



Daily Prayer For Individuals and Families

Adopted from *The Lutheran Service Book* (p. 294)

The First Sunday in Advent

December 3, 2023 A.D.

This brief service is intended as a simple form of daily prayer for individuals and families. When more than one person is present, the Psalm and other parts of the service may be spoken responsively, with one person reading the words in regular type and the others responding with the words in bold type. The Creed and Prayers that are in bold type are to be said by all.

The sign of the cross ✝ may be made by all in remembrance of their Baptism.

Invocation

In the name of the Father and of the ✝ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

Psalm

(From Zechariah 9 and Psalm 25)

Behold, your king is coming to you;
righteous and having salvation.

To you, O LORD,

I lift up my soul.

O my God, in you I trust; let me not be put to shame;
let not my enemies exult over me.

Indeed, none who wait for you shall be put to shame;
they shall be ashamed who are wantonly treacherous.

For those with access to the internet, you may now play today's worship video, located at www.bethanycr.org under the Sermons tab and then continue with the Nicene Creed.

Scripture Lesson

(Mark 13:24-37)

²⁴[Jesus said:] “In those days, after that tribulation, the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light, ²⁵and the stars will be falling from heaven, and the powers in the heavens will be shaken. ²⁶And then they will see the Son of Man coming in clouds with great power and glory. ²⁷And then he will send out the angels and gather his elect from the four winds, from the ends of the earth to the ends of heaven.

²⁸“From the fig tree learn its lesson: as soon as its branch becomes tender and puts out its leaves, you know that summer is near. ²⁹So also, when you see these things taking place, you know that he is near, at the very gates. ³⁰Truly, I say to you, this generation will not pass away until all these things take place. ³¹Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away.

³²“But concerning that day or that hour, no one knows, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. ³³Be on guard, keep awake. For you do not know when the time will come. ³⁴It is like a man going on a journey, when he leaves home and puts his servants in charge, each with his work, and commands the doorkeeper to stay awake. ³⁵Therefore stay awake—for

you do not know when the master of the house will come, in the evening, or at midnight, or when the cock crows, or in the morning—³⁶lest he come suddenly and find you asleep.³⁷ And what I say to you I say to all: Stay awake.”

Sermon

✠ *Stay Awake!* ✠ *(A copy is included at the end of this service.)*

The Nicene Creed

**I believe in one God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth and of all things visible and invisible.
And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God,
begotten of His Father before all worlds,
God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God,
begotten, not made, being of one substance with the Father,
by whom all things were made;
who for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven and was incarnate by the Holy Spirit of the virgin Mary and was made man;
and was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate.
He suffered and was buried.
And the third day He rose again according to the Scriptures and ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of the Father.
And He will come again with glory to judge both the living and the dead, whose kingdom will have no end.
And I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord and giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son together is worshiped and glorified, who spoke by the prophets.
And I believe in one holy Christian and apostolic Church,
I acknowledge one Baptism for the remission of sins,
and I look for the resurrection of the dead
and the life ✠ of the world to come. Amen.**



The Lord's Prayer



**Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name,
Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven;
give us this day our daily bread;
and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us;
and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.
For Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever and ever. Amen.**

Bethany's Prayer List

Thanksgiving

- Joni Schmith - recovered after surgery
- Rick Foreman - recovered after surgery
- Shay Gutman & Eleanore Dusheck - wedding on 12/2

Entrusting into God's Care

- Shirley Kellogg - hospice care at Terrace Glen, Marion
- Persecuted Christians and refugees
- Peace in Europe and throughout the world
- Project 24 students, Yvonne and Lorine

Healing

- Diane (relative of Brenda Heims) - health issues
- Rodney (relative of Betty Happel) - cancer
- Jan (friend of Joni Schmith) - complications from chemo
- Carolyn Johnson - upcoming surgery 12/8
- Cindy Broadwater - recovering at Harmony after hospitalization
- Lee Heims - recovering after surgery
- Karl Hoech - recovering after surgery
- Del Block - recovering after hospitalization
- Kelly Johnson - healing
- Bonnie Breiholz - recovering after surgery
- Philip Hackbardt - recovering after surgery
- Ron Prescott - recovering after surgery
- Ethel Doehrmann - immunotherapy treatment
- Doug Knutson - immunotherapy treatment
- Deb Heitland - health issues
- Abi Clark - health issues

Homebound

- Verlyn & Paul LeFevere - at home

Mourning, friends and family of

- Lee Roesti (former music director) - died 11/18
- Darrel (father of Dawn Thomas) - died 11/11
- Aaron (friend of Linda Patten) - died 11/7

