



*Expectation, Hope,  
and Knowing*

ADVENT DEVOTIONAL 2022





**REV. ORLANDO SCOTT, M.DIV.**

Rev. Orlando Scott is a Lead Chaplain at Northside Hospital System. For over six years, he has joyfully served as a Contextual Education Supervisor for the Candler School of Theology.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, Orlando and a faithful few launched AMPLIFY Christian Church in Snellville, GA. He currently serves as a Trustee with National Benevolent Association and the National Convocation. He enjoys Africana Studies, art and photographing nature. When he is not maneuvering around Atlanta traffic, Orlando enjoys the joyful presence of his two teenagers.

# CONTENTS

We are excited to have Disciples Pastor and Chaplain, Orlando Scott, writing for Advent.

He takes us on a biblical and cultural journey to include the following:

**MEDITATIONS**

**SCRIPTURE READINGS  
& REFLECTION**

**SONGS AND POEMS**

**PRAYERS**

**COMMUNAL LIBATION**

There is something for everyone, so enjoy with *Expectation, Hope, and a faithful Knowing* that Emmanuel comes to us, in this and every season!

ADVENT DEVOTIONAL 2022

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# PRELUDE

## THE SEASON OF REMEMBRANCE

AGAIN AND AGAIN, IT COMES:

THE TIME OF RECOLLECTION,  
THE SEASON OF REMEMBRANCE.

EMPTY VESSELS OF HOPE FILL UP AGAIN;

FORGOTTEN TREASURES OF DREAMS RECLAIM THEIR PLACE;  
LONG-LOST MEMORIES COME TROOPING BRING BACK TO ME.

THIS IS MY SEASON OF REMEMBRANCE,  
MY TIME OF RECOLLECTION.

INTO THE CHALLENGE OF MY ANGUISH  
I THROW THE STRENGTH OF ALL MY HOPE:

I MATCH THE DARTS OF MY DESPAIR  
WITH THE TREASURES OF MY DREAMS;

UPON THE CURRENT OF MY HEART  
I FLOAT THE BURDENS OF THE YEARS;

I CHALLENGE THE MIND OF DEATH  
WITH MY LOVE OF LIFE.

SUCH TO ME IS THE TIME OF RECOLLECTION,  
THE SEASON OF REMEMBRANCE.

Howard Thurman, *Meditations of the Heart*, 1st ed. (New York: Harper, 1953).

# EXPECTATION

Merriam-Webster defines expectation as the act or state of expecting or anticipation. In further examination, it is something that we look forward to with a sense of longing. An expectation is a strong belief about someone or something that is usually dependent on another belief.

As a child, we looked forward to Christmas. Growing up in Mid-Michigan provided us with some fairytale images of large banks of white snow, sleds and sleighs, gloves and mittens, scarves and boots. Christmas was a time of enjoying the aroma of pine trees, and enjoying the crackle of the fireplace while snuggling under blankets watching flames dance well into the evening. The laughter of family as we gathered around the tree selecting lights and ornaments, carefully placing them not to break any along the way, you could feel the energy of community as the neighbors dropped by to share good tidings. Tin cans were often stacked on the counter like a treasure to be uncovered, as little hands dipped in and out gathering their loot and disappearing into the darkness.

Christmas was also a time where we huddled around my grandmother anticipating our cooking assignments. Sugar measurer. Flour sifter. Egg cracker. Milk pourer. Bowl stirrer. Each task and each ingredient unique was necessary for the production of grandma's goodies-chocolate chip cookies, oatmeal cookies, pecan sandies, pound cakes, pies the list of culinary succulence. We gathered in the spirit of community preparing for Christmas. Anxiousness swelled in the air as we moved toward the 25th. Young people huddle in corners imagining which gift they would get, and what they would do with it when they got the Tonka truck, G.I. Joe, Barbie, or easy bake oven.

Grown-ups whispered amongst themselves, most assuredly, talking about where they hid the gifts to the frustration of their children. The night before Christmas, you can feel each second.

The hush of the night broken by the ticking of the clock



# EXPECTATION

like the countdown to New Years. Children lay awake watching the shadows hoping to gain a glimpse of Santa and the elves. Making a pact to keep each other awake until dawn breaks the horizon. As the night swells, and our eyelids fall, we drop into dreams with our minds full, thoughts of gifts cascading out from under the tree. In retrospect, the gifts came from hearts that wanted to give. My parents' love for their children compelled them to give. The gifts were a tangible expression of a benevolent heart. Moreover, the gifts we received at Christmas did not happen overnight. To give us the gifts we desired or expected it required pre-planning.

I imagine the people of Israel sitting year after year expecting, anticipating the liberator of their people. Earnestly looking for the signs of redemption, sharing one with another the words of comfort, prophecies of promise to encourage their community as the long midnight of successive imperial occupations dissuade their hearts.

The Roman occupiers positioned in Palestine, control the trade routes from Asia to Africa, propping up a wicked under-lord, a client king, Herod the Idumean, desiring to maintain the Pax Romana, the peace of Rome, for his own good. Into this contentious context, we find a glimmer of light, the unlikely appearance of a celestial event. The star of Bethlehem.

## REFLECTION:

- 1 What do you do when the prophetic word tarries?
- 1 How do you maintain hope in situations that appear hopeless?
- 1 In what ways are you looking with anticipation for God's signs, or God's presence?

## LET US PRAY.

God of our weary years  
God of our silent tears  
Thou who has brought us thus far on the way  
Thou who has by Thy might Led us into the light  
Keep us forever in the path, we pray  
Lest our feet stray from the places, our God, where we met Thee  
Lest, our hearts drunk with the wine of the world, we forget Thee  
Shadowed beneath Thy hand

May we forever stand  
True to our God  
True to our native land  
AMEN

-James Weldon Johnson



# DAY 1

ADVENT DEVOTIONAL 2022

*This is what Isaiah son of Amoz saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem: In the last days the mountain of the Lord's temple will be established as the highest of the mountains; it will be exalted above the hills, and all nations will stream to it. Many peoples will come and say, "Come, let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the temple of the God of Jacob. He will teach us his ways, so that we may walk in his paths." The law will go out from Zion, the word of the Lord from Jerusalem. He will judge between the nations and will settle disputes for many peoples. They will beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks. Nation will not take up sword against nation, nor will they train for war anymore. Come, descendants of Jacob, let us walk in the light of the Lord.*

Isaiah 2:1-5 NRSVUE

## PRAYER:

*God of Mercy, You who are the righteous judge. Teach us your ways that we may be instruments of your light. Amen*

## REFLECTION:

*This week sit quietly and allow God to speak to your heart about how you are to commune this Advent season.*

FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT

# HOPE

## JOURNAL AREA:

Listen to *Jacob's Song* and journal about what bubbles up.

