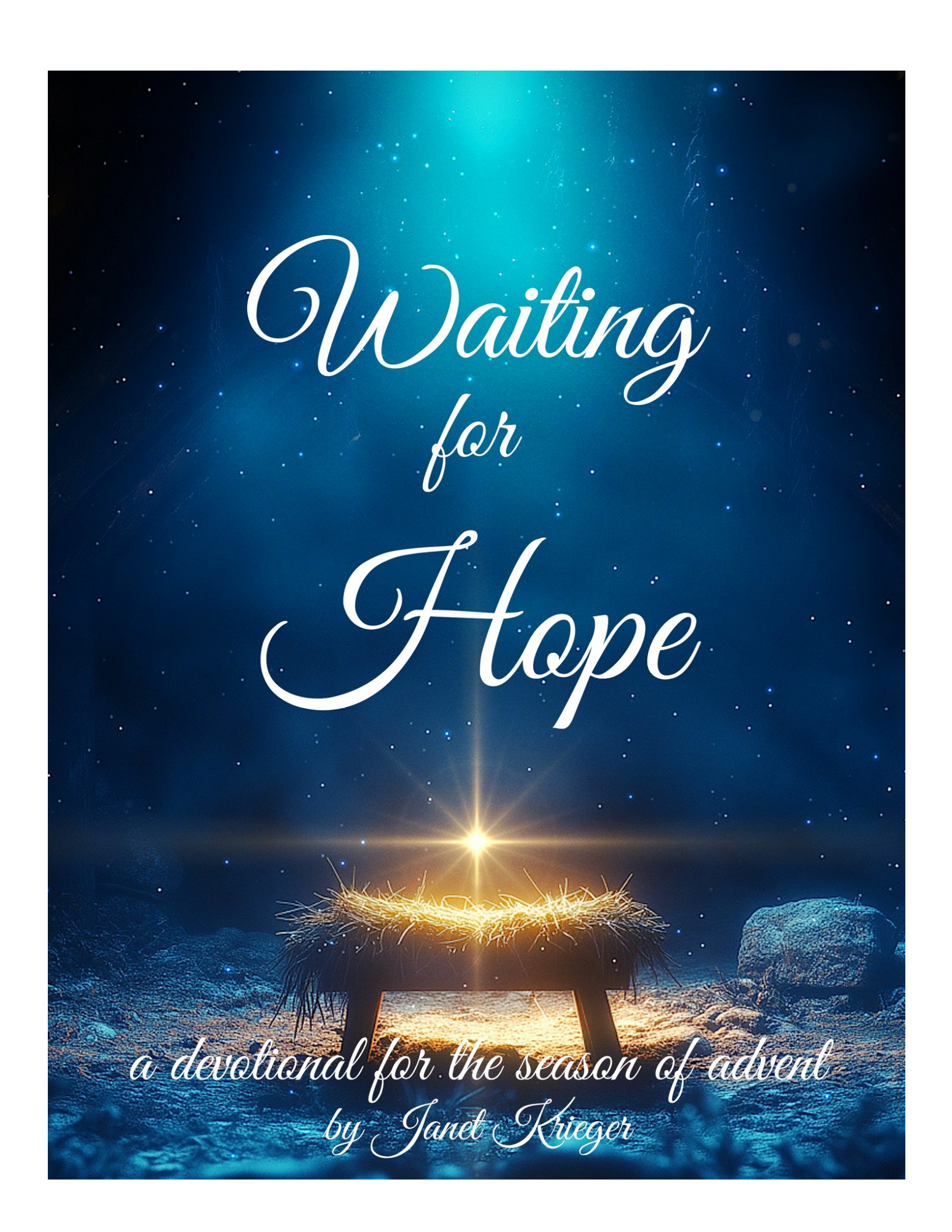


The background of the entire image is a deep blue night sky filled with numerous small, bright white stars. A prominent, bright yellow star with a four-pointed starburst effect is positioned in the lower center of the frame, directly above a manger. The manger is constructed from dark wood and is filled with a thick layer of golden-brown straw. The ground around the manger is dark and textured, with a large, smooth, grey rock visible on the right side. The overall atmosphere is serene and spiritual.

Waiting for Hope

*a devotional for the season of advent
by Janet Krieger*

I began thinking about writing this devotional September 30th of this year during the Women of the Word Bible study. On that day our dear John Stolzenbach was teaching from the book of Mark.

As I listened to John I heard him say “. . . waiting for hope” and promptly stopped listening to what else was said. I wrote on my class notes:

Waiting For Hope
(Advent Devotional) 12/25/25 Hope has arrived.

I thought about this most of the day and mentioned to a friend what I had heard and what I believed God had put upon my heart. I was encouraged to consider writing the devotional.

I then emailed Ericka with this idea and she shared she received my email minutes before walking into an advent planning meeting. The idea was approved and I began furiously studying and writing on October 1st.

I have written Advent and Lenten devotions before and typically do so over a three to four month time span. This one would need to be completed in six weeks!

And, it was! Thank you to my friends who supported this labor of love with prayer and encouragement.

P.S. I did return to listening, on that wonderful day in September, to John's very good teaching .

Janet Krieger (2025)

(New Living Testament, The Message, and NIV Bible versions used.)

Hope Is Our Anchor

“If only you would prepare your heart and lift up your hands to Him in prayer! . . . Then your face will brighten with innocence. You will be strong and free of fear. You will forget your misery; it will be like water flowing away. Your life will be brighter than the noonday. Even darkness will be as bright as morning. Having hope will give you courage. You will be protected and will rest in safety. You will lie down unafraid, and many will look to you for help.” Job 11:13-19

Hope is to expect with confidence, to trust and rely upon. Courage is the strength to persevere and withstand danger, fear, or difficulty. Courage doesn't require the absence of fear; but rather, calls us to move forward in spite of it. For believers it is the ability to trust in, to put our hope in Jesus.

Following Jesus takes courage. Our life of faith is not a single action but requires daily intention to stand strong and follow Jesus' example. Courage may be demonstrated when we stand for truth, or conversely when we hold our tongue, when we forgive someone, when we make a difficult decision, or when we stand alone in faith.

With each challenge we face and decision made we can be reminded that we are not alone. God is with us anchoring our lives in hope and enabling us to live with courage and confidence. There is always hope and our hope becomes a confident expectation in the faithfulness of our God.

Fix your mind upon Jesus. Lift your hands to Him in prayer and meditation. Place your hope in Him and rely upon His power to lead you in life.

This is My command—be strong and courageous! Do not be afraid or discouraged. For the LORD your God is with you wherever you go. Joshua 1:9

Prayer: Dear LORD, Thank you for the reassurance that You are with me wherever I go.

What current fear is holding you back, and how can trusting God help you face it? Offer a prayer asking God for the courage to face that fear.



Surround yourself with a community of believers who can support and encourage your courageous journey.

His Shield Our Hope

So many are saying, "God will never rescue him!" But You, O LORD, are a shield around me; You are my glory, the one who holds my head high. I cried out to the LORD, and He answered me from His holy mountain. I lay down and slept, yet I woke up in safety, for the LORD was watching over me. I am not afraid of ten thousand enemies who surround me on every side. Psalm 3:2-6

The LORD is my strength and shield. I trust Him with all my heart. He helps me, and my heart is filled with joy. I burst out in songs of thanksgiving. Psalm 28:7

The chaos of life can certainly be overwhelming . . . finances, loneliness, health, relationships, work pressures, and more can leave us consumed with worry and feeling exhausted. The image of our God as a shield can both comfort and empower us.

