





# Ordinary Blessings

## Advent Calendar

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Dear Magi,

I'm so glad we are traveling this season together. Here in the northern hemisphere, the days are still getting shorter. While commercial Christmas is loud, Advent is stealthy. It hums with anticipation and hope while our sight adjusts to long nights. This kind of waiting is active and expectant. We blink and seek treasures in the darkness, trusting a sacred hunch that something is about to be made clear.

Most of my poems begin with a persistent word or phrase that egg me on until I write. This Advent Calendar plucks 25 words and 25 phrases out of my new book *Ordinary Blessings* for the Christmas Season: Prayers, Poems, and Meditations.

The first page of this Advent Calendar includes a daily word that is also the name of a blessing in my book. You might integrate the blessing with worship, devotions, table grace, or a bedtime prayer. Look for the word in action that day. Let it be a lens for what can't wait.

The second page includes a daily phrase that comes from the blessing associated with the word from page one. Take it with you as a breath prayer or mantra for the day. May it help and guide your waiting as active and holy work throughout the season.

You can print the first two pages back to back or use the word and phrase to inspire more art. Since this calendar begins on December 1, it can be used year after year and in a variety of different ways.

May this little Advent Calendar be a map for the stars, a gentle invitation to look up and around at the whole cosmos waiting and moving, stirring with hope that's already and still coming true.

Gratefully, Meta Herrick Carlson

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