



Holy Sonnet 15
John Donne

Wilt thou love God as he thee? Then digest,
My soul, this wholesome meditation,
How God the Spirit, by angels waited on
In heaven, doth make His temple in thy breast.
The Father having begot a Son most blest,
And still begetting—for he ne'er begun—
Hath deign'd to choose thee by adoption,
Co-heir to His glory, and Sabbath' endless rest.
And as a robb'd man, which by search doth find
His stolen stuff sold, must lose or buy it again,
The Sun of glory came down, and was slain,
Us whom He had made, and Satan stole, to unbind.
'Twas much, that man was made like God before,
But, that God should be made like man, much more.

In the Journal

Pillar Journal Vol. 7 No. 1

Advent 2024

A seasonal journal produced by Pillar Church in Holland, MI to guide us through the Christian year.

Cover Art: Anna Hoskins

Original hand lettering: Logan Wigglesworth

All prayers are traditional liturgical prayers sourced from:

- The Book of Common Prayer

- acollectionofprayers.com

Introduction - Jonathan Gabhart

Guide for Daily Prayer

Week 1

Week 2

Week 3

Week 4

Christmas Eve

Christmas Day

THE DAWN FROM ON HIGH

The Lord be with you friends. If you have gotten your hands or eyes on this journal, we have arrived at the Advent season 2024. This journal is a simple guide for daily prayer. Hopefully it is rather intuitive to navigate, but here are a few thoughts to help us through over the next few weeks.

We are being guided by a particular verse of Scripture this Advent. It comes from the end of the Song of Zechariah in the first chapter of Luke. The verses are printed each week in such a way that you can slowly “interiorize” (memorize) the words and get them down deep into your soul. The image on the opposite page is an original hand lettering of those verses by Logan Wigglesworth that is on display at Pillar.

There are 3 forms for prayer each week that lead us to Christmas Day. Pray them as you like and as it finds its way into your rhythm of the day. Each form has an invitation into silence. I hope you will take this seriously. It is, in my opinion, a needed practice in our day. Maybe even set a timer and see what happens in your spirit. And there is lots of page space for written notes, prayers, and journaling as well. Mark it up!

There are also Advent hymns for reflection and listening. Each has a QR code that goes to a YouTube video of a performance of that hymn. They are all in the Western/English choral tradition; not because that is the best or only way to engage, but it does provide a slow, meditative, beautiful space of listening. There is a playlist of all the hymns if you'd like to listen to them as a group. You can find that at this link (bit.ly/pillaradventplaylist) or the QR code below.

Peace to you as we wait for the dawn from on high together.
- Jonathan Gabbart

(Scan for Advent YouTube Playlist)



By the tender
mercy of God,
the dawn from
on high will
break upon us.
to give light
to those who
sit in darkness
and in the
shadow of death,
to guide our
feet into the
way of peace.

Advent Week 1

Notes and Journaling

December 1 and 2

Call to Prayer:

“For God alone my soul waits in silence,
for my hope is from him.” (Psalm 62)

Silence (1 minute)

Scripture for Interiorization:

“By the tender mercy of our God, the dawn from on high will break upon us...”
(Repeat slowly, 5 times)

Prompts for Prayer

- Focus in on the first phrase of the verse from Luke. How have you experienced the “tender mercy of God,” or how are you hoping and longing to experience God’s tender mercy?

- Who are the people or where are the situations outside of your own life that need God’s tender mercy? Offer a prayer of intercession.

Hymn for Reflection - “Come Thou Long Expected Jesus”



Closing Prayer:

Almighty God, give us grace to cast away the works of darkness, and put on the armor of light, now in the time of this mortal life in which your Son Jesus Christ came to visit us in great humility; that in the last day, when he shall come again in his glorious majesty to judge both the living and the dead, we may rise to the life immortal; through him who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

December 3 and 4

Notes and Journaling

Call to Prayer:

“Restore us, O God; let your face shine, that we may be saved!” (Psalm 80)

Silence (1 minute)

Scripture for Interiorization:

“By the tender mercy of our God, the dawn from on high will break upon us...”
(Repeat slowly, 5 times)

Prompts for Prayer

- Prayerfully read the entirety of Psalm 80. How does the language of lament land in your spirit this day?
- In this second phrase from the luke passage, what sparks your imagination as you consider Jesus as “the dawn from on high”?
- Are there any moments, even in the last week, where you notice the need for a new day to dawn?

