



ADVENT

AT CROSSPOINT

Advent—the four weeks preceding Christmas—is a season of active waiting. The word Advent means “coming” or “arrival,” and this season has traditionally been a time of celebration and anticipation; we celebrate Jesus’ first Advent, and we urgently anticipate his promised second Advent.

Advent is all about Jesus. The daily Scriptures listed in this guide point to the character and work of the person Jesus. As we celebrate Advent, our focus is on Jesus and the implications of the God-man for us today. We not only remember Jesus’ first Advent, but we look forward to the day when King Jesus will return at his second Advent and free us from sin, injustice, and brokenness forever.

We await this second Advent actively. It’s marked by the mission of God where our hearts, hands, and homes become instruments of hope and healing. It’s a waiting where we learn to love God with all of our heart, soul, mind, and strength and love our neighbors as ourselves. We participate in shaping the world God has placed us in to reflect the ethics of Jesus, who ushered in a kingdom that both has come and has yet to fully arrive.

PRAYER & READING GUIDE | ADVENT 2023

WEEK 1: Hope

Pray that we, as the family of CrossPoint, would seek God expectantly, out of the hope of what he has done and intends to do.

Pray that our service would cause others to place their hope in Christ.

Pray that we would generously give out of a hope found in God with eyes on eternity, not out of our present or unknown future circumstances.

Daily Rhythm for Scripture Passages

PAUSE: Spend a few minutes in silence. Ask the Holy Spirit to speak to you through God's Word.

READ: Slowly read each passage of Scripture. Reflect on the words of God.

REFLECT: Use a journal or space provided in this guide to reflect and pray.

LISTEN: Take a moment and just be. Listen to what the Spirit is saying to your heart.

PRACTICE: Faithfully respond to what God has said to you during this time.

ENCOURAGE/SHARE: Interact with others about what God is saying to you through your time with him.

Scripture Passages

December 3 — Isaiah 53v1-12

December 4 — Romans 15v13

December 5 — Romans 8v22-25

December 6 — Hebrews 10v22-23

December 7 — Isaiah 40v29-31

December 8 — 1 Thessalonians 1v1-5

December 9 — Psalm 147v10-11

“Father, may the hope we have found in you, cause us to bring our petitions to you with expectant hearts; knowing you are the God who was, is, and is to come!”

“Holy Spirit, allow our service to others to not be recognized as good works alone, but inspire others to place their hope in you.”

“Jesus, place in us generous hearts to give, not determined by what has already been done, but the hope and vision of what you intend to do in the season ahead.”

WEEK 2: Peace

Pray that those who seek God would be met with his peace, regardless of current struggles.

Pray that as we serve, we would be ministers of God's peace in a world in chaos and disorder.

Pray that the manner of our giving would bring peace to the giver and receiver.

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Scripture Passages

December 10 — Luke 2v1-6; Isaiah 9v6

December 11 — John 16v29-33

December 12 — Isaiah 26v3-4

December 13 — Romans 12v17-18

December 14 — Philippians 4v6-7

December 15 — 2 Corinthians 13v11

December 16 — 2 Thessalonians 3v16

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WEEK 3: Joy

Pray that those who are anxious, depressed, and filled with grief would have their sorrow replaced with the Lord's joy.

Pray that we would serve the community with hearts of gladness out of gratitude for the way that Jesus first served us.

Pray that God would give us "joyful hearts," eager to give, out of the abundance of what he has done for us.

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Scripture Passages

December 17 — Luke 2v8-20

December 18 — James 1v2-4

December 19 — Psalm 33v18-22

December 20 — John 15v10-11

December 21 — 1 Peter 4v12-14

December 22 — 1 Thessalonians 5v15-18

December 23 — Philippians 4v4-7

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WEEK 4: Love

Pray that the investment of time in prayer with the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit would grow our hearts to love God more fully and completely.

Pray that we would "serve one another humbly in love," as Christ modeled for us.

Pray that out of love we would give selflessly for the kingdom's best interest, expecting nothing in return.

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Scripture Passages

December 24 — 1 John 4v9-10

December 25 — 1 Corinthians 13v13

December 26 — Luke 6v35-36

December 27 — Proverbs 3v3-4

December 28 — Romans 13v8-10

December 29 — Ephesians 2v4-5

December 30 — John 15v12-14

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A Lifestyle of Prayer

Our 24/7 prayer experiences are designed to help us intentionally practice God's presence as a community. It is one way we deepen in trusting and following Jesus as his disciples.

These weeks of 24/7 prayer:

- Serve as intentional times of investment in the kingdom of God
- Create a launchpad for us as to cultivate habitual, consistent rhythms of prayer as we deepen in relationship with God
- Help us normalize prayer as we practice it in community

To understand how to have a lifestyle of prayer, we can look at the example Jesus gave during his life on earth:

Very early in the morning, while it was still dark, Jesus got up, left the house and went off to a solitary place, where he prayed. (Mark 1v35)

HAVE A CERTAIN TIME

Jesus got up early in the morning to spend time with his Heavenly Father. Make a daily appointment with God—whether first thing in the morning, at lunch, or in the evening—and faithfully keep it.

HAVE A CERTAIN PLACE

Jesus prayed at a specific place. Having a designated spot helps us remove distractions and frees us to worship and pray aloud.

HAVE A CERTAIN PLAN

This prayer guide can serve as a plan to help you pray. Also, the book of Psalms in Scripture is one giant prayer book for God's people—it's an awesome place to begin. As we pray, our plans for our prayer time may include silence, praying through Scripture, worship music, making a thanksgiving list to give God praise, writing prayers, interceding for others, praying for those who do not yet follow Jesus, or many other things.