God, our strength and shield, surrounds us with His presence, guarding us and restoring our confidence. We face great challenges living in this world but we do not face them alone. God is not far away in heaven, but rather right here with us, always present. He lifts our heads high and gives us dignity and hope reminding us of who we are in Him . . . His beloved daughters and sons. His shield does not remove the chaos but provides protection in the midst of it. He is our protector. God is with us in every moment of this life.

We can give our chaos, our challenges to God and ask Him to be our strength and shield. We can trust that He is working even when we do not see immediate results. We can surround ourselves with reminders of His protection; write down Bible verses, listen to worship songs, and spend time in prayer. As we focus on God we will experience His peace. And, as we acknowledge God as our strength and shield we can respond with joy and thankfulness to His sustaining presence in our lives..



We put our hope in the LORD. He is our help and our shield. In Him our hearts rejoice, for we trust in His holy name. Let Your unfailing love surround us, LORD, for our hope is in You alone.

Psalm 33: 20-22

Prayer: Thank You for being my shield and my protector. When life feels overwhelming, help me to trust in Your presence and remind me that I am not alone.

Think about a recent moment where you've experienced God's help. How did it make you feel? Take a moment to express gratitude through prayer, song, or writing.

Keep a journal to track your prayers and see how God has been faithful in responding.

A Life of Hope and Praise

But I will keep on hoping for Your help; I will praise You more and more. Psalm 71:14

The psalm recalls God's faithfulness in this life and the ongoing hope and praise believers should maintain. It is recognition that hope isn't dependent upon comfortable circumstances but rather from our personal understanding of God's character and that praise is not just a reaction to good times but essential during challenges and trials. Praise encourages us to focus on God's unchanging nature and His promises to us.

*"Praise is a practice that opens our hearts to receive God's love. We often think of praise in moments of victory, but true praise comes from a heart that trusts God in times of uncertainty."
– Max Lucado*

Praise is recognizing God's presence and goodness in our lives and the world around us. We can express our gratitude for His blessings, guidance, protection, and provision no matter the circumstances surrounding us. Acknowledging God's goodness, remembering all He has done for us encourages us to have hope for the future.

*"I've picked you. I haven't dropped you. Don't panic. I'm with you. There's no need to fear for I'm your God. I'll give you strength. I'll help you. I'll hold you steady, keep a firm grip on you."
Isaiah 41:10*

Our hope lies in the expectation God will move in our lives when we call upon Him. We can choose hope daily approaching each new day with great anticipation about what God will do in our lives. We can allow praise to transform our minds. When we express our thankfulness to God our worries are set aside for that moment in time.

*"Give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you."
1 Thessalonians 5:18*

Prayer: Thank You LORD for walking beside me through all of this life.

Take time to consider how God has shown His faithfulness and goodness to you.

Thank Him for the ways in which He is at work in your life and the world. Join with your church family this Christmas season to worship and adore Him.



His Word Our Hope

I am counting on the LORD; yes, I am counting on Him. I have put my hope in His word. Psalm 130:5

God sent the angel Gabriel to Nazareth, a village in Galilee, to a virgin named Mary. She was engaged to be married to a man named Joseph, a descendant of King David. Gabriel appeared to her and said, "Greetings, favored woman! The Lord is with you!" Confused and disturbed, Mary tried to think what the angel could mean. "Don't be frightened, Mary," the angel told her, "for God has decided to bless you! You will become pregnant and have a son, and you are to name Him Jesus. He will be very great and will be called the Son of the Most High. And the Lord God will give Him the throne of His ancestor David. And He will reign over Israel forever; His Kingdom will never end!" Mary asked the angel, "But how can I have a baby? I am a virgin." The angel replied, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So the baby born to you will be holy, and He will be called the Son of God. What's more, your relative Elizabeth has become pregnant in her old age! People used to say she was barren, but she's already in her sixth month. For nothing is impossible with God." Mary responded, "I am the Lord's servant, and I am willing to accept whatever He wants. May everything you have said come true." Luke 1:26-38

Mary's response to this angelic announcement is an example of surrendering in faith to the limitless possibilities of our Father. Mary responded believing nothing to be impossible with God. Mary responded and humanity received the miraculous.

God continues to do miracles in and through His people, the church. God answers prayers, provides physical, spiritual and emotional healing, and supplies material and financial needs. God works miracles through the supernatural and through people themselves. Our faith is founded on the truth that a virgin became pregnant and gave birth by the power of the Holy Spirit; for this there is no logical explanation. We must acknowledge that *nothing is impossible with God* and then count on Him, accepting His direction in our lives. We must acknowledge the greatness of God and the impossibilities He can accomplish. We must count on the Father and not depend solely on our own will power, strength, or intelligence.

Jesus looked at them intently and said, "Humanly speaking, it is impossible. But with God everything is possible." Matthew 19:26



Prayer: Lord, remind me that Your Word is my refuge, my comfort, and my source of hope.

Close your eyes and simply listen to Father God. What is He asking you to trust Him in or through? Respond as Mary did by putting your hope in Him.

His Love Our Hope

... the LORD's delight is in those who fear Him, those who put their hope in His unfailing love.

Psalm 147:11

For God so loved the world that He gave His only Son, so that everyone who believes in Him will not perish but have eternal life. John 3:16

Can anything ever separate us from Christ's love? Does it mean He no longer loves us if we have trouble or calamity, or are persecuted, or are hungry or cold or in danger or threatened with death? No, despite all these things, overwhelming victory is ours through Christ, who loved us. And I am convinced that nothing can ever separate us from His love. Death can't, and life can't. The angels can't, and the demons can't. Our fears for today, our worries about tomorrow, and even the powers of hell can't keep God's love away. Whether we are high above the sky or in the deepest ocean, nothing in all creation will ever be able to separate us from the love of God that is revealed in Christ Jesus our Lord. Romans 8:35, 37-39

This is real love. It is not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son as a sacrifice to take away our sins. 1 John 4:10

To fear the LORD means to be in awe of His power, His holiness, and His great love.

God so loved the world that He gave . . . and He gave His best. At Christmas we celebrate the best gift of all, salvation given to us through faith in Jesus Christ. God gave as an expression of His absolute love for us. The baby born at Bethlehem was God made man. He didn't stop being God. He was no less God. Jesus was not created in Bethlehem. He came down to earth. He began to be man. And, the wonder of the Christmas story is not that this baby was born to humble parents, but that this baby was God arriving to live among us, arriving to take away the penalty of sin. The baby in the manger was God. The One to whom the wise men were led by the Bethlehem star was the very One who made every star. The spirit of Christmas is told in the first chapter of John. Jesus set aside all His glory as God. He left behind all His heavenly delights so that He could bring the gift of God's grace and love to mankind. The spirit of Christmas is seen in Jesus not just telling us about our Father God but by demonstrating every attribute of God in the way He lived each day of His life.



Putting our *hope in His unfailing love* becomes a statement of our trust in His goodness and faithfulness. This is the good news, this is the gospel. And, this is what Christmas means. Jesus did not come to simply give us a beautiful manger scene. He did not come to give us a Christmas Eve service once a year. He came to be our Savior. He came in love to give us salvation and hope.

Prayer: God, thank You for Your unfailing love. Teach us to put our hope in You alone.

Let your actions reflect your awe of God. Be a testimony of hope through acts of kindness.

