've written down. Thank God for the ways He has brought joy into your life, even in the midst of waiting.

Prayer:

Jesus, thank You that we no longer have to wait for You to come—you are here with us now. Even in the things I'm still waiting for, help me to find joy in Your presence. Teach me to be patient and to trust Your timing. Amen.

20



FRIDAY, DECEMBER 20TH

Scripture: John 15:11

I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete.

Reflection:

Jesus invites us to experience a joy that is full and overflowing—a joy that shapes our lives and spills over to those around us. This joy is rooted in our relationship with Him and reflects His presence in our lives. As His disciples, we are called to live in a way that makes His joy visible to others. It shows in how we love, how we serve, and how we face challenges with hope. The joy of Jesus is not meant to be hidden; it's meant to shine through us, pointing others to the source of true joy. This Advent, how can we let Jesus' joy overflow into our interactions with friends, family, and even strangers?

Reflection Questions:

How would someone recognize that you are a disciple of Jesus? What are simple ways you can share His joy with others this week?

Spiritual Practice:

Spend a few minutes thinking about how you've experienced Jesus' joy recently. Thank God for the gifts of joy that he has poured into your life. Then, ask God to extend His joy to others through you. Is there somebody you know who could use an encouragement card? Is God inviting you to take a meal to somebody in need? Keep your eyes open for ways that God is inviting you to spread his joy today. As you go about your day, pray silently for the people you encounter, asking God to fill them with His joy and to use you as a vessel of that joy.

Prayer:

Jesus, thank You for filling me with Your joy—a joy that is complete and unshakable. Help me to live as Your disciple, letting Your joy overflow to everyone I meet. Show me how to share Your love and light with others, so they too may experience the joy that comes from knowing You. Teach me to follow Your example and to carry Your joy into the world. Amen.

21



SATURDAY, DECEMBER 21ST

Scripture: Psalm 126:2-3

"Our mouths were filled with laughter, our tongues with songs of joy. Then it was said among the nations, 'The Lord has done great things for them.' The Lord has done great things for us, and we are filled with joy."

Reflection:

Joy often begins quietly, like a small spark, but as it grows, it can overflow and fill us with delight. Watching popcorn burst to life is a simple but powerful image of how joy works in our lives. Joy may start with a single moment—an answered prayer, a kind word, or a reminder of God's love—but it grows, multiplying and spreading as its impact takes hold and we become more aware of God's work within us and around us. As we reflect on joy this Advent, we're reminded that true joy comes from God. When we take time to notice the ways God fills our lives with joy, we can't help but let that joy overflow to those around us.

Reflection Questions:

What small moments in your life spark joy and gratitude? How can you share the joy you've received with someone else this week?

Spiritual Practice:

Start imagining the process of popcorn popping. Reflect on how joy sometimes begins with one small "kernel" moment and then spreads, bursting into more and more delight. As you go about your day, be on the lookout for small, joyful things you might normally overlook. For each "pop" of joy you discover, say aloud or in your heart, "This brings me joy, and I thank You, Jesus." If you'd like, write them down or snap photos of these joyful moments to reflect on later.

Prayer:

Jesus, thank You for filling my life with joy that grows and overflows. Teach me to notice the small moments that spark joy and to let them remind me of Your love and faithfulness. Help me to share this joy with others, so they too may experience the delight of knowing You. Amen.

22



THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT: LOVE

Scripture: 1 John 4:9-11

This is how God showed His love among us: He sent His one and only Son into the world that we might live through Him. This is love: not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins. Dear friends, since God so loved us, we also ought to love one another.

Reflection:

Love is at the heart of Advent. It's the reason for the season—the love of God made visible in Jesus, who came to dwell among us. This love is not just something we receive; it's a gift meant to be shared. Just as a cozy blanket wraps us in warmth, the love of God surrounds us, bringing comfort and peace. When we take time to rest in God's love, we are reminded of its power to heal, strengthen, and connect us. This Advent, let's reflect on how God's love flows to us and through us to others, creating moments of connection and joy.

Reflection Questions:

How does God's love bring comfort and warmth into your life? How can you share this love with others in a simple, meaningful way?

Spiritual Practice:

Find a cozy spot with a warm blanket or a favourite sweater. Sit quietly and let the physical warmth remind you of God's love surrounding you. As you breathe deeply, reflect on ways you have experienced God's love this week. A Jesuit priest named Anthony De Mello once wrote, "Behold the One beholding you, and smiling." Spend a few moments "beholding" God in this way. Allow His love to renew you and restore you. Then take some time to express your love and gratitude to God.