[LINK: JACOB'S SONG - BRIANA BABINEAUX](#)



# DAY 2

ADVENT DEVOTIONAL 2022

*The people walking in darkness have seen a great light. On those living in a pitch-dark land, light has dawned.*

*Isaiah 9:2 CEV*

## THE CREATION:

*A Poem by James Weldon Johnson*

*And God stepped out on space,  
And he looked around and said:  
I'm lonely—  
I'll make me a world.  
And far as the eye of God could see  
Darkness covered everything,  
Blacker than a hundred midnights  
Down in a cypress swamp.  
Then God smiled,  
And the light broke,  
And the darkness rolled up on one side,  
And the light stood shining on the other,  
And God said: That's good!*

*Then God reached out and took the light in his hands,  
And God rolled the light around in his hands  
Until he made the sun;  
And he set that sun a-blazing in the heavens.  
And the light that was left from making the sun  
God gathered it up in a shining ball  
And flung it against the darkness,  
Spangling the night with the moon and stars.  
Then down between  
The darkness and the light  
He hurled the world;  
And God said: That's good!*

## PRAYER:

*God, you who unveils darkness and ignite our hearts and minds, shine on our hearts today that we may seek after your ways of compassionate care for your Creation. Oftentimes, we shrink back into bitterness, hatred, envy, jealousy and strife. We forget that you are light. You illuminate our path to fulfilling your great commission as ambassadors of love. Lord fill us now.*



## REFLECTION:

*Find a quiet place where you can be alone and undisturbed for five to ten minutes. Get comfortable and relax.*

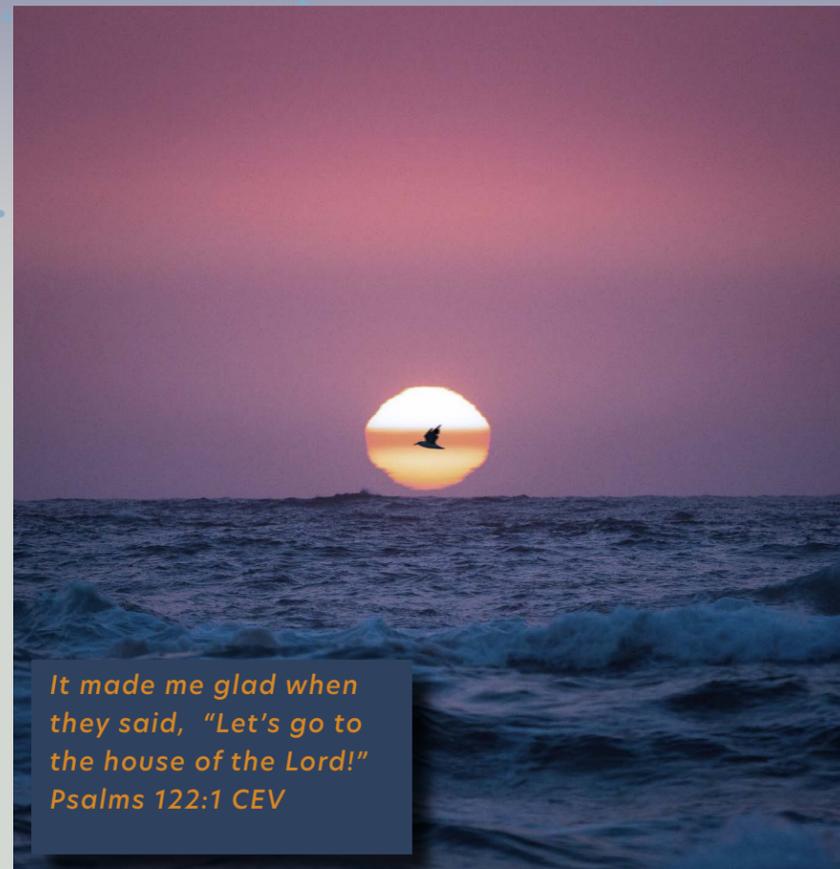
*Think back to a situation where you were strong, resilient and resourceful. Relive that moment mentally. What was the process?*

*What is coming to light?  
Pay attention to what you feel in your body: strength or weakness, energy or tiredness, hope or despair.  
Ask God to illuminate how you may compassionately care for your soul.  
As you conclude this time, place your hand over your heart and tell yourself, "I'm good".*



# DAY 3

ADVENT DEVOTIONAL 2022



*It made me glad when they said, "Let's go to the house of the Lord!"  
Psalms 122:1 CEV*

## PRAYER:

*Lord, You have called out to me and I have answered. Lord, I thank you that you are renewing my faith daily. As I continue this consecration, stir my heart to commune with you. In Yeshua's name, Amen.*

## REFLECTION:

*Spirituality is conscious contact with the spirit that is God, who transcends and inspires us. It is conscious contact with the inner-self where memory, imagination, intellect, feelings, and the body are caught up in the search for humanity. Spirituality is at once God-awareness, self-awareness, and other awareness. It is the level of consciousness and of choosing that makes us different from the pelican that dies on the beach and simply is no more.*

Sister Thea Bowman, Shooting Star (Winona, Minnesota: St. Mary's Press, 1993).



# DAY 4

ADVENT DEVOTIONAL 2022

People of Israel, let's live  
by the light of the LORD.

Isaiah 2:5 CEV

## PRAYER:

Blessed are you, Lord, Our God the Maker of Heaven and Earth. By your hands we are framed and You know our secret places. You know with what and how we struggle, and you shower us with your grace along the way. Lord, stir our hearts that we may follow your precepts. Empower us that we may walk in your ways. In Yeshua's name.

## REFLECTION:

**"LISTEN TO THE LONG STILLNESS.  
NEW LIFE IS STIRRING.  
NEW DREAMS ARE ON  
THE WING. NEW HOPES  
ARE BEING READIED:  
HUMANKIND IS FORGING  
A NEW MIND GOD IS AT WORK.  
THIS IS THE SEASON  
OF PROMISE."**

**HOWARD THURMAN**



# DAY 5

ADVENT DEVOTIONAL 2022

*I will sing of your steadfast love,  
O LORD, forever; with my mouth I will  
proclaim your faithfulness to all  
generations. I declare that your  
steadfast love is established forever;  
your faithfulness is as firm as the  
heavens. You said, "I have made a  
covenant with my chosen one;  
I have sworn to my servant David:  
'I will establish your descendants  
forever and build your throne for all  
generations.'" Selah*

Psalm 89:1-4 NRSV

## THE CREATION CONT'D:

A Poem by James Weldon Johnson

Creation Cont'd

A Poem by James Weldon Johnson

Up from the bed of the river  
God scooped the clay;  
And by the bank of the river  
He kneeled him down;  
And there the great God Almighty  
Who lit the sun and fixed it in the sky,  
Who flung the stars to the most far corner of  
the night,  
Who rounded the earth in the middle of his  
hand;  
This great God,  
Like a momma bending over her baby,  
Kneeled down in the dust  
Toiling over a lump of clay  
Till he shaped it in is his own image;

## PRAYER:

Lord, establish me in your love. Amen.