His Strength Our Hope

But those who hope in the LORD will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not be faint. Isaiah 40:31

. . . And let us run with endurance the race God has set before us. We do this by keeping our eyes on Jesus . . . Hebrews 12:1-2

Placing our hope in God is an act of trust. It requires patience acknowledging that God's timing may be very different from our own rushed agendas. Placing our hope in God allows us to find a resting spot wherein we can catch our breath, renew our spirit, and gain strength for the journey ahead.

The demands and challenges of life have a way of wearing us down. Yet, Isaiah proclaims God can transform our weariness; we can trade our fatigue for His infinite strength. Given His renewal we are able to rise above our circumstances and see this life from a higher perspective. With faith in God's goodness we can set aside anxiety and worry.

Running without growing weary and walking without fainting are accomplished with the endurance our Lord provides. Our life can be full of unexpected hills and valleys to navigate. Isaiah promises God will provide the stamina we need to move above our challenges.

Hope in the LORD does not mean we will avoid trials in this life but encourages us that God provides a divine strength that allows us to rise above, endure and triumph when we keep our eyes on Jesus and align our hearts with His.

Jesus is waiting patiently for us. He will always provide everything we need. Today, choose to fellowship with Him. Choose to include Him in your day. Share, pray, meditate, talk to Him.

Prayer: Lord, today I choose hope, today I choose You. My strength is not found in my own ability but in Your promise to renew and sustain me.

This week enjoy coffee with Jesus. Let Him speak to you through His Word. Listen.

Tell God where you're exhausted – physically, emotionally, and/or spiritually. Invite Him to renew every part of you.



His Plans Our Hope

For I know the plans I have for you, says the LORD. They are plans for good and not for disaster, to give you a future and a hope. Jeremiah 29:11

And we know that God causes everything to work together for the good of those who love God and are called according to His purpose for them. Romans 8:28

Rarely, do the dreams, goals, or plans for our life turn out exactly in the way we envisioned them. Today's Scripture verses remind us that just because things may not be going as we had planned it does not mean that God is not present guiding us through every circumstance and leading us to His intended purpose. He is using our journey to grow our faith, strengthen our purpose, and deepen our relationship with Him.

Listen as our Lord speaks this truth . . . I have *plans for your good*. The Hebrew word for *plans* is "mahshevot" and suggests deep thoughts and intentions. His plans for us are created with infinite wisdom and love. God is committed to us, for all of our life.

Scripture is filled with examples of people who trusted God's guidance . . . Abraham trusting God when asked to sacrifice his son Isaac, Mary's "yes" to the angel, Paul's conversion on the road to Damascus. These examples, and many more, demonstrate God's plans for His beloved are not random but filled with hope, purpose, and love. Each of our lives are part of a larger story, a story of which God knows both the journey and the ending.

Prayer: Father God, today I choose to trust Your plan. I choose to believe that You love me and Your purpose for my life is good.

What hope can you embrace today? Wait expectantly for God to share His plan for you.

Begin each morning by asking God to open your eyes to all the possibilities to love and serve that He will put before you.



Scriptures Grow Our Hope

"For everything that was written in the past was written to teach us, so that through the endurance taught in the Scriptures and the encouragement they provide, we might have hope."
Romans 15:4

For the word of God is alive and powerful. It is sharper than the sharpest two-edged sword, cutting between soul and spirit, between joint and marrow. It exposes our innermost thoughts and desires.
Hebrews 4:12

The Bible was written to teach us. It was written by Spirit empowered servants of God and disciples of Jesus. The scriptures were written so we, God's people, might know and obey Him. The Bible is our guide in life encouraging and sustaining us. It is described as a living breathing text that shapes our faith journey.

Scriptures teach us to hold on, endure, and persevere in a world in which patience is often in short supply. In Scripture we read stories of hope, resilience and God's interventions that encourage us in our daily walk. Hope is found among the pages of the Bible and hope takes shape in our hearts and minds.

The application of Romans 15:4 in our lives is key to our growth as believers. Cultivate a habit of reading and meditating on a verse or chapter of Scripture. Use the index in your Bible to read stories of individuals facing the same difficult decisions and challenges that are before you. Find support in a faith community whether through attending church services, joining small groups, or participating in online communities. Reading Scripture, studying His Word, and having a community of others who share our beliefs can help us persevere and find hope as we navigate life's challenges.

Prayer: Thank You for the wisdom, encouragement, and hope found in Your Word. Help me to seek out Your Scriptures daily.

How does God's Word inspire hope in your daily life?

Spend time each day reading a verse or chapter of the Bible. In stillness reflect on its application to your current life circumstances.



God Is Hope

There's more to come: We continue to shout our praise even when we're hemmed in with troubles, because we know how troubles can develop passionate patience in us, and how that patience in turn forges the tempered steel of virtue, keeping us alert for whatever God will do next. In alert expectancy such as this, we're never left feeling shortchanged. Quite the contrary - we can't round up enough containers to hold everything God generously pours into our lives through the Holy Spirit!

Romans 5: 3-5 Message



And endurance develops strength of character, and character strengthens our confident hope of salvation. And this hope will not lead to disappointment. For we know how dearly God loves us, because He has given us the Holy Spirit to fill our hearts with His love.

Romans 5:4-5 NLT

We put our hope in a lot of things . . . a winning sports teams, receiving a raise at work, being able to finish a long run, and . . . hope in each other. The reality is, many times the very thing we think of and wish for lets us down. In Romans Paul writes that hope in God is not wishful thinking but rather a confident expectation of His promises. Paul acknowledges everything is not okay in this world. He encourages us that the trials and

challenges we face are temporary . . . *There's more to come.* God will have the final word; one day we will be with Him and sin and suffering will be no more.

The hope the Holy Spirit has poured into us is that of eternal life with God. We are not trusting in a God who might let us down and not deliver on His promise of salvation and heaven. The cross and resurrection of Jesus are the real expression of the hope we have been given.

Prayer: Father, thank You for the wonderful hope we have in You. Thank You for the love You have poured into us through Your Holy Spirit.

Pause in the midst of the troubles of this life with all its unknowns and quiet your heart in prayer. Let His Word fill your heart and mind. Accept the peace our Lord provides and acknowledge the hope you have in God.

Prayer Sustains Hope

Rejoice in our confident hope. Be patient in trouble, and keep on praying. Romans 12:12

"When you call on Me, when you come and pray to Me, I'll listen. "When you come looking for Me, you'll find Me. Jeremiah 29:12-13

How much of our lives does God have? How much of our lives do we allow God to be part of? Do we think about and talk to God only at certain times of the day?

Many people think that God is someone to talk to when they need or want something. Or they think God is someone to talk to first thing in the morning and then don't think about Him the rest of the day. The reality is God desires to be the central part of our life all day, every day. He wants to be part of a very personal relationship with us.

Prayer is the simple act of talking with God. When we pray we spiritually stand before the very throne of our Heavenly Father. God desires we pray to Him because He loves us; we were created to fellowship with Him. Consider the feeling of loving someone so much you cannot wait until you can talk with them again. Think about how often during the day your thoughts turn toward that person you love. That is how God feels about us.

Our Father in Heaven loves us and wants us to talk with Him. We don't have to wait for our quiet time or for a specific need to arise. We can talk with God at any moment. The reasons to pray are endless. Prayer is sharing with our loving Father those things of our heart, our thoughts, emotions, requests, needs, cares, anxieties, and worries. Prayer is talking about our hopes and desires and offering praises and thanksgiving. Prayer is simply sharing our lives with Him.