Hymn for Reflection - “O Come, O Come, Emmanuel”



Closing Prayer:

Almighty God, give us grace to cast away the works of darkness, and put on the armor of light, now in the time of this mortal life in which your Son Jesus Christ came to visit us in great humility; that in the last day, when he shall come again in his glorious majesty to judge both the living and the dead, we may rise to the life immortal; through him who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

December 5, 6, 7

Notes and Journaling

Call to Prayer:

“Lead me in your truth, and teach me, for you are the God of my salvation; for you I wait all day long.” (Psalm 25)

Silence (1 minute)

Scripture for Interiorization:

“By the tender mercy of our God, the dawn from on high will break upon us...”
(Repeat slowly, 5 times)

Prompts for Prayer

- Prayerfully read the entirety of Psalm 25.
- Psalm 25 starts with “To you, O Lord, I lift up my soul,” on the next page, simply make a list of things that you are lifting up to God this day.
- Take a look back at the week, how has God been leading you in truth?

Hymn for Reflection - “The Angel Gabriel”



Closing Prayer:

Almighty God, give us grace to cast away the works of darkness, and put on the armor of light, now in the time of this mortal life in which your Son Jesus Christ came to visit us in great humility; that in the last day, when he shall come again in his glorious majesty to judge both the living and the dead, we may rise to the life immortal; through him who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

Advent Week 2

December 8, 9

Call to Prayer:

“Give the gift of wise rule to the king, O God,
the gift of just rule to the crown prince.
May he judge your people rightly,
be honorable to your meek and lowly.” (Psalm 72, The Message)

Silence (2 minutes)

Scripture for Interiorization:

“By the tender mercy of our God, the dawn from on high will break upon us
to give light to those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death...”

Prompts for Prayer

- Reflect on God as the wise and just King, what images does that bring up for you?
- Do a quick internet search for the places in Scripture where we see language of light in darkness. What do you notice?

Hymn for Reflection - “Drop Down Ye Heavens



Closing Prayer:

Blessed Lord, who caused all Holy Scriptures to be written for our learning:
Grant us so to hear them, read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest them, that by
patience and the comfort of your holy Word we may embrace and ever hold fast
the blessed hope of everlasting life, which you have given us in our Savior Jesus
Christ; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever
and ever. Amen.

Call to Prayer:

“Unto the upright there ariseth light in the darkness: he is gracious, and full of compassion, and righteous.” (Psalm 112)

Silence (2 minutes)

Scripture for Interiorization:

“By the tender mercy of our God, the dawn from on high will break upon us to give light to those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death...”

Prompts for Prayer

- On the next page. Write a simple 2-3 line prayer of longing for the Advent season.

- One of the primary themes of Advent is waiting, waiting for Jesus, waiting for salvation...what do you need to say to God as you wait?

Hymn for Reflection - “O Virgo Virginum”



Closing Prayer:

Blessed Lord, who caused all Holy Scriptures to be written for our learning: Grant us so to hear them, read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest them, that by patience and the comfort of your holy Word we may embrace and ever hold fast the blessed hope of everlasting life, which you have given us in our Savior Jesus Christ; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

Call to Prayer:

“Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death,
I fear no evil; for you are with me; your rod and your staff—they comfort me.
(Psalm 23)

Silence (2 minutes)

Scripture for Interiorization:

“By the tender mercy of our God, the dawn from on high will break upon us
to give light to those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death...”