## REFLECTION:

Goodness is stronger than evil.  
Love is stronger than hate.  
Light is stronger than darkness.  
Life is stronger than death.

Victory is ours through him who loves us.

-Desmond Tutu



# DAY 6

ADVENT DEVOTIONAL 2022

*People of Jerusalem, you don't need to cry anymore. The Lord is kind, and as soon as he hears your cries for help with, he will come. The Lord has given you trouble and sorrow as your food and drink. But now you will again see the Lord, your teacher, and he will guide you.*

*Isaiah 30:19-20*

## PRAYER:

*Lord, thank you for your instructions. Press upon my heart your divine counsel that I do not pursue falseness or selfish ambition. Amen.*

## REFLECTION:

- 1 Write a reflection on excerpts from "The Creation" poem.
- 1 How did it make you feel?
- 1 What parts did you identify with more than others?
- 1 Recount the moments where you felt connected and disconnected from the poem.
- 1 Why?



## JOURNAL AREA:

Journal writing area with a torn paper top edge and a torn paper bottom edge.



# DAY 7

ADVENT DEVOTIONAL 2022

*Comfort, comfort my people! says your God. Speak compassionately to Jerusalem, and proclaim to her that her compulsory service has ended, that her penalty has been paid, that she has received from the LORD's hand double for all her sins! A voice is crying out: "Clear the LORD's way in the desert! Make a level highway in the wilderness for our God! Every valley will be raised up, and every mountain and hill will be flattened. Uneven ground will become level, and rough terrain a valley plain. The LORD's glory will appear, and all humanity will see it together; the LORD's mouth has commanded it."*

*Isaiah 40:1-5*

## PRAYER:

*God, our Creator and Sustainer, thank you for smoothing out the rough places of our lives. Incline our eyes to see your glory and understand. Amen.*

## REFLECTION:

*Inventory your community and make a list of things you are expecting in faith. Inventory your gifts and talents. Ask how you are willing to commit them to transforming your community.*



## JOURNAL AREA:

Journal writing area with a torn paper top edge and a torn paper bottom edge.

# SACRED CORD OF HOPE

I responded to a call in the ER: Emotional support for the family of a man found unresponsive in his bed. The patient, an older man, was an Indian immigrant from Mumbai brought to the US after his wife died. As the trauma team hurriedly cared for the patient, I made my quick assessment noticing the faces in the room: a daughter (the oldest), two sons, two daughters-in-law, and two grandchildren. Before me was a concerned family, sitting on the edge of their seats waiting with baited breath, anticipating the call to see him.

I approached his daughter; the cardiac event painted her face. She speaks nervously, "Is he ok... When can I go see him?" After a brief conversation with the ER care team, we decided to take the daughter back to wait for the doctor's report. As we arrived to the trauma room, the trauma team was still administering CPR. I grabbed a chair and placed it in the hallway so she might be a little more comfortable.

To pass the time I engaged in conversation about her father and her family. Like a defense lawyer, the daughter recounted his benevolence toward others emphasizing the fact that he was a well-respected man in their community, enlightening me of his character, a "good man" and went to "church" every day.

After a short time that felt like a decade, the ER doctor came out. He shared that her father was very sick, and that he believed he would not make it through the night. He also said he was waiting for the ICU doctor to come and talk to her.

As he finished the report, she sat insistent, mind racing, processing what the doctor had just revealed. The doctor compassionately touches her shoulder, reaffirming his commitment to her father's care. Responsively, she assures the doctor she understands what he has told her and positions herself for the opportunity to enter her father's room.

# SACRED CORD OF HOPE

As our conversation lulled and her unease increased, she would close her eyes and rock front to back mumbling. At first, I thought that she was just anxious, worried that her father was not going to make it, but then I noticed something in her hand, a set of beads she ran carefully through her fingers. I thought to myself, "Is she Catholic or Muslim?" In the course of our waiting, I began to sing and walk as she sat and prayed.

Our dance-- a conversation, prayers to God. Joining her I said, "You continue to pray and I will pray through my song". My song was a simple one line repetitive tune, "Lord, have mercy". Her rocking and my pacing and singing became somewhat a rhythmic dance between hope and concern, our bodies and voices rising and falling into the wee hours of the morning.

Although we did not talk about her beads, we did talk about our hope in God. Hope, the reassured anticipation of favorable results because we trust in God's munificent care. Our hope resigns itself in God's ability and not

in the activities of humans. I shared with her I believe God listens to the prayers of humanity, God sees our tears, and understands our emotions. As we sat side-by-side sharing this sacred moment, I assured her I believed God indeed hears and answers prayers, and we can pray in many different languages and bodily expressions.

Then it came...the moment of our breakthrough! The ICU doctor rounded the corner and stated, "He's responding to the medicine but we're still waiting on the CT scans". We celebrated our minor victory that her father would not die in the emergency room as the doctor predicted. His life was extended, only if momentarily, a brief opportunity to embrace his family again. We hugged, cried, and talked some more about the power of prayer and faith of humanity. I was physically tired, but strangely warmed by the connection with this family. Warmed, by the fact that I, we could hold the sacred cord of hope, as they experienced the dark recesses of grief and loss.



# DAY 8

ADVENT DEVOTIONAL 2022

SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT

# LOVE

*A shoot shall come out of the stump of Jesse, and a branch shall grow out of his roots. The spirit of the Lord shall rest on him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord. His delight shall be in the fear of the Lord.*

ISAIAH 11:1-2 NRSV

## PRAYER:

*Lord, I thank you for the spirit of wisdom and understanding to know the embodiment of love. I pray that you continue to provide me with your counsel and increased knowledge. Guide my hands that I would be your instrument. Amen.*

## REFLECTION:

*Spirituality is conscious contact with the spirit that is God, who is above us, who transcends and inspires us...Spirituality is at once God-awareness, self-awareness, and other awareness. It is the level of consciousness and of choosing that makes us different from the pelican that dies on the beach and simply is no more.*

Sister Thea Bowman, Shooting Star (Winona, Minnesota: St. Mary's Press, 1993).