Serving Our Country

- Ben (son of Kroemers) - IA National Guard
- Devin (friend of Kroemers) - IA Army National Guard
- Mitchell & Benjamin (relatives of Schoens & Smiths) - US Navy
- Harrison (son of Siecks) - US Army, stationed in TX
- Jordan (grandson of Kim Neuhaus) - IA National Guard

Collect of the Day

Stir up Your power, O Lord, and come, that by Your protection we may be rescued from the threatening perils of our sins and saved by Your mighty deliverance; for You live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

Concluding Prayers

Blessed Lord, You have caused all Holy Scripture to be written for our learning. Grant that we may so hear them, read, mark, learn, and take them to heart that, by the patience and comfort of Your holy Word, we may embrace and ever hold fast the blessed hope of everlasting life; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

Together we pray... **I thank You, my heavenly Father, through Jesus Christ, Your dear Son, that You have kept me this night from all harm and danger; and I pray that you would keep me this day also from sin and every evil, that all my doings and life may please You. For into Your hands I commend myself, my body and soul, and all things. Let Your holy angel be with me, that the evil foe may have no power over me. Amen.**

Let us bless the Lord.

Thanks be to God.



✠ *Stay Awake!* ✠

Grace, Mercy, and Peace to you from God – the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Amen.

No one can say for sure when it happens, but every year it does. Perhaps when the Thanksgiving Day or Black Friday comes. Maybe even when the season of Advent begins. No one knows for sure, but every year right around this time, the Holiday Season arrives. Of course, this time of year means many different things for many different people. For some it's a time candy canes, Christmas cookies, and other treats to enjoy. For others, it's a time to shop, or to get together with friends and family. And of course for many, this time of year is special because of their relationship with God. We often hear people for whom this is true saying catchy things like, "Jesus is the reason for the season." Or reminding everyone to, "Keep Christ in Christmas." Perhaps we have even said such things ourselves. Now truth be told, this time of year is probably special for many of us for a variety of reasons, and that is all right. But along with this time of year arriving, so too does a particular danger for many of us, even those of us who want to keep Christ in Christmas. A danger that is drawn out by looking at the Gospel lesson this morning.

Jesus has just finished telling Peter, James, John, and Andrew that no one knows, not even the angels when Christ will return in glory. Therefore, He says, be alert because you don't want to be caught "sleeping" when Christ does come again. Of course, Jesus doesn't literally mean that if you're sleeping when He returns, you're in big trouble. Rather Jesus teaches us in this mini-parable that we need to be ready. Nobody knows when the master will be back, so all his servants, especially the one at the door, needs to be ready at any time.

Now we should be able to see how this fits in with us - we need to be ready for the Second Coming and that it is our faith in Christ that makes us ready. But where things get really interesting for us is when Jesus says in the last verse, "What I say to you, I say to all: Stay awake."

Remember, Jesus is not talking to unbelievers, but rather some of His closest disciples. And He effectively says, "I'm going tell the four of you the same thing I tell everyone else, be ready!" If we were there, Jesus would say the same thing. It doesn't matter if you know that Jesus is the reason for the season or how much you keep Christ in Christmas - you need to watch. You need to be ready not just to celebrate on December 25th God taking upon our flesh to die for our sins, but be ready for when He'll come again with glory whenever that may be! The timing of Christ's coming is unknown, but the coming itself is certain. And Christ calls us to not just celebrate and rejoice in the past, to live in the certainty of His Second Coming.

When the Church created the season of Advent, they knew this. The color it choose for the altar and pulpit used to be purple, a royal color for the coming of the King. Today, many churches, including ours, uses blue - the color of hope, as watchman during the night used to wait for the blue sky of morning. But did you notice that colors of Advent were not just about the past. For Advent is a time in which we not only remember how God prepared the Old and New Testament saints for Christ's first coming through the prophets and others likes of Mary, Elizabeth, and Zechariah. But in Advent we are also to remember that Jesus will come again and that that He comes to us today. Not to remember this would be to live in the past, and run the risk of living as ones who have no hope in the future and being blind to the blessings that Jesus gives to us this very day through the Word and Sacraments. For Christ not only has come and will come, but He has promised to be with us wherever we may be.

As we begin our celebrations of this Holiday season, let us hear Jesus' call for all of us to be vigilant in watching for His Second Coming. History shows us that the earliest Christians did not celebrate Christmas as we know it - rather it seems that they were watching. They were watching for Christ to come again - when He would come with glory and might and put an end to evil and suffering in this world. They were watching - living as those who have been redeemed by the crucified Christ, who is still with us now through His Word and Sacraments, and will come again.

It is of course good and proper to celebrate Christ's first coming and Christmas, as God does remind the Israelites to remember the great deeds He had done in the past. But as Christians today , let us never forget about the present, nor the future, and the hope that we have in Jesus' return. Amen.