We can talk with God throughout the day because He is present in every aspect of our lives. Our God is everywhere and in every situation. We can speak to Him knowing He is present. We can communicate with God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit about every detail of our day. We are God's children and have the privilege of speaking directly and intimately with Him. Don't make prayer complicated. Talk with God throughout every day as if you are having a conversation with a friend. He is King of creation, but He is also our caring and loving Father.



Prayer: Thank You Lord that You are present and want to hear from us. Thank You for the gift of prayer and the hope it instills in our hearts.

Worship our God by sharing your life with Him.

This Christmas season take the everyday things you do and let them be reminders for you to pray. Let your everyday life become a conversation with God.

Hope Gives Peace

I pray that God, the source of hope, will fill you completely with joy and peace because you trust in Him. Then you will overflow with confident hope through the power of the Holy Spirit. Romans 15:13

Jesus is the Prince of Peace. He has provided all that is needed for peace to be known. He taught us to love our neighbors as we love ourselves. He told us to turn the other cheek, tolerate each other's weaknesses, go the extra mile, forgive, live humbly, and live to serve one another with love as He loves us.

As He was leaving earth to return to Heaven Jesus said "I am leaving you with a gift -- peace of mind and heart." John 14: 27

Peace has been given to us; living in peace is up to us. Paul writes in Philippians a prescription for living in peace.

Always be full of joy in the Lord. I say it again -- rejoice! Let everyone see that you are considerate in all you do. Remember, the Lord is coming soon. Don't worry about anything; instead, pray about everything. Tell God what you need, and thank Him for all He has done. If you do this, you will experience God's peace, which is far more wonderful than the human mind can understand. His peace will guard your hearts and minds as you live in Christ Jesus. And now, dear brothers and sisters, let me say one more thing as I close this letter. Fix your thoughts on what is true and honorable and right. Think about things that are pure and lovely and admirable. Think about things that are excellent and worthy of praise. Keep putting into practice all you learned from me and heard from me and saw me doing, and the God of peace will be with you. Philippians 4: 4-9

Let God, *the source of hope*, be your joy; not the material things of this world. Live gently and humbly considering the needs of others at all times. Have a confident expectation that God knows your circumstances and will answer your prayers. Express gratitude for His faithfulness to us. Meditate upon His Word, soak in His presence.

Glory to God in the highest heaven, and peace on earth to all whom God favors. Luke 2:14

Prayer: Lord, may your Holy Spirit fill me to overflowing with confident hope, joy, and peace.

How will you choose to pursue peace?



Eternal Faith, Hope and Love

Three things will last forever—faith, hope, and love—and the greatest of these is love.

1 Corinthians 13:13

So now I am giving you a new commandment: Love each other. Just as I have loved you, you should love each other. Your love for one another will prove to the world that you are My disciples.

John 13:34-35

We know what real love is because Christ gave up His life for us. And so we also ought to give up our lives for our Christian brothers and sisters. 1 John 3:16

The command we have from Christ is blunt: Loving God includes loving people. You've got to love both. 1 John 4:21

In the life of a believer faith, hope, and love are woven together to form the very essence of the Christian life. Faith inspires hope, hope sustains our faith journey, and love is the action that reveals our faith to the world.

Dear friends, let us continue to love one another, for love comes from God. Anyone who loves is born of God and knows God. But anyone who does not love does not know God -- for God is love.

1 John 4:7-8

Love begins and ends with God. God's character is love and everything He does is good and done in perfect love. Because we have been created in His image we are able to love and we are full of good! Our ability to love others is a supernatural experience that comes from the presence of the Holy Spirit in our lives. Our love for others is so much more than a feeling; it is a lifestyle, a choice we make daily. We can choose to express love for others in many ways. Perhaps it is offering your place in a store checkout line to a mother with a cartful of groceries and a tired child, simply sitting alongside someone who has received unsettling news, shaking the hand of a new acquaintance and inviting them to join you for coffee, or celebrating the success and achievement of someone with whom you work. Small acts of kindness done with no expectation of return are examples of Christian love. Loving others is about giving to them hope, respect, mercy and meeting their needs. It is about loving selflessly.

Prayer: Father God, thank You for the eternal gift of faith, hope, and love.

Worship God by loving others in appreciation of His great love for you. Ask God to open your eyes, your ears and your heart to someone you can love today. Live to love!



Hope Hangs On

So we're not giving up. How could we! Even though on the outside it often looks like things are falling apart on us, on the inside, where God is making new life, not a day goes by without his unfolding grace. These hard times are small potatoes compared to the coming good times, the lavish celebration prepared for us. There's far more here than meets the eye. The things we see now are here today, gone tomorrow. But the things we can't see now will last forever.

2 Corinthians 4:16-18

For we live by believing and not by seeing. 2 Corinthians 5:7

In this passage, Paul is writing to the church in Corinth encouraging them to maintain courage and hope in the midst of the challenges they were facing; challenges that included false prophets, a divided church, and sexual immorality. He declares *"we're not giving up."*

There is no one better than Paul to give this encouragement. Paul has been beaten, stoned, survived a shipwreck, and endured hard labor, sleeplessness, and hunger. It is likely he no longer sees or hears well. He would be aware of his wrinkled face and hands and that he no longer possesses the strength he once did. And yet, despite his own personal challenges Paul encouraged God's people to not lose heart when trouble comes our way.



Paul lived in two distinct realities; the temporary known world around us and the eternal unseen world of God's Kingdom. Because of this Paul was able to tell us to hang on and even triumph when we are discouraged by the injustice we see in this world, broken relationships, difficult work situations, financial struggles, or a health crisis. Paul is reminding us the problems we experience are temporary but the hope we have in Jesus is eternal.

Our troubles are temporary but our faith is everlasting. We find strength to face our trials with hope and joy by living confidently in the eternal glory that God has prepared for us.

Prayer: Lord, help us to see you more clearly.

What are the situations in our world, in your life that you need encouragement to sustain courage and hope through? Spend a few moments in prayer over this.

Don't give up! Pursue strengthening your spiritual life through prayer, scripture reading and the support of your church community.

Confident Hope

I pray that your hearts will be flooded with light so that you can understand the confident hope He has given to those He called—His holy people who are His rich and glorious inheritance. I also pray that you will understand the incredible greatness of God's power for us who believe Him. This is the same mighty power that raised Christ from the dead and seated Him in the place of honor at God's right hand in the heavenly realms. Ephesians 1:18-20

Paul is praying the Ephesian believers would understand the hope of our calling in Christ. This hope is not wishful thinking. It's a sure, unshakable confidence in God's promises.

For we are God's masterpiece. He has created us anew in Christ Jesus, so that we can do the good things He planned for us long ago. Ephesians 2:10

For God, who said, "Let there be light in the darkness," has made us understand that this light is the brightness of the glory of God that is seen in the face of Jesus Christ. But this precious treasure -- this light and power that now shine within us -- is held in perishable containers, that is, in our weak bodies. So everyone can see that our glorious power is from God and is not our own.

2 Corinthians 4:6-7

Do you know your worth?

We are God's best! We are made in the image of the perfect and holy God. And, what is the precious treasure God has placed inside us? It is knowledge of God our Father; knowledge of our great and glorious God. It is the treasure of the presence of Christ dwelling within us. It is the very breath of God inside us, and His intent for our existence. It is His indescribable love, the immeasurable love He has invested in us, that makes us worthy. We are to base our value upon our Creator who gave His Son for our salvation.