JOURNAL AREA:



# DAY 9

ADVENT DEVOTIONAL 2022

*I put all my hope in the Lord. He leaned down to me; he listen to my cry for help. He lifted me out of the pit of death, out of the mud and the filth, and set my feet on solid rock. He steadied my legs. He put a new song in my mouth, a song of praise for our God. Many people will learn of this and be amazed; they will trust in the Lord. Those who put their trust in the Lord, who pay no attention to the proud or to those who follow lies, are truly happy! You, Lord my God! You've done so many things - your wonderful deeds and your plans for us - no one can compare with you! If I were to proclaim and talk about all of them, they would be too numerous to count! You do not relish sacrifices or offerings; you don't require entirely burned offerings or compensation offerings - but you have given me ears! So I said, "Here I come! I'm inscribed in the written scroll. I want to do your will, my God. Your instruction is deep within me.*

Psalms 40:1-8 CEB

## PRAYER | REFLECTION:

*LOVE EVER BURNING  
O love ever burning and never extinguished  
Charity  
My God set me on fire.  
-St. Augustine*



JOURNAL AREA:





# DAY 10

ADVENT DEVOTIONAL 2022

*He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his father David.*

*Luke 1:32 NRSV*

## PRAYER:

*Lord, tear down the idols of our heart and be exalted. Help us to partner from the margins that your justice is established in the earth.*

## REFLECTION:

“THE EMPIRE OF JESUS, BUILT SOLIDLY AND MAJESTICALLY ON THE FOUNDATION OF LOVE, IS STILL GROWING.”  
**MARTIN LUTHER KING JR.**



JOURNAL AREA:

Journal area for Day 10, featuring a white background with a torn paper edge at the top and bottom.



# DAY 11

ADVENT DEVOTIONAL 2022

*In the year of king Uzziah's death, I saw the lord sitting on high an exalted throne, the edges of his robe filled the temple. Winged creatures were stationed around him. Each had six wings: with two they veiled their faces, with two they veiled their feet, and with two they flew about they shouted to each other, saying: "holy, holy, holy is the lord of heavenly forces! All the earth is filled with God's glory!" The doorframe shook at the sound of the shouting, and the house was filled with smoke.*

*Isaiah 6:1 - 4 CEV*

## PRAYER | REFLECTION:

*"Thou movest us to delight in praising Thee; for Thou hast formed us for Thyself, and our hearts are restless till they find rest in Thee. Lord, teach me to know and understand which of these should be first, to call on Thee, or to praise Thee; and likewise to know Thee, or to call upon Thee."  
-St. Augustine*

JOURNAL AREA:

Journal area for Day 11, featuring a white background with a torn paper edge at the top and bottom.





# DAY 12

ADVENT DEVOTIONAL 2022

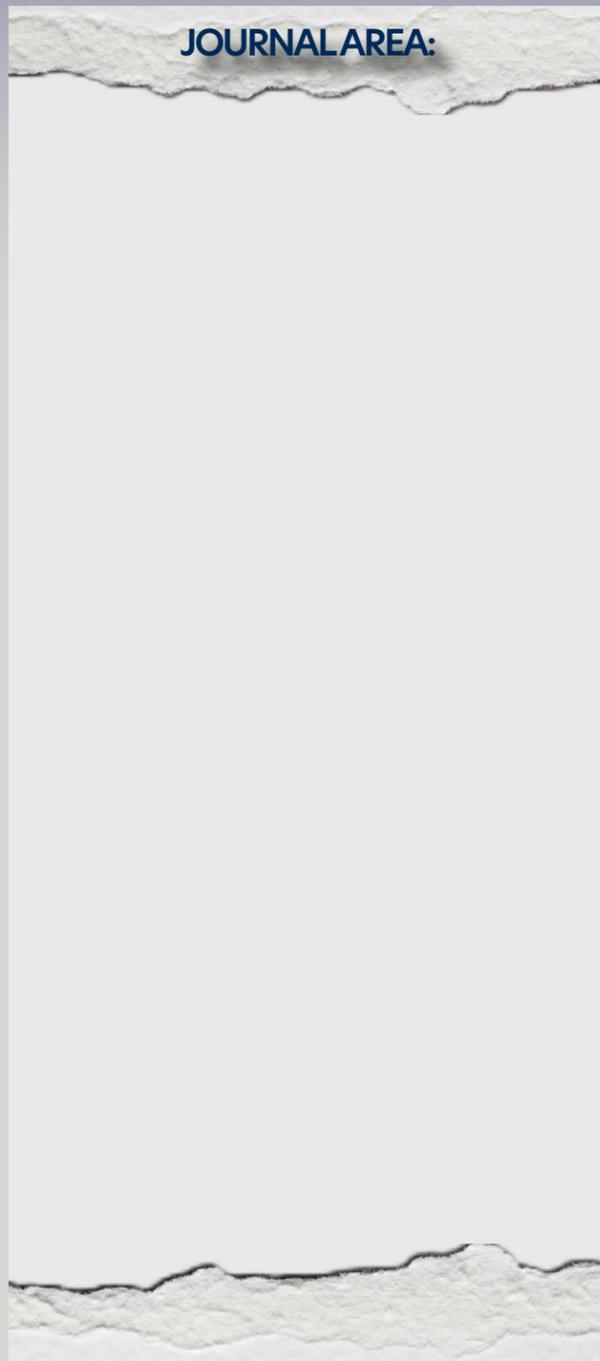
*In the days of King Herod of Judea, there was a priest named Zechariah, who belonged to the priestly order of Abijah. His wife was descended from the daughters of Aaron, and her name was Elizabeth. Both of them were righteous before God, living blamelessly according to all the commandments and regulations of the Lord. But they had no children because Elizabeth was barren and both were getting on in years.*

*Luke 1:5-8 NRSV*

## PRAYER | REFLECTION:

*Eternal God, In the barren days of my life, I confess that I often wonder if you are there. And in seasons of distress and grief, I wonder if a new day of abundance and joy will come. But each time, oh God, when my life seemed to have become a vast wasteland, you have restored to me the moments the locusts have eaten. I thank you, then, for the barren moments, but for most especially I am grateful for the wonderful moments of grace. Amen.*

*A. Knight Stanley, A View From My Window:  
15 Sermons of Hope & Assurance  
(Cronos Press, 2008).*



JOURNAL AREA:



# DAY 13

ADVENT DEVOTIONAL 2022

*Out of the depths I cry to you, Oh Lord. Lord hear my voice! Let your ears be attentive to the voice of my supplications! If you, or Lord, should mark iniquities, Lord, who could stand? But there is forgiveness with you, so that you may be revered. I wait for the Lord, my soul weights, and in his word I hope; my soul waits for the Lord more than those who watch for the morning, more than those who watch for the morning.*

*Oh Israel, hope in the lord!*

*For with the Lord there is steadfast love, and with him is power to redeem. It is he who will redeem Israel from all its iniquities. Psalms 130 NRSV*

## PRAYER | REFLECTION:

**HOPE IS WILLING TO LEAVE  
UNANSWERED QUESTIONS  
UNANSWERED AND UNKNOWN  
FUTURES UNKNOWN.  
HOPE MAKES YOU SEE GOD'S  
GUIDING HAND NOT ONLY IN THE  
GENTLE AND PLEASANT MOMENTS BUT  
ALSO IN THE SHADOWS OF  
DISAPPOINTMENT AND DARKNESS.  
HENRI NOUWEN, TURN MY MOURNING  
INTO DANCING (NASHVILLE:  
THOMAS NELSON INC., 2010).**





# DAY 14

ADVENT DEVOTIONAL 2022

*Be patient, therefore beloved, until the coming of the Lord. The farmer waits for the precious crop from the earth, being patient with it until it receives that early and the late rains. You also must be patient. Strengthen your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is near. Beloved, do not grumble against one another, so that you may not be judged. See, the judge is standing at the doors! As an example of suffering and patience, beloved, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord.*

James 5:7-10 NRSV

## PRAYER:

*Bestower of blessing, grant me the grace of gratitude for all Your seasons.*

-Elizabeth Sherrill

## REFLECTION:

The Adinkra symbol AYA represents "endurance, independence, defiance against difficulties, hardiness, perseverance, and resourcefulness."

