

Midweek Prayer, first week of Advent

November 29 – December 5, 2020 † Mount Olive Lutheran Church



Prayer in the home

In Advent we normally gather for Vespers on Wednesday evening. In this time of physical separation, there are two opportunities to worship together while apart. A meditative recording of Compline is available for your night-time prayer any time during the week **at this link**.

These pages are a brief devotion for use in the home at morning or evening, or at your dinner table, with a different Scripture and additional reading for each week in Advent. The appropriate number of candles on your Advent wreath (or your grouping of four candles) may be lighted as the liturgy begins.

Note on the readings: the readings from Scripture are chosen to reflect on the themes for the week that the Sunday readings introduced. The poetry following is meant to connect with the Scripture.



Centering and Gathering

Light the first candle on your Advent wreath.

ADVENT DIALOG – *may be spoken with another person or by yourself*

Jesus Christ is the light of the world,
the light no darkness can overcome.

Stay with us, Lord, for it is evening,
and the day is almost over.

Let your light scatter the darkness
and illumine your church.

Word

PRAYER (*Martin Luther's Evening Prayer, from the Small Catechism*)

I give thanks to you, heavenly Father, through Jesus Christ, your dear Son, that you have graciously protected me today. I ask you to forgive me all my sins, where I have done wrong, and graciously to protect me tonight. Into your hands I commend myself: my body, my soul, and all that is mine. Let your holy angels be with me, so that the wicked foe may have no power over me. Amen

If more than one are praying together: We give thanks to you, heavenly Father, through Jesus Christ, your dear Son, that you have graciously protected us today. We ask you to forgive us all our sins, where we have done wrong, and graciously to protect us tonight. Into your hands we commend ourselves: our bodies, our souls, and all that is ours. Let your holy angels be with us, so that the wicked foe may have no power over us. Amen

SCRIPTURE READING: Romans 8:18-27

Paul writes: ¹⁸ I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory about to be revealed to us. ¹⁹ For the creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the children of God; ²⁰ for the creation was subjected to futility, not of its own will but by the will of the one who subjected it, in hope ²¹ that the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to decay and will obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God. ²² We know that the whole creation has been groaning in labor pains until now; ²³ and not only the creation, but we ourselves, who have the first fruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly while we wait for adoption, the redemption of our bodies. ²⁴ For in hope we were saved. Now hope that is seen is not hope. For who hopes for what is seen? ²⁵ But if we hope for what we do not see, we wait for it with patience.

²⁶ Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we ought, but that very Spirit intercedes with sighs too deep for words. ²⁷ And God, who searches the heart, knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of God.

POEM: "Passing Away, Saith the World"

Passing away, saith the World, passing away:
Chances, beauty and youth, sapp'd day by day:
Thy life never continueth in one stay.
Is the eye waxen dim, is the dark hair changing to grey
That hath won neither laurel nor bay?
I shall clothe myself in Spring and bud in May:
Thou, root stricken, shall not rebuild thy decay.
On my bosom for aye.
Then I answer'd: Yea.

Passing away, saith my Soul, passing away:
With its burden of fear and hope, of labour and play,
Hearken what the past doth witness and say:
Rust in thy gold, a moth is in thine array,
A canker is in thy bud, thy leaf must decay.
At midnight, at cockcrow, at morning, one certain day
Lo, the Bridegroom shall come and shall not delay:
Watch thou and pray.
Then I answer'd: Yea.

Passing away, saith my God, passing away:
Winter passeth after the long delay:
New grapes on the vine, new figs on the tender spray,
Turtle calleth turtle in Heaven's May.
Though I tarry, wait for Me, trust Me, watch and pray:
Arise, come away, night is past and lo it is day.
My love, My sister, My spouse, thou shalt hear Me say.
Then I answer'd: Yea.

Christina Rossetti (1830-1894) Public domain.

INTERCESSORY PRAYERS

Pray for loved ones, the Church, the world, and all in need.

LORD'S PRAYER *Pray the Lord's Prayer.*

CLOSING PRAYER (*prayer for Peace, for centuries part of Vespers in the Lutheran tradition*)

O God, from whom come all holy desires, all good counsels, and all just works: give to us, your servants, that peace which the world cannot give, that our hearts may be set to obey your commandments; and also that we, being defended from the fear of our enemies, may live in peace and quietness; through Jesus Christ our Savior, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, God forever. Amen

BENEDICAMUS AND BLESSING – *may be spoken with another person or by yourself*

Let us bless the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Almighty God bless us, defend us from all evil, and bring us to everlasting life.

Amen.