Until we understand who God is we are unable to fully realize how valuable we are. Our worth is in Him. We must discipline ourselves to practice being in the presence of God so that we may intimately know our Father.

"The greatest value in the universe is found in the heart of God's people. You are treasured, cherished, and loved beyond measure." – Max Lucado

"The same power that raised Jesus from the dead is the power available to you today, to transform, to heal, and to bring hope." – Christine Caine

Prayer: Father God, may we embrace Your vision of us as Your holy people with the incredible greatness of Your power to love and serve others.

Put on some instrumental music; play it softly. Settle yourself in a comfortable place, close your eyes and invite God's presence. Simply enjoy His love.

Determined Hope

I'm not saying that I have this all together, that I have it made. But I am well on my way, reaching out for Christ, who has so wondrously reached out for me. Friends, don't get me wrong: By no means do I count myself an expert in all of this, but I've got my eye on the goal, where God is beckoning us onward—to Jesus. I'm off and running, and I'm not turning back.

Philippians 3:12-14 Message

I don't mean to say that I have already achieved these things or that I have already reached perfection. But I press on to possess that perfection for which Christ Jesus first possessed me. No, dear brothers and sisters, I have not achieved it, but I focus on this one thing: Forgetting the past and looking forward to what lies ahead, I press on to reach the end of the race and receive the heavenly prize for which God, through Christ Jesus is calling us. Philippians 3:12-14 NLT



Paul is encouraging us to look ahead with hope and determination because Jesus has made it possible for us to lay down our regrets and embrace the grace and forgiveness He offers. Our journey of faith can move forward pursuing the purpose and calling that God has given us. It is about living in a way that allows us to become more like Christ every day.

As followers of Jesus our aim is to learn to be like Him. Jesus begins His work within us through the Holy Spirit, as we are, but calls us to grow up in spiritual maturity. Being His follower is about committing to a lifestyle of learning and growing. Being a Christian moves beyond believing in Him to

becoming like Him. Being a follower of Jesus is learning to walk a Kingdom lifestyle on this earth. It is in our day to day living that we have opportunities to become more and more Christ like. A growing maturing faith is one that models the actions of Jesus. When presented with hunger He fed people. In the presence of sickness He ministered with physical healing. This was the normal lifestyle of Jesus and His disciples.

The Holy Spirit working within us transforms us into the image of Jesus. It is not our effort that changes our behavior but His power. God began the work within us at creation, creating us in His own image, and then sent Jesus to complete it. When we accepted Christ as our Savior we were justified or made right with God. We are now in the life long process of sanctification or being made Christ like. And, when we pass into eternity and join our King we will be glorified; that is the heavenly prize we press on and run towards.

Prayer: Lord, help me to look ahead with hope and anticipation for the future

Is your faith journey one that has moved beyond believing in Jesus to the pursuit of becoming like Him? Jesus is asking us to press on. It is in our homes, our jobs, among our friends and in all the places we live our lives that we can choose to learn to live like Jesus. Study His Word. Walk a Kingdom lifestyle. Love others and meet their spiritual, emotional and physical needs.

Hope of Glory

The mystery in a nutshell is just this: Christ is in you, so therefore you can look forward to sharing in God's glory. It's that simple. Colossians 1:27

The mystery Paul reveals is Christ in us, our hope of glory. It is not a concept to be pondered, but rather as Christians, it is our reality that Jesus Christ, by His Holy Spirit, lives in us. It is not about imitating Jesus, but allowing His Spirit to transform our lives.

My old self has been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me.

Galatians 2:20



May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

2 Corinthians 13:14

But when the Father sends the Counselor as My representative -- and by the Counselor I mean the Holy Spirit - He will teach you everything and will remind you of everything I myself have told you. John 14:26

When the Spirit of truth comes, He will guide you into all truth. He will not be presenting His own ideas; He will be telling you what He has heard. He will tell you about the future. He will bring Me glory by revealing to you whatever He receives from Me. All that the Father has is Mine; this is what I mean when I say that the Spirit will reveal to you whatever He receives from Me. John 16:13-15

Jesus counseled that the Holy Spirit would become our counselor, teacher and guide in this life. His knowledge is infinitely greater than ours. The Holy Spirit knows the very secrets of Heaven; He has access to the heart of our Father so that whatever is spoken in the throne room of Heaven the Holy Spirit hears and communicates to us. The very presence of the Holy Spirit in our lives empowers us to walk in a manner worthy of living as a child of God.

Our fellowship with the Holy Spirit is about opening the most intimate parts of ourselves to His influence and leading. As we pursue the fellowship of the Spirit His character traits become predominant in us and we will grow into all that God intended.

Prayer: Lord Jesus I pray that Your Spirit in me grows deeper and stronger, and brings me into a closer likeness of You.

Christ in me, the hope of glory. Take a couple of minutes to close your eyes and think on and pray about this. Whisper this truth out loud: *"Christ lives in me."* Repeat it slowly. Let it move from your lips into your mind, then into your heart until it becomes more than words, but is your reality. And then, let Christ live through you and into the world.

Enduring Hope

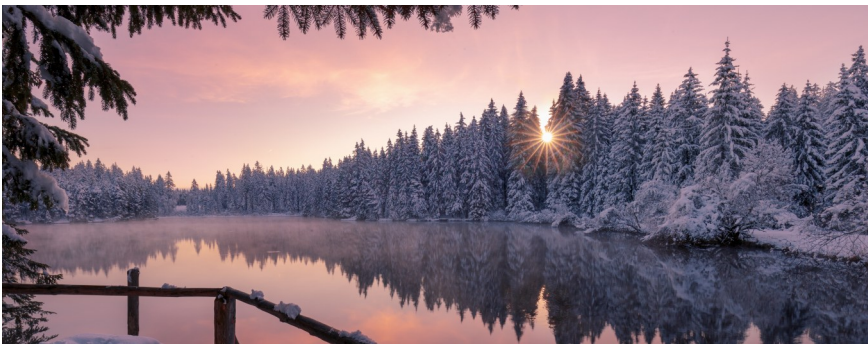
As we pray to our God and Father about you, we think of your faithful work, your loving deeds, and the enduring hope you have because of our Lord Jesus Christ. 1 Thessalonians 1:3 NLT

Every time we think of you, we thank God for you. Day and night you're in our prayers as we call to mind your work of faith, your labor of love, and your patience of hope in following our Master, Jesus Christ, before God our Father. It is clear to us, friends, that God not only loves you very much but also has put His hand on you for something special. 1 Thessalonians 1:2-5 Message

Faith, love, and hope are the foundation of the Christian life individually and in the church as the community of faith.

Faithful work is seen in the belief that trusts God's promises and in the service of others. The labor of love is a commitment to serve others, even when it is challenging to do so. Patient enduring hope is the reliance on God's promises that sustain our faith journey.

Our example of service is Jesus who descended from the throne room to model for us compassion and love for all people, even *"the least of these."* Jesus spent time with people we would consider unappealing . . . Jesus hung out with the poor, the outcast, the lonely, sinners, prostitutes, tax collectors, adulterers, lepers, cheats, thieves, drunkards, idolaters, and murderers; the unclean. He



He talked with them, ate with them, touched them and genuinely cared for them. His expectation is that we will do the same.