Prayer:

God of love, thank You for the gift of Your Son, who shows us the depth of Your love. Help me to rest in the warmth of Your love today, trusting in Your presence and care. Teach me to reflect this love to others, sharing kindness, gratitude, and peace. May Your love flow through me and bring warmth to those around me this Advent season. Amen.

23



MONDAY, DECEMBER 23RD

Scripture: Matthew 1:23

The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel" (which means "God with us").

Reflection:

The name Immanuel, "God with us," reveals the depth of God's love for us. Rather than remaining distant, God chose to step into our world—to live among us, walk in our struggles, and express His love through real and tangible actions. This divine act of presence shows us that true love isn't just spoken, but is lived out. Knowing that God is always near changes everything. In moments of loneliness, fear, or uncertainty, we can find peace and strength in His constant presence. Immanuel reminds us that God's love isn't something we have to earn or search for—it surrounds us and fills us, here and now, every moment of every day.

Reflection Questions:

How does the name "God with us" help you understand God's love? What is one way you can remind yourself of God's presence when you experience loneliness, fear, or uncertainty?

Spiritual Practice:

Create a reminder of God's love. Choose an object to represent God's love and presence—perhaps a small stone, a piece of jewellery, or a note card with "Immanuel" written on it. Keep it somewhere visible or carry it with you. When you notice the object, pause to reflect on God's love for you and say a simple prayer like, "Thank You, Immanuel, for being with me. Help me to experience and share Your love today." At the end of the day, reflect on moments when you felt God's presence or showed love to someone else.

Prayer:

Jesus, You are Immanuel, God with us, and Your love is closer than I can imagine. Thank You for coming near and showing me the depth of Your love. When I feel distant or in need of love, remind me that You are always with me. Help me to rest in Your presence and to reflect Your love to those around me. Amen.

24



TUESDAY, DECEMBER 24TH

Scripture: John 3:16

For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.

Reflection:

Jesus is the ultimate expression of God's love—a love that is selfless, sacrificial, and transformative. In His life, we see what love truly looks like: compassion for the outcast, forgiveness for the sinner, and care for those in need. Jesus shows us that love isn't just a feeling; it's an action, a choice to put others before ourselves and to reflect God's grace in all we do. As we reflect on Jesus' love this Advent, we are invited to let His example shape our own lives. What would it look like to love like Jesus in your relationships, your community, and your everyday actions? How might His love flow through you to others this season?

Reflection Questions:

What stories or actions of Jesus come to mind when you think about love? How can you love more like Jesus in your life today?

Spiritual Practice:

Find a comfortable, quiet space where you can be still and undisturbed. Sit in a relaxed position, take a few deep breaths, and centre yourself in God's presence. Pray the following breath prayer:

- *Inhale:* Be
- *Exhale:* Loved

Allow these words to sink into your heart. After a few moments, gently shift the focus of the prayer, inviting God to work through you as an expression of His love:

- *Inhale:* Be
- *Exhale:* Love

Spend some time quietly resting in God's love. Carry this sense of peace into the rest of your day.

Prayer:

Jesus, thank You for showing us what love truly looks like. Fill me with Your love today, and help me to give it freely to those around me. May my actions reflect Your heart, and may I grow to love as You love. Amen.

25



WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 25TH MERRY CHRISTMAS!!!

Scripture: Luke 2:10-11

But the angel said to them, “Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people. Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord.”

Reflection:

The birth of Jesus is a story of love—God’s love for the world, revealed in the humblest of ways. Take a moment to place yourself in the story. Imagine the quiet awe of the shepherds, the brightness of the angel’s announcement, the earthy smells of the stable, and the profound stillness surrounding the baby in the manger. This is Immanuel—God with us. Imagine standing in the stable, looking at the face of the newborn Jesus. His arrival is the fulfillment of God’s promise and the greatest expression of love the world has ever known.

Reflection Questions:

How does the birth of Jesus help you understand God’s love more deeply? How can you carry the love of Christ into your celebrations and relationships today?

Spiritual Practice:

Make a warm drink, like hot chocolate, tea, or coffee. As you prepare it, think about the anticipation and joy that surrounded Jesus’ birth. As the aroma fills the air, thank God for His gift of love. Wrap your hands around your mug and take a slow sip. Imagine God’s love surrounding you like the warmth of the drink in your hands. Let this moment be a reminder of His presence and care for you. Carry this sense of warmth and love into your interactions today.

Prayer:

Jesus, thank You for showing us what love truly looks like. Your life is a gift, teaching us how to care for others selflessly and with grace. Fill me with Your love today, and help me to give it freely to those around me. May my actions reflect Your heart, and may I grow to love as You love. Amen.