Using your favorite color draw your representation of AYA.

# AYA



# DAY 15

ADVENT DEVOTIONAL 2022

THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT

# JOY

*But just when he had resolved to do this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, "Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife, for the child conceived in her is from Holy Spirit.*

Matthew 1:20 NRSV

Listen to the song below as your prayer for today and note your feelings.

LINK: [THE PRAYER - THE CANADIAN TENORS, YOLANDA ADAMS, DONNIE McCLURKIN](#)

## REFLECTION:

*KEEP A SPACE WHERE  
GOD CAN LET  
SOMETHING TOTALLY  
NEW TAKE PLACE.*

**HENRI NOUWEN**



## JOURNAL AREA:

Blank journal area with a torn paper effect at the top and bottom edges.





# DAY 16

ADVENT DEVOTIONAL 2022

*Simon Peter a servant and apostle to Jesus Christ, to those who have received the faith as precious as ours through the righteousness of our God and Savior Jesus Christ. May Grace and peace be yours in abundance in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord. His divine power has given us everything needed for life and godliness, through the knowledge of him who has called us by his own glory and goodness. Thus he has given us, through these things, his precious and very great promises, so that through them you may escape from the corruption that is in the world because of lust, and may become participants of the divine nature.*

*For this very reason, you must make every effort to support your faith with goodness, and goodness with knowledge, and knowledge with self-control, and self-control with endurance, and endurance with godliness, and godliness with mutual affection, and mutual affection with love.*

*II Peter 1:1 - 7 NRSV*

## PRAYER:

*God, stir my heart to reject the allure of the world. Cause my eyes to focus on your eternal promises. Amen.*

## REFLECTION:

*In what ways have you built up your spiritual muscles to support your faith?*

*Meditate on what you need to do to grow.*



# DAY 17

ADVENT DEVOTIONAL 2022

*And he came to her and said, "Greetings, favored one! The Lord is with you." But she was much perplexed by his words and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. The angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God."*

*Luke 1:28-30 NRSV*

## PRAYER:

*God, thank You for your eyes that watch over me and guide me when I'm unsure of my way. Your loving presence reminds me that I'm never alone. Lord, thank you for Your covenant which protects me. You make known Your promises to me. Amen.*

## REFLECTION:

[LINK: SPEAK TO MY HEART -DARIUS PAULK](#)



## JOURNAL AREA:





# DAY 18

ADVENT DEVOTIONAL 2022

*The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who lived in a land of deep darkness—on them light has shined. You have multiplied exultation; [b] you have increased its joy; they rejoice before you as with joy at the harvest, as people exult when dividing plunder. For the yoke of their burden and the bar across their shoulders, the rod of their oppressor, you have broken as on the day of Midian. For all the boots of the tramping warriors and all the garments rolled in blood shall be burned as fuel for the fire. For a child has been born for us, a son given to us; authority rests upon his shoulders, and he is named Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Great will be his authority, and there shall be endless peace for the throne of David and his kingdom. He will establish and uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time onward and forevermore. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will do this.*

Isaiah 9:2-7 NRSV

## PRAYER:

God thank you for the light that has opened my eyes to your love. Amen

**THE DEEPER OUR FAITH,  
THE MORE DOUBT WE  
MUST ENDURE; THE  
DEEPER OUR HOPE, THE  
MORE PRONE WE ARE TO  
DESPAIR; THE  
DEEPER OUR LOVE, THE  
MORE PAIN ITS LOSS WILL  
BRING: THESE ARE A FEW  
OF THE PARADOXES WE  
MUST HOLD AS HUMAN  
BEINGS. IF WE REFUSE  
TO HOLD THEM IN THE  
HOPES OF LIVING  
WITHOUT DOUBT,  
DESPAIR, AND PAIN,  
WE ALSO FIND  
OURSELVES LIVING  
WITHOUT FAITH, HOPE,  
AND LOVE.**

**PARKER PALMER**



# DAY 19

ADVENT DEVOTIONAL 2022

*But let your hand be upon the one at your right hand, the one whom you made strong for yourself. Then we will never turn back from you; give us life, and we will call on your name.*

Psalms 80:17-19

## PRAYER:

God you have made us and you provide us with your goodness. Cause my heart to draw near you that I may receive the grace to live.

## REFLECTION:

List the things that make you feel separated from the presence of God. Confess to God your dependence on the Holy Spirit to break the power of those things in your life.

**JOURNAL AREA:**





# DAY 20

ADVENT DEVOTIONAL 2022

*Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I am a virgin?" The angel said to 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 holy; he will be called the Son of God.*

*Luke 1:34-35*

## PRAYER:

*Lord, in my distress I cry to you.  
Please don't leave me comfortless.  
Amen*

## REFLECTION:

*Read the scripture, then listen to the song.*

*Write a letter to God on what is burdening your heart at this time.*

[LINK: HEAR MY CRY - FRED HAMMOND RFC](#)

## JOURNAL AREA:

Blank journal area with a white background and a torn paper edge effect at the top and bottom.



# DAY 21

ADVENT DEVOTIONAL 2022



*But you, beloved, build yourself up on your most holy faith; praying in the Holy Spirit; keep yourselves in the love of God; look forward to the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ that leads to eternal life. And have mercy on some who are wavering; same others by snatching them out of the fire; and have mercy on still others who fear, hating even the tunic defiled by their bodies.*

*Jude 1:20 -23 NRSV.*

## PRAYER:

*Lord, as I encounter each day, help me to walk boldly for you. Increase my confidence in who you are that I may be a witness to those who are wavering. Amen.*



# KNOWING

There is a story told about a young man from the city sent to the country by his mother, to visit his grandfather for the summer. The young man, astute in city life and its trappings, was uncomfortable about going to the "backwardness" of the country. He was used to the hustle and bustle of city streets, blaring horns of taxis, the loud screeches of the subway trains and the deep baritone of the conductor calling out the stops. He found excitement watching the throngs of people pass in their array of colors. The stately businesspersons in their gray and blue suits, bold and daring colors of cardinal red patent leather shoes and canary yellow hat and playful plaids and striped skirts, he wondered what pleasure he would have in the country. As he thought about the long arduous trip to the countryside, he began to get angry and shared his thoughts with his mother. In a motherly tone, she reminded him he needed to spend time with his grandfather, as he is aging. The young man packs his clothes for the long bus trip to the country swollen with annoyance as he loaded onto the bus.