Prompts for Prayer

- Offer prayers of intercession for the darkness of the world around us...war, violence, abuse, hate, division.
- Where are you finding comfort in the midst of darkness this day?

Hymn for Reflection - “There is No Rose”



Closing Prayer:

Blessed Lord, who caused all Holy Scriptures to be written for our learning:
Grant us so to hear them, read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest them, that by
patience and the comfort of your holy Word we may embrace and ever hold fast
the blessed hope of everlasting life, which you have given us in our Savior Jesus
Christ; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever
and ever. Amen.



Advent Week 3

Notes and Journaling

December 15, 16

Call to Prayer:

Our God is a God of salvation, and to God, the Lord, belongs escape from death. (Psalm 68)

Silence (3 minutes)

Scripture for Interiorization:

“By the tender mercy of our God, the dawn from on high will break upon us to give light to those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death to guide our feet into the way of peace.”

Prompts for Prayer

- Come to God with the ways that you need the way of peace to be revealed in your life

- Take a moment to consider peace. What comes to mind? Journal it on the next page.

Hymn for Reflection - “Fear and Rejoice”



Closing Prayer:

O Lord Jesus Christ, you sent your messengers the prophets to preach repentance and prepare the way for our salvation: Grant that the minister and stewards of your mysteries may likewise make ready your way, by turning the hearts of the disobedient to the wisdom of the just, that at your second coming to judge the world, we may be found a people acceptable in your sight; for with the Father and the Holy Spirit you live and reign, one God, now and for ever. Amen.

Call to Prayer:

For he delivers the needy when they call,
the poor and those who have no helper.

He has pity on the weak and the needy,
and saves the lives of the needy.

From oppression and violence he redeems their life;
and precious is their blood in his sight. (Psalm 72)

Silence (3 minutes)

Scripture for Interiorization:

“By the tender mercy of our God, the dawn from on high will break upon us
to give light to those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death to guide
our feet into the way of peace.”

Prompts for Prayer

- Consider the themes of Psalm 72. God delivering the poor and needy. What
arises in your spirit?

- Take a moment to journal 2-3 ways you can walk in the way of peace this day

Hymn for Reflection - “The Truth from Above”



Closing Prayer:

O Lord Jesus Christ, you sent your messengers the prophets to preach repentance
and prepare the way for our salvation: Grant that the minister and stewards of
your mysteries may likewise make ready your way, by turning the hearts of the
disobedient to the wisdom of the just, that at your second coming to judge the
world, we may be found a people acceptable in your sight; for with the Father
and the Holy Spirit you live and reign, one God, now and for ever. Amen.

Call to Prayer:

Blessed be the Lord, the God of Israel,
who alone does wondrous things.

Blessed be his glorious name for ever;

may his glory fill the whole earth. Amen and Amen. (Psalm 72)

Silence (3 minutes)

Scripture for Interiorization:

“By the tender mercy of our God, the dawn from on high will break upon us to give light to those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death to guide our feet into the way of peace.”

Prompts for Prayer

- As we approach the end of the Advent season, what has developed, strengthened, or shifted in your soul the past few weeks?

- Compose a prayer for peace. Short and simple to the God who does wondrous thing.

Hymn for Reflection - “In the Bleak Midwinter”



Closing Prayer:

O Lord Jesus Christ, you sent your messengers the prophets to preach repentance and prepare the way for our salvation: Grant that the minister and stewards of your mysteries may likewise make ready your way, by turning the hearts of the disobedient to the wisdom of the just, that at your second coming to judge the world, we may be found a people acceptable in your sight; for with the Father and the Holy Spirit you live and reign, one God, now and for ever. Amen.

Advent Week 4

Notes and Journaling

December 21, 22

Opening Prayer:

Almighty God,
fulfill our desire
and kindle our hearts by your Spirit,
that being filled with the oil of your grace,
we may shine as bright lights
at the coming of your Son Jesus Christ;
who lives and reigns
with you and the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and forever.