What if we were to view every person we encounter as embodying the very presence of Christ. Would we be

changed? How much kinder would we be? How much more welcoming? How much more would we genuinely care about their hardships, difficulties, and physical needs? Do people see the love of God radiating from within us, or do they see barriers between us and those who are different? Can people see that we are followers of King Jesus; does our life look like His?

What we do and how we live matters. We can live with abundant purpose. As we face each new day, we can do so with faith, trusting that God is at work to accomplish His purposes. We can serve those around us with deep love knowing that every person we encounter is in the image of God. We can endure and overcome every challenge because of the hope we have in Christ - a better day awaits us.

Follow God's example in everything you do, because you are His dear children. Live a life filled with love for others, following the example of Christ, who loved you and gave Himself as a sacrifice to take away your sins. And God was pleased, because that sacrifice was like sweet perfume to Him. Ephesians 5:1-2

Prayer: Lord, help me to keep my eyes on You and to faithfully labor in love for Your creation.

Consider where your life journey this week will cross paths with "the least of these." How will you imitate the ministry of Jesus when your paths cross?

12/16/25

Hope in the Eternal



I, Paul, am God's slave and Christ's agent for promoting the faith among God's chosen people, getting out the accurate word on God and how to respond rightly to it. My aim is to raise hopes by pointing the way to life without end. This is the life God promised long ago—and He doesn't break promises. Titus 1:1-2

For He has rescued us from the one who rules in the kingdom of darkness, and He has brought us into the Kingdom of His dear Son. Colossians 1:13

This world exists in the midst of a conflict between two kingdoms. There is the kingdom of darkness where Satan is allowed to rule and the eternal Kingdom of God where Jesus is Savior and Lord.

Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, came to earth to set us free from the rule of the kingdom of darkness. On the cross Christ set us free to live forever in God's Kingdom. God's Kingdom is not a distant place we aspire to but, rather the Kingdom of God is here, present among believers today. God's Kingdom is present within each believer at the moment salvation reconciles us to God.

Kingdom living occurs when we allow God to rule every area of our lives. Kingdom living is trusting that God will and does provide all that we need. We experience Kingdom living when we truly know that all we are and all we have is best lived in the everlasting love of our Father.

Prayer: God, my hope is in You. Thank You for rescuing me from the kingdom of darkness and setting me free to live eternally in the Kingdom of Jesus Christ.

Every day we face a battle deciding which kingdom we will live in. Make a commitment today to choose God's Kingdom. Live as a Kingdom person by acknowledging God's presence in each moment and space of your life.

Shared Hope

.. let us hold tightly without wavering to the hope we affirm, for God can be trusted to keep His promise. Let us think of ways to motivate one another to acts of love and good works. And let us not neglect our meeting together, as some people do, but encourage one another, especially now that the day of His return is drawing near. Hebrews 10: 24-25 NLT

So let's do it - full of belief, confident that we're presentable inside and out. Let's keep a firm grip on the promises that keep us going. He always keeps His word. Let's see how inventive we can be in encouraging love and helping out, not avoiding worshiping together as some do but spurring each other on, especially as we see the big Day approaching. Hebrews 10:22-25 Message

What good fellowship we enjoyed as we walked together to the house of God. Psalm 55:14

An intentional fellowship with other believers is spoken of multiple times in the New Testament and is the model of how the church is to live in relationship to one another. It is our fellowship with other believers that makes a church more than a congregation, but rather the living breathing Body of Christ. It is a relationship based on our being joined with other believers as the family of God. Joined together in the Body of Christ, we become interdependent upon one another for our spiritual growth and health. Our fellowship is a coming together to do and talk about the things of God. Fellowship is praying together, serving together, giving together and sharing all of life with one another. The more we grow in our relationship with God the more we will long to be in the presence of His people.

It is not possible to love God and not spend time in fellowship with each other. Time spent with each other becomes the practice field for the love we are called to demonstrate to the world.

.. But if we walk in the light, God Himself being the light, we also experience a shared life with one another . . . 1 John 1:7

Fellowship is our privilege and blessing whether it occurs in church, a Bible study, a small group or among our family.

Prayer: Father God, thank You for the fellowship of our church family.

What opportunities for fellowship do you have in your life? When you spend time with believers, is there a mix of fun and a deeper purpose? Do you have a group of friends with whom you share life and who will graciously come alongside you and help you back up when you fall? Do you have a group with whom you regularly pray? Are there others who will join you in walking out your faith in service to our church and community?

Choose to worship God in the fellowship of His family. If you desire connection with a small group or bible study group reach out to Ericka in the church office and she will help put you in touch with the family of believers at Grace.



Faithful Hope

Faith shows the reality of what we hope for; it is the evidence of things we cannot see.

Hebrews 11:1

For we live by believing and not by seeing. 2 Corinthians 5:7

Faith is not based upon what we see. Faith is built upon trusting God no matter our circumstances. Faith is a confidence in God's promises, even when we cannot yet physically see the outcome.

We all experience days when people in our lives let us down, when our prayers do not have an immediate or visible answer, or when this life takes a completely unexpected turn. Faith allows us to rely upon our God when nothing seems clear. It is the continued belief that God is in control; given faith our hope remains alive.

We can exercise and grow our faith by reading Scripture, communicating with God through prayer, and reminding ourselves that His timing is perfect. Our faith grows as we are obedient to God, obeying His Word by living it out in our daily lives. We choose to obey God and we do so out of our love for Him and our trust that He is a good Father who desires only the best for us; He promises our obedience will bring great joy. Being obedient to God is not simply keeping the commands He has given us but it is about maintaining a heart focused on Him.

We can trust in God's goodness even though we may not fully understand His ways; Webster's dictionary defines trust as "to rely on the truthfulness of, to place confidence in, to hope or expect confidently." Our faith is strengthened when we continue our faith walk despite the twists and turns of life that make us stumble; we get back up and keep walking!

Trust God from the bottom of your heart; don't try to figure out everything on your own. Listen for God's voice in everything you do, everywhere you go; He's the one who will keep you on track.

Proverbs 3:5-6

Prayer: LORD, thank you for the gift of faith. Teach me to trust You fully and rely upon Your promises.

What are the seeming impossibilities in your life, in your marriage, with your children and family members or friends? Pray against giving in to the worry, fear and doubt that are of this world.



Worship God by acknowledging He is more powerful than any circumstance of this life. Thank God that nothing is beyond His attention or too difficult for Him. Have faith in His limitless possibilities.

Close your eyes and simply listen to Father God. In what circumstance is He asking you to express faith? Spend a few moments in prayer over this.

Hope in Salvation

So prepare your minds for action and exercise self-control. Put all your hope in the gracious salvation that will come to you when Jesus Christ is revealed to the world. 1 Peter 1:13

Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!
2 Corinthians 5:17

And when Christ, who is your real life, is revealed to the whole world, you will share in all His glory.
Colossians 3: 1-4

We have become His! Once we were dead, doomed forever because of our sins. But now we are alive! We are new beings in Christ Jesus. Our new and right relationship with God is based upon the



baby boy sent to deliver us. Since we have been raised to new life with Christ, set your sights on the realities of heaven, where Christ sits at God's right hand in the place of honor and power. Do not think only about things down here on earth but let heaven fill your thoughts.

Hold fast to the hope we have in salvation. Allow the world to see in our lives the reflection of Christ in whom we are being sanctified. And, one day this new life in

Christ will be fully realized, visible for all to see. Jesus will appear in glory and we will be with Him.