He arrived to his destination, bag in tow, looking around at the primitive nature of his grandfather's farm. Walking towards the house, he observes the scarcity of grass and the free-range chicken scurrying about. He sees the small well-worn pen where a group of pigs lay aimlessly, and in the distance a modest barn reaching toward the sky. His grandfather, happy to see his grandson, shares a hug with him and says, "Son you're right on time, put your things away I got something for you to do."

As a young man comes out of the home, he walks over to his grandfather preparing to go to the market. He tells the young man, "I need you to load the wagon." The young man sees the supplies and produce that needs to go to the market, and begins to load the wagon. Loading the wagon, he notices there is an old mule harnessed to the wagon. The mule was standing still without a fuss. Taking more notice to the mule, it appears the mule is blind.

Curious about the situation, the young man hurries back to his grandfather and says, "I'm loading up the wagon and I'm concerned that you won't make it to the market because the mule is blind."

# KNOWING

His grandfather unfazed by the suspicious observation of his grandson replied back saying, "Don't worry about the mule being blind, you just load the wagon." The young man goes back to his task and as he continues to load the wagon, he gets more curious about how a blind mule can make a 4-mile round trip ride to the market. Curiosity again arresting the young man's heart and mind racing as he tries to figure out this problem. Adamant about his observation and his point, the young man returns to his grandfather and shares again, "I don't know if you want to take the risk of loading this wagon with a mule. I just don't think it's a smart thing to do."

The old man continuing in his chores tells the young man, "Don't worry about the mule being blind you just load the wagon." Wanting to be a respectful and not continue to badger the old man, he goes back and finishes the task. He loads the wagon and returns to the grandfather informing him that the load is complete. As he stands in front of his grandfather, he asks one last clarifying question. "Why are you sure that the mule will make it to the market?"

His grandfather, detecting the concern in his grandson's voice, replied to him saying, "This old mule and I have been together for over twenty-five years. This mule and I have traveled along this road many 'a times before in good times and the bad, the sunshine and the rain. I relied on this mule to take what I have to the market more times than I can remember. Over the years, I have learned to trust this mule, and it has learned to trusts me. Son, I may not know much about the city and city things, yes, she has lost her sight but she has not forgotten this road. What I know for sure is that this mule can carry us safely to the market and back."

## REFLECTION:

Beloved, are you more like the young man or his grandfather?

In what ways has God proven to God's reliability to you? Pray for an increase in your confidence in God.



# DAY 22

ADVENT DEVOTIONAL 2022

*For God so loved the world that he gave his only son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life. John 3:16 NRSV*

*It is not true that creation and the human family are doomed to destruction and loss— This is true: For God so loved the world that He gave his only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have everlasting life; It is not true that we must accept inhumanity and discrimination, hunger and poverty, death and destruction—*

*This is true: I have come that they may have life, and that abundantly. It is not true that violence and hatred should have the last word, and that war and destruction rule forever—*

*This is true: Unto us a child is born, unto us a Son is given, and the government shall be upon his shoulder, his name shall be called wonderful councilor, mighty God, the Everlasting, the Prince of peace.*

*It is not true that we are simply victims of the powers of evil who seek to rule the world— This is true: To me is given authority in heaven and on earth, and lo I am with you, even until the end of the world.*

*It is not true that we have to wait for those who are specially gifted, who are the prophets of the Church before we can be peacemakers—*

*This is true: I will pour out my spirit on all flesh and your sons and daughters shall prophesy, your young men shall see visions and your old men shall have dreams. It is not true that our hopes for liberation of humankind, of justice, of human dignity of peace are not meant for this earth and for this history—*

*This is true: The hour comes, and it is now, that the true worshipers shall worship God in spirit and in truth.*

FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT

# PEACE

*So let us enter Advent in hope, even hope against hope. Let us see visions of love and peace and justice. Let us affirm with humility, with joy, with faith, with courage: Jesus Christ—the life of the world.*

Allan Boesak, *Walking on Thorns* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2004).

## PRAYER | REFLECTION:

*All powerful God, Put the fire of the Spirit in our bellies. Help us overcome seeming helpless in the face of stereotypes, the odds, public opinion and what is normally expected. You are an awesome God and we are your children. Give us wings and courage to fly toward what you have promised. Amen.*

A. Knight Stanley, *A View From My Window: 15 Sermons of Hope & Assurance* (Cronos Press, 2008).

[LINK: SWEET LITTLE JESUS BOY- TENET](#)



# DAY 23

ADVENT DEVOTIONAL 2022

*In the beginning was the Word, and the Words was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being in him was life, and the life was the light of all people."*

*John 1:1-4*

## PRAYER:

*Lord let my ways represent your life-light. As I interact with your people let them see your mercy, love and justice in me. Amen.*

## REFLECTION:

*Meditate on the ministries/social causes that light a flame in your heart. Research how you can volunteer with those ministries and causes*

## JOURNAL AREA:



# DAY 24

ADVENT DEVOTIONAL 2022

*Therefore, thus says the Lord God, See, I am laying in Zion a foundation stone, a tested stone, a precious cornerstone, a sure foundation: "One who trust will not panic. "And I will make justice the line, and righteousness the plummet; hail will sweep away the refuge of lies, and waters will overwhelm the shelter.*

*Isaiah 28:16 -17 NRSV*

## PRAYER:

*God, enlarge my trust in you through life's circumstances. Let me not to be shaken by what I see, but to rely on your Divine foundation. Amen*

LINK: [GOD REST YE MERRY GENTLEMEN - PENTATONIX](#)



# DAY 25

ADVENT DEVOTIONAL 2022



*But I saw no temple in the city, because the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are its temple. And the city has no need of sun or moon to shine on it, because the glory of God illuminates the city, and the Lamb is its lamp. By its light the nations will walk, and into it the kings of the earth will bring their glory. Its gates will never be shut at the end of the day, because there will be no night there. And into the city will be brought the glory and honor of the nations.*  
*Revelations 21:22 - 26*



## GYE NYAME

*Take a moment to meditate on the overwhelming splendor of God.*

*The Akan Adinkra symbol Gye Nyame (Pronounced 'Gee-Nah-May' ) reflects the omnipotence of God.*

*Write inside the image all the things God has done that no one else could do.*





# DAY 26

ADVENT DEVOTIONAL 2022

*The LORD's majesty will be there for us:  
as a place of rivers, broad streams  
where no boat will go, no majestic ship  
will cross.*

*Isaiah 33:21 CEB*

## **PRAYER:**

*Lord God, the light of Zion be my everlasting  
rock. When I fear the might of my enemy,  
help me remember your majesty. Amen*

### JOURNAL AREA:

Journal area with a white background and torn paper edges at the top and bottom.



