

Prayer Calendar

December 2017

*Praying the Story
The Advent and Christmas Story
As told by Luke*

Advent, the first season of the church year, finds us calling out for a Savior. In this season we wait with expectation for the birth of the Christ Child. The Season of Christmastide is the time when we celebrate God's response to us by sending us a Savior, born in humility and poverty. As you spend time each day in these familiar scriptures imagine you are hearing the story as a child for the very first time – what do you hear? What do you see? What do you feel

Friday, December 1

Luke 1: 26: In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth,

~ Loving God, you send your messengers to us in ordinary times and places. Help me pay attention today to the angels in my life. I am listening. This is what I hear_____.

Saturday December 2

Luke 1: 27: to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David.

~ God of Grace, you chose an ordinary girl to bear the Christ Child. I am ordinary, what sacred task do you have for me?

Sunday December 3

Luke 1: 28: And he came to her and said, "Greetings, favored one! The Lord is with you.

~ Holy God, you tell us God is with us. Give me confidence today to live securely knowing God is with me.

Monday December 4

Luke 1:29: But she was much perplexed by his words and pondered what sort of greeting this might be.

~ God, many times, we are like Mary, much perplexed. Help us discern what you are saying through scripture and give us understanding. My questions today are: _____.

Tuesday December 5

Luke 1:30: The angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God.

~ Holy One, sometimes we are most afraid when we know you have called us into something new that calls for sacrifice. Help us work through our fear and know that you are with us.

Wednesday December 6

Luke 1: 31: And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus.

~ Savior, you are birthing something new within me. I am much perplexed and wonder what I am supposed to do; where I am supposed to go. Name this new thing for me.

Thursday December 7

Luke 1:33: He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end.

~ God of All, we trust that you are in control of all things at all times. Help us know that no matter the circumstance you are sovereign. I will practice trust in your today by_____.

Friday December 8

Luke 2:5: He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child.

~ Lord, even Mary and Joseph suffered challenges and storms in their lives. Being favored by you does not mean life is fair or easy. Today remind me of the goodness in my life.

Saturday December 9

Luke 2:6: While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child.

~ Gracious God, sometimes I want things to be different. Sometimes I want the world to go according to my plan and I am upset when things don't go my way. Help me today.

Sunday December 10

Luke 2:7: And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth, and laid him in a manger....

~ God of Love, in the midst of what we want when we want it you provide grace. Help me remember that in the challenges of life there is always grace. Today I see your care_____.

Monday December 11

Luke 2:7b: ...because there was no place for them in the inn.

~ God of All, the holy family was without shelter – there was no place for them in the rush of the town. Help me today to remember that each family without shelter belongs to you and to pray hope for them.

Tuesday December 12

Luke 2:8: In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night.

~ God of Love, the shepherds were outcasts and not fit for good company, yet you announced the birth of Jesus to these people on the margins. Help me remember that you value all people no matter what their station or ability. I pray for those who are on the margins of society.

Wednesday December 13

Luke 2:9: Then the angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified.

~ Lord of Life, sometimes I am terrified by your glory. Sometimes I shy away from knowing you and loving you because to become closer means I must change. Open my eyes and heart to your glory so that I might listen.

Thursday December 14

Luke 2:10: But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid, for see – I am bringing you good news of great joy for all people;

~ Holy God, once again you tell me not to be afraid. Help me let go of my fears and replace them with the good news of great joy. Today I name my fears _____. Replace these fears with joy _____.

Friday December 15

Luke 2:11: to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord."

~ Great God of All, new life is born within us. Today I sit with the gift of salvation – the gift of new birth, hope and relationship with you, O God and with neighbor.

Saturday December 16

Luke 2: 12: "This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger."

~ Loving God, we cry out to you for a Savior and you respond with an infant. You surprise us, we think we know what we want and you give us what we need.

Sunday December 17

Luke 2: 13: And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God....:

~ Lord, I can only imagine what the heavenly choir sounded like – add my voice to that choir praising you. Today I praise you through each thing I say, do and sing.

Monday December 18

Luke 2:14: Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace among those whom he favors!