By our identification with Jesus our past sins and guilt have been buried with Him and we have been raised anew to walk in His love, power, and authority. Like Christ we have been seated in heaven. Our physical position may be on earth, but our spiritual position *is "in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus."* *Ephesians 2:6*

For this is the secret: Christ lives in you, and this is your assurance that you will share in His glory.
Colossians 1:27

These truths give us security for today and hope for what is to come. They strengthen us along our faith journey. Jesus Christ is our hope for eternity. What a privilege to be His, made new by His saving grace.

Be renewed. Let heaven fill your thoughts this Christmas season.

Prayer: Father God, thank You for the hopeful anticipation of all that is to come. Thank You for my seat in heaven with Jesus.

Write a Scripture that God brings to you, through devotions or meditation, on a note card. Place the note card in a place where you will see it throughout the day . . . on the front seat of your car, on your desktop or on the kitchen counter. Pray the Scripture for yourself and others in your life throughout the day.

The Light of Hope

You are the light of the world -- like a city on a mountain, glowing in the night for all to see. Don't hide your light under a basket! Instead, put it on a stand and let it shine for all. In the same way, let your good deeds shine out for all to see, so that everyone will praise your heavenly Father.

Matthew 5:14-16

"No longer will you need the sun or moon to give you light, for the LORD your God will be your Everlasting Light, and He will be your glory. The sun will never set; the moon will not go down. For the LORD will be your Everlasting Light. Isaiah 60:19-20

At the birth of Jesus people saw a great light. Light represents the very presence of God bringing salvation and blessing to His people. The birth of Jesus brought the reality of a new day with God, the Everlasting Light, whose faithfulness to us is an encouragement to embrace hope in the daily walk of our faith journey.

Light has several properties; it illuminates, energizes and reflects. Our source of light is the very life of Christ within us. This light radiates from within our hearts and minds and it is our responsibility to make every effort to let His Everlasting Light shine clearly in this world. We are *the light of the world*.

Do our actions illuminate and serve those who need His love the most? Do we allow His light to energize us to serve others as a way of life. Do we reflect the image of Jesus to this world? He is reflected to those among us when we fill ourselves to overflowing with the presence of His Holy Spirit and serve with a sense of celebration that glorifies our God. Live a cross shaped life with arms wide open to receive and give!

Christmas is a time for giving, sharing, and spreading hope to others. Let's be vessels of hope and light as we celebrate this beautiful season together!

"The place God calls you to is the place where your deep gladness and the world's deep hunger meet." ~ Fredrick Buechner

Prayer: LORD, may I illuminate and reflect the life of Jesus in all I am and all I do.

How are you reflecting the light of His presence in the lives of your family, friends, and community? Share with God what energizes you and ask where He is calling you to serve His people.



Hope In Us

God spoke: "Let us make human beings in our image, make them reflecting our nature . . ."
Genesis 1:26

Then the LORD God formed the man from the dust of the ground. He breathed the breath of life into the man's nostrils, and the man became a living person. Genesis 2:7

You made all the delicate, inner parts of my body and knit me together in my mother's womb. Thank you for making me so wonderfully complex! Your workmanship is marvelous -- and how well I know it. Psalm 139: 13-14

And His name will be the hope of all the world. Matthew 12:21

It was an intimate creation of mankind. God knows us completely. He made us and breathed the very breath of life into us. We are fearfully and wonderfully made, as are all people on earth.

What if we truly believed that each person we encounter is fearfully and wonderfully made by the God who loves them? Would we judge people by how they look, by the color of their skin, by their circumstance in life if we truly believed they were created in the very image of our God? Or would we look at the character, the inner being, to understand what matters most?



The God who made us made hope available and placed the very Spirit of Hope, Jesus, within us. God invested the very essence of Himself into us for a reason . . . *this is what He requires of us: to do what is right, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with Him . . .* Micah 6:8

This incredible gift of a life sustained by Jesus, our hope, has been given to us to glorify God by bringing good to the world.

Prayer: Thank you God for breathing life into me, for loving me and sustaining me with hope.

Take time to reflect on the truth that God fearfully and wonderfully made you. Celebrate your uniqueness and ask Him to reveal to you the people and places you can share His goodness and hope.

Celebration of Hope

The Savior -- yes, the Messiah, the Lord -- has been born tonight in Bethlehem, the city of David!
Luke 2:11

Christmas is the most anticipated and celebrated birthday in all of history. It is the birthday of Jesus! Hope came into the world with the birth of Jesus. It is the birthday of the child who was fully God, yet like us in every way; Immanuel, our God with us.

We see His life unfold in the Scriptures much in the way parents record with photographs the joy of their own children. There is the infant in the manger wrapped in swaddling clothes. We see Jesus the boy in His Father's house. We see Him as a young man beginning His ministry. He is seen in the desert wrestling against Satan. We see Jesus loving children and understand He knows what it is to be a child. When we see Him on the cross it is with the knowledge He feels the pain that we feel. And, then we see Him triumphant and risen from the grave restored to His heavenly throne.

This is a life that deserves more than one day of birthday celebration! This is a life that deserves to daily be celebrated with adoration and worship. Jesus deserves the gift of every treasure we possess offered up to Him.

Yours, O LORD, is the greatness, the power, the glory, the victory, and the majesty. Everything in the heavens and on earth is Yours, O LORD, and this is Your kingdom. We adore You as the One who is over all things. 1 Chronicles 29:11

For a child is born to us, a son is given to us. And the government will rest on His shoulders. These will be His royal titles: Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. His ever expanding, peaceful government will never end. He will rule forever with fairness and justice from the throne of His ancestor David.. Isaiah 9:6-7

All glory to Him, who alone is God our Savior, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Yes, glory, majesty, power, and authority belong to Him, in the beginning, now, and forevermore. Amen. Jude 1:25

Prayer: Lord Jesus, we celebrate all that You are in our lives. We worship and adore You.



Share with God what His royal titles, listed in Isaiah, mean in your life.

Consider how you will make the celebration of Jesus a daily part of your life.

Hope is Born

And while they were there, the time came for her baby to be born. She gave birth to her firstborn son. She wrapped Him snugly in strips of cloth and laid Him in a manger, because there was no lodging available for them. Luke 2:6-7

Your attitude should be the same that Christ Jesus had. Though He was God, He did not demand and cling to His rights as God. He made Himself nothing; He took the humble position of a slave and appeared in human form. And in human form He obediently humbled Himself even further by dying a criminal's death on a cross. Because of this, God raised Him up to the heights of heaven and gave Him a name that is above every other name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee will bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. Philippians 2: 5-11

It was time to leave Heaven and become a baby, born to save His creation. Jesus, Lord of all, Creator of the universe, the Mighty God left His throne to come to earth.

Jesus was not created. He has always been. Jesus was present at creation forming the sun, the moon, the stars, the oceans, all creatures, and us. He existed with God and was God. Christ left His heavenly dwelling so that we could be justified, made right, to live in eternal fellowship with Father God. Jesus, the baby in the manger, came so that we can experience the eternal glory of Heaven.



And when He came it was with all humility, bearing the heart of a servant. Jesus gave up everything . . . streets of gold, gates of pearl, the glory of the Father . . . because of His great love for us. He came as a baby in a manger and grew up to die on a cross as sacrifice for our sins. Jesus lived life on this earth with the purpose of restoring us to a right relationship with God. He lived among us teaching us to love and serve with the heart of our Father. And, now He lives, restored to His rightful position in the throne room . . . Jesus King of kings. Hallelujah!