Silence (5 minutes)

Hymn for Reflection: "Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence"

Closing Prayer:

Stir up your power, O Lord,
and with great might come among us;
and as we are sorely hindered by our sins
from running the race that is set before us,
let your bountiful grace and mercy speedily help
and deliver us; through Jesus Christ our Lord,
to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit,
be honor and glory, now and for ever. Amen.



December 23

Notes and Journaling

Opening Prayer:

Dear Lord God,
awaken us,
that we may be ready
when your dear Son comes,
that we may receive him with joy
and serve you with pure hearts;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.

Silence (5 minutes)

Hymn for Reflection: "Lo How A Rose E're Blooming"



Closing Prayer:

Stir up your power, O Lord,
and with great might come among us;
and as we are sorely hindered by our sins
from running the race that is set before us,
let your bountiful grace and mercy speedily help
and deliver us; through Jesus Christ our Lord,
to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit,
be honor and glory, now and for ever. Amen.

Christmas Eve

December 24

O God,
 you have made this holy night
 shine with the brightness
 of the true Light.
 Grant that we
 who have known the mysteries of that Light
 here on earth
 may come to the fullness
 of his joys in heaven;
 who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,
 one God, now and forever.

Hymn for Reflection:
 Sussex Carol "On Christmas Night"



"On Christmas Night"

C7 F B^b/D F/C C7/B^b F/A B^b

1 On Christ - mas night all Chris - tians sing to hear the news the
 2 Then why should we on earth be sad, since our Re - deem - er
 3 When sin de - parts be - fore his face, then life and health come
 4 All out of dark - ness we have light, which made the an - gels

an - gels bring. On Christ - mas night all Chris - tians sing to
 made us glad? Then why should we on earth be sad, since
 in its place. When sin de - parts be - fore his face, then
 sing this night. All out of dark - ness we have light, which

F/A B^b Am/C C F C B^b C7/B^b

hear the news the an - gels bring: news of great joy, news
 our Re - deem - er made us glad, when from our sin he
 life and health come in its place. An - gels re - joice with
 made the an - gels sing this night: "Glo - ry to God in

F/A C C/B^b F/A B^b C B^b/D F B^b C F

of great mirth, news of our mer - ci - ful King's birth.
 set us free, all for to gain our lib - er - ty?
 us and sing, all for to see the new - born King.
 high - est heaven, peace on earth, and good-will. A - men."

Words: Luke Wadding (d. 1686), alt., P.D.
 Music (SUSSEX CAROL 8.8.8.8 refrain 10.9): English carol; arr. Ralph Vaughan Williams (1872-1958), P.D.

Christmas Day

December 25

Christmas Acclamation
18th Century, German

Praise and adoration
be to our God,
for he is good.
His grace and mercy
fill the heavens and earth.

Let us come into his presence with thanksgiving,
and joyfully praise
our creator.

As a father,
he loves us,
his children.
Sing his praises
with joyful thanks
in love and devotion!
Let us love him
who has loved us
since the world began.
Who would not
love God from the heart?

We can not give him
adequate praise.
Still, in heaven
he receives with goodwill
our joyful songs of praise
and pours much joy into our souls,
whenever we thank him,
whenever we live in him.

Sing to Jesus Christ
praise, thanks and glory,
for he came from heaven
to destroy sin and death for us
and by his precious, willing sacrifice,
restored innocence and peace.

Already here on earth
he renews joy and life to us
by his grace.
Still greater bliss is prepared there
for those who love him
when one day they will be renewed in his image,
made new and holy,
and awakened from death.

Let us rejoice in our holy God!
Let us rejoice in our eternal God!
How blessed it is to praise him
here, and then in heaven.
He is our holiness!
He is our life!
He always loves us, his children.

The dawn
on high will
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to give light
to those who
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feet into the

By the tender mercy of our God,
the dawn from on high
will break upon us,
to give light
to those who sit in darkness
and in the shadow of death,
to guide our feet
into the way of peace.'

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