~ Jesus, your peace is not as the world gives. Help me live into your peace that does not depend on outward circumstances, but on the heart.

Tuesday December 19

Luke 2: 15: When the angels had left them...the shepherds said to one another, “Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us.”

~ Guiding Lord, I know, within my heart, what has taken place so long ago, takes place each and every day – new birth in Christ Jesus. Give me courage to respond by my action and service in the world for what has been made known to me.

Wednesday December 20

Luke 2: 16: So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger.

~ God, sometimes I tarry in my response to your calling. Sometimes I wait instead of going forth with conviction and courage. Today send me out to

Thursday December 21

Luke 2:17: When they saw this they made known what had been told them about this child.

~ Living God, you give each one of us a story to tell. A story of how we have seen you, listened to you, where you have acted in our lives. Give me courage to share my story so others may remember their own stories. My story begins_____.

Friday December 22

Luke 2:19: But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart.

~ Listening God, sometimes I just run ahead of you without stopping to be still, to be quiet, to “ponder” what is happening so that I may respond rather than react. Slow me down today.

Saturday December 23

Luke 2:20: The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

~ Father, the Shepherds went to see the Christ Child, then returned to their work, their lives praising you and telling their stories. Stir within me the desire to share my story of what I have heard and seen of your love and grace.

Sunday December 24

Christmas Eve

Luke 2:21: After eight days had passed ...and he was called Jesus, the name given by the angel before he was conceived in the womb.

~ Holy One, each of us is given a name by you: Beloved Child. You knew us and shaped and formed us – help us remember that we are yours and knew us before we were born. Help me remember my name.

Monday December 25

Christmas Day

Luke 2:26: It had been revealed to him (Simeon) that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord's Messiah.

~ Loving God, we see your action and movement every day of our lives, yet often times do not know what we are seeing. We overlook your presence and how you work in and through us and others so that your desire for your people may be accomplished. Open my eyes and ears today so that your presence may be revealed.

Tuesday December 26

Luke 2:27: Guided by the Spirit, Simeon came into the temple; and when the parents brought in the child Jesus ...Simeon took him in his arms and praised God....

~ Lord, your Holy Spirit guides us even today. Help us to pay attention to your Spirit's call and leading. Help us to wait, to listen, to take action when the Holy Spirit moves.

Wednesday December 27

Luke 2:36: There was also a prophet, Anna the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was of great age, having lived with her husband seven years after her marriage....

~ Loving God, you use people of all ages and stages in life to witness your glory and your love. Help us to remember that we are never too old or too young to be your witness.

Thursday December 28

Luke 2:37: ...then as a widow to the age of eighty-four. She never left the temple but worshiped there with fasting and prayer night and day.

~ Faithful God, Anna teaches us what it means to wait with expectation on what you promise. Keep us centered in your heart.

Friday December 29

Luke 2:38: At that moment she came, and began to praise God and to speak about the child to all who were looking for the redemption of Jerusalem.

~ God of Life, we too are looking for redemption. Help us not to be afraid, but to be strong and faithful for we have found our Redeemer. I praise God today for_____.

Saturday December 30

Luke 2:39: When they had finished everything required by the law of the Lord, they returned to Galilee, to their own town of Nazareth.

~ Lord, we leave the celebrations and go back into our homes and work and everyday life allowing the miracle of the birth of Jesus change us. Give us the power and steadfastness to live into the transformation that Christ makes possible.

Sunday December 31

Luke 2:40: The child grew and became strong, filled with wisdom; and the favor of God was upon him.

~ Loving God, you teach us that the baby grew into a man. You help us understand that as Jesus grew, so we must grow in our faith, understanding and wisdom. Help me every day to grow stronger in my faith

This prayer calendar is designed to aid you in your daily life of prayer.

Read the scripture *for the day over and over, out loud if possible. As you read, listen with an “ear of the heart” to a word or phrase that strikes you.*

Reflect on that word or phrase *asking yourself the question: “What is God saying to me through this word or phrase at this time?” Spend time in silence with this scripture, mulling it over in your mind and heart.*

Allow God to speak to you in the silence. *Offer a prayer out of your reflection.*

Thank God for whatever you received in the silence of your prayer and take that with you through your day.

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