Jesus' earthly life, from birth to death to resurrection, gives us hope.

Prayer: Father God, thank You for the living hope that is Jesus.

Consider who you can serve humbly with the heart of a servant. Take care of an outside chore for a neighbor - shovel snow, rake leaves, sweep the front steps. Pay for someone's coffee. Provide a meal to someone in need.

Hope Has Arrived

Our King... left His heavenly throne to be born in a manger. He was worshipped by men and angels. Our King was fully man yet fully God. He healed, served, taught and gave His life for us. Our King defeated death, giving each of us the promise of eternal life!

How can we live to honor our King? How do we allow the hope of Christmas to transform us?

My beloved friends, let us continue to love each other since love comes from God. Everyone who loves is born of God and experiences a relationship with God. 1 John 4:7

Love His people. Pray for others. Speak words of blessing. Be friendly. Be helpful. Spend time listening.

Never stop praying. 1 Thessalonians 5:17

Be continually aware of God around you and the people, places and experiences in which you encounter Him. Be in ongoing conversation, talking and listening to our LORD.

I have given you an example to follow. John 13:15

Have the love and courage to be the heart, hands, feet, and voice of Jesus. See this world with His eyes, hear with His ears. Imitate Jesus' example of humble servanthood.

Jesus replied, "All those who love Me will do what I say. My Father will love them, and We will come to them and live with them. John 14:23

Be obedient. Read the Bible so you can be taught by God, so that you can learn the ways of Christ and follow His teachings. Join a small group of believers so you may be discipled, encouraged and held accountable to the Word.

God lifted Him high and honored Him far beyond anyone or anything, ever, so that all created beings in heaven and on earth - even those long ago dead and buried - will bow in worship before this Jesus Christ, and call out in praise that He is the Master of all, to the glorious honor of God the Father. Philippians 2: 9-11

Praising God is our ultimate purpose. It is our destiny as believers. Praise is the highest form of honor we can give our King.

Prayer: Lord Jesus may we honor You with all of our life each and every day.



How does your life honor God?
How do you reflect the hope of Jesus to this world?

Choose to love His people today.
Smile, make conversation with someone new, thank store clerks, hold the door open for someone, return someone's shopping cart. Thank God for the people He brought to you to love today.

Hope was the theme for Advent. As believers we are able to have hope and hold fast to it because of the promises of our God. God's promises never fail, they are living truth for us today and for all our tomorrows. His promises speak healing, love, and peace, keep us grounded in His truth, reflect the unchanging nature of God, align our prayers with His Word, and are meant for us as the Church and for us individually as His beloved children.

Let's conclude the final 12 days of Advent by reflecting on some of those promises.

December 26 God Will Never Leave Us

So be strong and courageous! Do not be afraid and do not panic before them. For the LORD your God will personally go ahead of you. He will neither fail you nor abandon you.

Deuteronomy 31:6

God's presence is constant whether we feel it or not. Our LORD is with us in the unknown, sits beside us in moments of fear, grief, and isolation, and stays by our side when others may abandon us.

Take a moment to acknowledge God's presence in your life and invite Him to walk with you through every moment, knowing that He is faithful and true.

December 27 God Will Provide for Our Needs

And, this same God who takes care of me will supply all your needs from His glorious riches, which have been given to us in Christ Jesus. Philippians 4:19

God will supply our needs, whether they are physical, emotional or spiritual from the abundance of heaven. God sees and will provide exactly what we need when we need it.

Identify an area of your life where you need God's provision and give it to Him in prayer. Choose faith over fear, knowing that our faithful Father is at work on your behalf.

December 28 God Will Give Us Peace

I am leaving you with a gift - peace of mind and heart. And the peace I give is a gift the world cannot give. So don't be troubled or afraid. John 14:27

Access to His peace is always present and not dependent on circumstances. We have the presence of the Holy Spirit calming our minds and hearts even in the midst of chaos.

When you feel overwhelmed, pause. Take a few deep breaths and remind yourself, "Jesus is with me. I am not alone."

December 29 God Will Give Us Strength

He gives power to the weak and strength to the powerless. Even youths will become weak and tired, and young men will fall in exhaustion. But those who trust in the LORD will find new strength. They will soar high on wings like eagles. Isaiah 40:29-31

We can rest in Him. When we feel like giving up, that we can no longer go on God steps in. He will carry what is too heavy for us until our strength is renewed.

Tell God where you're exhausted – physically, emotionally, spiritually. Invite Him to renew every part of you.

December 30 God Will Forgive and Cleanse You

But if we confess our sins to Him, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all wickedness. 1 John 1:9

No condemnation. Just forgiveness with our slate wiped clean and our soul restored.

Spend a few moments considering the sin you need to confess. Accept responsibility, confess to God and ask for forgiveness. Choose to change and do better. Then go on with your day knowing that you're forgiven

December 31 God Will Work All Things For Good

That's why we can be so sure that every detail in our lives of love for God is worked into something good. Romans 8:28

God is at work behind the scenes of our lives. He is not the author of our pain, but He does not waste a single moment to write for us a story of purpose and grace.

Begin a gratitude journal, noting daily where you see God's goodness and how He might be using your circumstances for a greater purpose.

January 1 God Will Hear Your Prayers

Call to me and I will answer you. I'll tell you marvelous and wondrous things that you could never figure out on your own. Jeremiah 33:3

God is never too busy - He is listening and He promises to respond. Know that your voice matters to the One who knows all.

Set aside specific time today to pray about one important matter, trusting that God will answer in His perfect way.

January 2 God Will Give You Wisdom

If you need wisdom, ask our generous God, and He will give it to you. James 1:5

When you're not sure what to do, pause and pray. God's wisdom is readily available and always in line with His truth.

Search through the Bible to learn what God's Word says about your need; use your Bible index or do an internet scripture search. Write down the verse or verses you find and keep that piece of paper with you to review.

January 3 God Will Fight For You

The LORD Himself will fight for you. Just stay calm. Exodus 14:14

God knows what we are up against and will fight the battle with heavenly power. Be still. Stand firm. Trust.

Pray "Lord, I release control of this situation to You. I trust You to fight for me."

January 4 God Will Complete the Work He Started In You

And I am certain that God, who began the good work within you, will continue His work until it is finally finished on the day when Jesus Christ returns. Philippians 1:6

God started a good work in us and will not give up until it is completed. We are works in progress and our best is yet to come!

Reflect on your faith journey. Where are the places you have grown, what are the lessons you have learned, how does your faith walk look different today from what it was at various stages of your life? Thank God for the good work He is still doing in you.

January 5 God Has Conquered The World

In this godless world you will continue to experience difficulties. But take heart! I've conquered the world. John 16:33

Jesus has triumphed over the world. Stand strong in difficulty and let His hope and encouragement provide true peace.

Find someone you can help. Sometimes, helping another person can remind you that you're not alone—and it helps bring peace to both of you.

January 6 God Has Given Believers Eternal Life

For this is how God loved the world; He gave His one and only Son, so that everyone who believes in Him will not perish but have eternal life. John 3:16

In His great great love for us God has given the gift of His Son, Jesus Christ, and the invitation to receive eternal life.

Share hope with those around you by making a conscious choice to let God's love shine through your actions.

Happy New Year!

Have a blessed journey with our God!