# DAY 27

ADVENT DEVOTIONAL 2022



*Because of your promise, and according  
to your own heart, you have wrought  
all this greatness, so that your servant  
may know it. Therefore, you are great,  
O Lord God; but there is no one like  
you, and there is no God besides you,  
according to all that we have heard  
with our ears.*

*II Samuel 7:21- 22 NRSV*

## REFLECTION:

*TODAY IS GOD  
IN THE BEGINNING WAS GOD,  
TODAY IS GOD,  
TOMORROW WILL BE GOD.  
WHO CAN MAKE AN IMAGE OF GOD?  
HE HAS NO BODY.  
HE IS THE WORD WHICH COMES  
OUT OF YOUR MOUTH.  
THAT WORD! IT IS NO MORE, IT IS PAST,  
AND STILL IT LIVES!  
SO IS GOD.*

*PYGMY*





# DAY 28

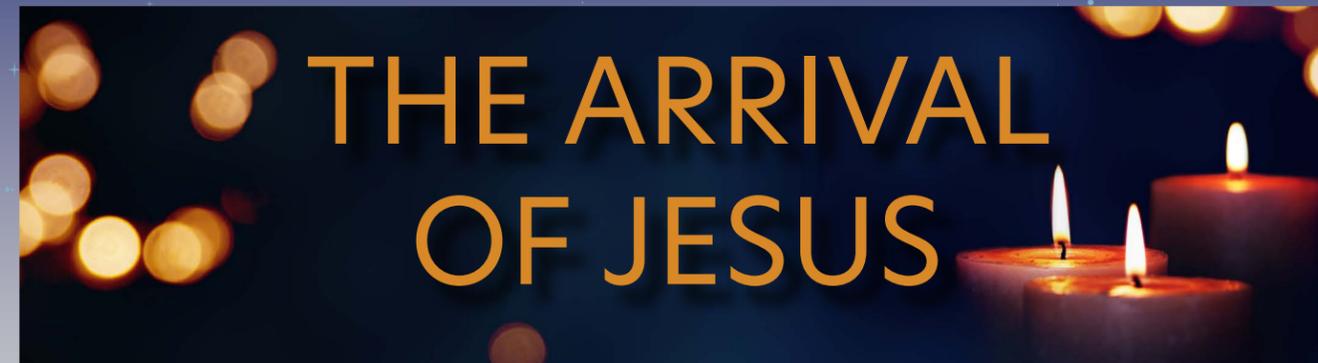
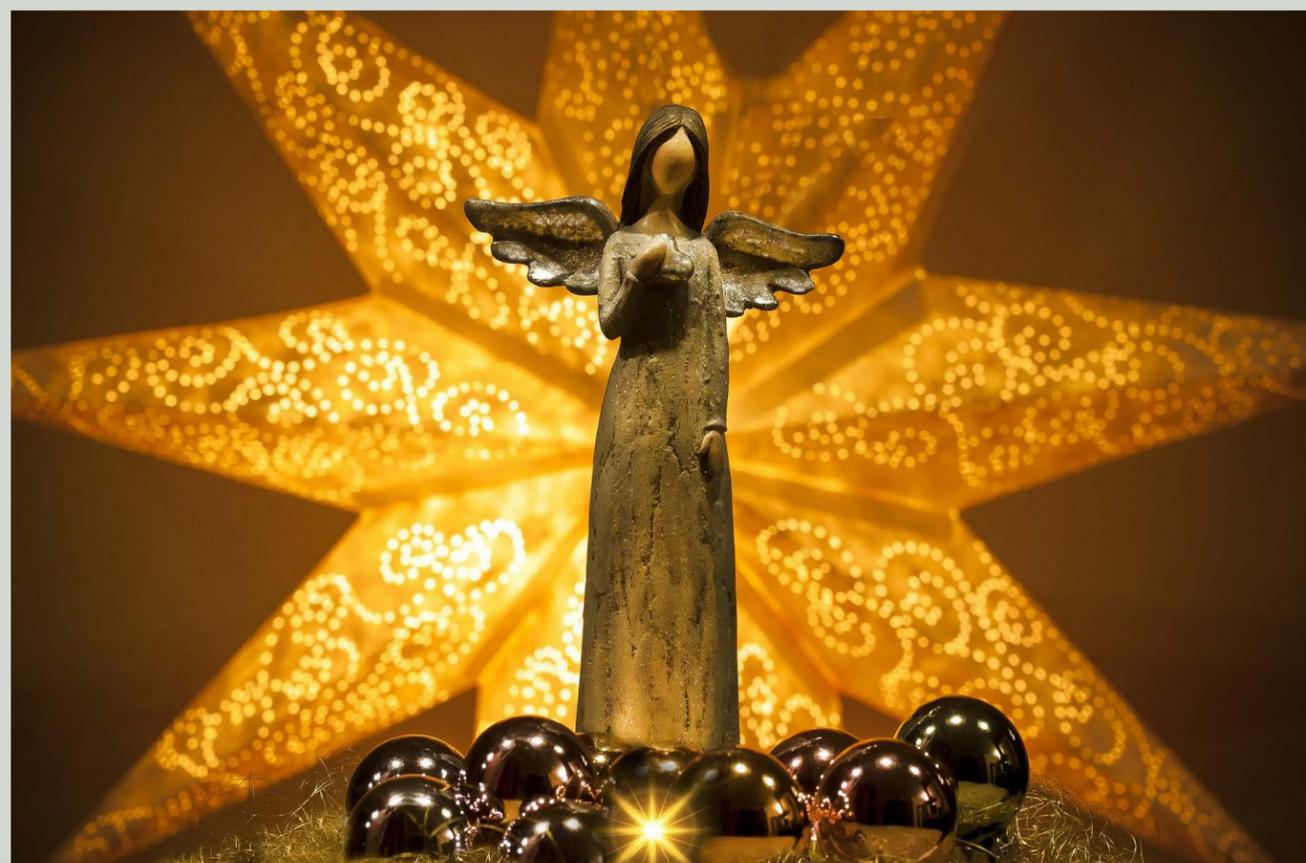
ADVENT DEVOTIONAL 2022

*Praise the Lord! Praise God in his sanctuary; praise him in his mighty for moment! Praise him for his mighty deeds; praise him according to is a passing greatness! Praise him with trumpet and sound; praise him with lute and harp! Praise him with tambourine and dance; praise him with strains and pipes! Praise him with clanging symbols; praise him with loud clashing symbols! Let everything that breathes praise the Lord! Praise the Lord!*  
Psalms 150

## REFLECTION:

Watch this praise in dance and offer God some form of physical praise in your own way.

YAHWEH - ALL NATIONS MUSIC | STACY J. & UNIFIED PRAISE DANCE COMPANY  
LINK:



# THE ARRIVAL OF JESUS

*So Joseph also went up from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to Bethlehem the town of David, because he belonged to the house and line of David. He went there to register with Mary, who was pledged to be married to him and was expecting a child. While they were there, the time came for the baby to be born, and she gave birth to her firstborn, a son. She wrapped him in cloths and placed him in a manger, because there was no guest room available for them. When they had seen him, they spread the word concerning what had been told them about this child, and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds said to them. But Mary treasured up all these things and pondered them in her heart.*

Luke 2:1-7, 17-19

## REFLECTION:

- 1 What do you treasure about the arrival of Jesus?
- 2 What do you ponder about his life?
- 3 What does celebrating Jesus look like in your life?

## JOURNAL AREA:

Blank journal area with a white background and a torn paper edge at the top and bottom.

HALLELUJAH, SALVATION, AND GLORY  
- BROOKLYN TABERNACLE CHOIR  
LINK: ANTHEM OF PRAISE - RICHARD SMALLWOOD



# POSTLUDE

## VISION OF FREEDOM

Reflecting on the liturgical (relating to public worship) season of Advent and the multi-layered meanings for the diverse Christian communities, I approach this season pregnant with possibility and a strong desire to experience God's refreshing touch.

I intentionally position myself to receive from God the assurant care by remembering the covenantal promise manifest in Bethlehem. I pray that you, too, will still your busied lives to stir the fire that burns deep within, and unite with the body of Christ during this hallowed season.

Advent, a celebration of the first coming of Yeshua, or the Messiah as he inaugurates the rule and reign of YHWH; but Advent also looks forward to His second coming, as we earnestly plea as John the Revelator from Patmos, " ... Amen Come, Lord Jesus. "

The birth of Yeshua in a manger primaries those on the margins, unleashing hope to the people of the land and terror to the institutional powers of his times. His birth is an assurance that we do not worship a distant or detached God who cannot understand or empathize with our frailties.

On the contrary, the birth embodies God's solidarity with humanity exhibited through the birth of a vulnerable baby to a family at risk to institutional religious and political forces.

I imagine myself situated in the African peninsula of Palestine; inhaling the anxiousness of the times, the uneasiness and uncomfortable-ness of shifting tides of power, and exhaling the anticipatory birth announcement of a God ordained ruler. The coronation of a liberator that would quench the thirst of a weary Israel, the anointing of a king that would set the captives free from the crushing grip of successive centuries of brutal Imperial overlords from the Assyrians, Babylonians, Greeks and the Romans; the Davidic monarch who would right wrongs of history.

As I reflected both theologically and contextually, I entitled this last devotion "Visions of Freedom". Their social setting places them on the fringes of a brutal and expansive empire that has no regard to their covenantal identity.

# POSTLUDE

## VISION OF FREEDOM

YHWH Elohim who established relationship with this people breaks into human relationships through an unlikely source in an unlikely location, Bethlehem. It is through this Divine appointment that humanity receives the gift of Yeshua, the baby King.

This Advent devotional integrates various aspects of African American spirituality, art and culture. It also intersects with voices from the broader global majority, and within European American communities. I desired to center the complex and broad experiences of African Americans pulling from both traditional African practices such as a communal libation and the celebration of African American spirituals. As you read through the material you will notice that I incorporated several different genre of elements to make this journey as holistic as possible. I pray that as you walk through this Advent devotional you would be inspired, empowered, restored and renewed.

ADVENT DEVOTIONAL 2022



# SONGS TO LIFT OUR SOULS

CLICK ON THE LINK ABOVE EACH LINE

GOD - DONALD LAWRENCE

O COME, ALL YE FAITHFUL - VOCTAVE

JACOB'S SONG - BRIANA BABINEAUX

FREEDOM IS COMING - CHOIR OF SOJOURNERS  
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

PEOPLE, LOOK EAST - HOUSTON CHAMBER CHOIR

O COME, O COME, EMMANUEL - (PIANO/CELLO) - THE PIANO GUYS

COME THOU FOUNT OF EVERY BLESSING - FERNANDO ORTEGA

TAKE ME TO THE KING - TAMELA MANN

RIDE ON, KING JESUS - ARR. MOSES HOGAN

RICHARD SMALLWOOD & VISION - ANTHEM OF PRAISE

HAIL TO THE LORD'S ANOINTED - CHET VALLEY CHURCHES

WALK IN THE LIGHT - ARETHA FRANKLIN

# COMMUNAL LIBATION

**LEADER:** We enter this Advent season with thanksgiving and into the abundant awareness God's presence with praise!!!

**ALL:** We offer our community libation to God and our Ancestors. Libation is a communal ritual through which we remember and celebrate the presence of our Creator and those who have come before us.

**LEADER:** As we embrace this Sankofa moment - a time to reach back and draw some things forward into the future, we employ this sacred time of Expectation, Hope and Knowing to set our intentions toward a deep and meaningful awareness of God's care.

**ALL:** We speak the names of the Most High God out of the diversity of the languages and ask that you please respond to each name by saying "Asé!" (pronounced ahshay)  
This means, "It is so!"

**LEADER:** Elohim  
YHWH - The I AM  
El Shaddai - Lord God Almighty  
El Olam - The Everlasting God  
Jehovah Jireh - the Lord our Provider  
Jehovah Nissi - the Lord My Banner  
Jehovah Shalom - the Lord our Peace  
Jehovah Rapha - the Lord that Heals  
Jehovah Tsidkenu - the Lord Our Righteousness  
We ask that your presence manifest and arise in each and every one of us.

**ALL:** To the Son, the one who is known by the titles Prophet, Priest,  
Teacher of the Way:  
Messiah (Meh-see-ah), The Anointed One  
Rabouni, Teacher  
Emmanuel - God Who is With Us  
Yeshu - YHWH is Salvation  
We ask that your presence manifest and arise in each and every one of us.

**LEADER:** To our Ancestors. Those who have gone before us who dedicated their lives building a future that they themselves would not embrace. Freedom fighters who through their faith and trust in God provided structures of spiritual, educational and economic uplift for the generations that followed. Siblings who confidently stood firm in their faith in the face of enslavement, wars, Civil and Human Rights struggles passing on a legacy of committed discipleship with Expectation, Hope, and Knowing. We remember Jesus.  
We remember you!

(insert your ancestors/community members names here)  
ASE, ASE, ASE-O!



*For more information about DHM Christian Education resources,  
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**[WWW.DISCIPLESHOMESSIONS.ORG](http://WWW.DISCIPLESHOMESSIONS.ORG)**

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