Remember, it doesn't matter as much what you do, as much as it matters that you invest your time in pursuing the presence of God. That's a lifestyle worth cultivating.

Praying the Lord's Prayer

This, then, is how you should pray: "Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.

Give us today our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one." (Matthew 6v9-13)

"To this day I am still nursing myself on the Lord's Prayer like a child, and am still eating and drinking of it like an old man without getting bored of it." — Martin Luther

"The Lord's Prayer correctly understood is one of the high roads into the central mystery of Christian salvation and Christian experience." — N.T. Wright

"To cultivate a deeper prayer life all you have to do is say the Lord's Prayer, but take an hour to do it." — Timothy Jones

This prayer given by Jesus can be used in two quite distinct ways:

As a model. The Lord's Prayer serves as the ultimate prototype. It is a condensed liturgical poem clearly intended for frequent repetition. It teaches us what to pray.

As a map. The Lord's Prayer guides us as we express the things in our hearts. Each line can be applied and expanded in personal conversation with the Father. It teaches us how to pray.

The Lord's Prayer exercises:

- Underline each distinct phrase in the Lord's Prayer.
- Pray each distinct phrase slowly leaving a long pause between each phrase. Pray through the Lord's prayer this way a minimum of three times.
- Pray each of the phrases you have underlined one at a time. Talk to God about each phrase, one at a time. For example, the line "Our Father in heaven." Talk to God about being your Father, who is in heaven. Start there and continue with each phrase.

Intercessory Prayer

Intercession is a form of prayer rooted in our deep desire to see God radically move—to change us and circumstances around us. In this practice, we are bringing people and circumstances before God, and then waiting on the Holy Spirit to show us how to pray so we would be able to pray God's will. Remember that God's will always looks like heaven coming to earth: life over death, healing over sickness, freedom over bondage, and so on.

This practice requires slowing down to connect to God, listening, faith and boldness to ask. Prepare by putting away your phone or any other distractions. Then get comfortable.

- Begin by making a prayer card—a short list of people or circumstances where you desire to see God radically move
 - Any crises or emergencies that you are aware of
 - Any illness, financial needs, and similar situations
 - Anyone who needs healing in their marriage or in their families
- Spend a minute in silence; invite the Holy Spirit to guide you
 - Let your mind calm down
 - Take deep breaths to join your mind and body in focus on God
 - Take a couple of minutes to connect with God and listen to him
- Thank God for these three realities:
 - God is your “Father,” he has good intentions toward you, and he cares about everything in your life—small and large
 - God is “in heaven”—here, now, as close as the air around you
 - Your prayers really do make a difference
- Now pray through your prayer card.
 - Ask the Father/Jesus what he wants you to know about the person/circumstance
 - Ask him how he wants you to pray and what he wants you to ask for (on their behalf or in the circumstance)
 - Ask him to increase your faith, and then pray with boldness according to what the Spirit has shown you or said
- Close in a prayer of gratitude and expectation

Specific Prayer Needs

- Pray that you will see Jesus through fresh eyes this season and that even if you've heard the stories of Christmas countless times, they will have a powerful impact on you this year.
- Pray that people will encounter Jesus in powerful ways through our shared 24/7 prayer focus in this season. We're expecting to have powerful times of intimacy with God as we pray.
- Pray that we will experience a deeper, richer appreciation of what the Christmas season is really all about.
- Pray that families will spend time together this season in prayer, in serving through Love the Valley, and in sacrificially and prayerfully participating in our Advent Initiative special offering.
- Pray that we will launch 30 new Love the Valley projects by the end of this year, and that God would use these to impact our neighbors in meaningful, life-changing ways.
- Pray that people will respond to the challenge of our Advent Initiative special offering later this month, as we stand together to eliminate the debt on our building so we can focus more energy and resources toward Kingdom projects and priorities.
- Pray that people will respond to our invitations to attend Christmas Eve gatherings, that people's hearts will be receptive to what God wants to do in their lives, and that people will make the decision to trust and fully follow Jesus.
- Pray that our teams will serve our neighbors well throughout this season, and that the love and joy and peace and hope of Jesus will be obvious to all.
- Pray that the partnership in prayer between CrossPoint and Echo Hills will increase the unity of God's church in the LC Valley, resulting in a move of the Holy Spirit to see the gospel advance further in our region and beyond.



A SEASON TO PRAY | SERVE | GIVE

This Advent, we invite you into intentional steps of discipleship by praying, serving, and giving as we seek to wisely steward the powerful story God is writing at CrossPoint.

PRAY: 28 Days of Prayer

We will engage in 24/7 prayer starting on Sunday, December 3, and continuing for 28 days, through Sunday, December 31. We believe this major investment in prayer will result in exponential fruit as we pursue the presence of God, asking for God to move and answer our prayers as a church family.

We encourage you to use the prayer room at the church building—pray with your family, your friends, your CrossPoint Community, or alone. We will be partnering with another local church—Echo Hills—to believe for God to do incredible things in the LC Valley and beyond.

SERVE: Love the Valley

We want to serve our community well by funding 30 Love the Valley Projects during Advent. Serve with your family, friends, or CrossPoint Community to meet needs in our city and build bridges through tangible expressions of love so people can encounter the Good News of Jesus.

Love the Valley is our ongoing commitment to equip and empower the people of CrossPoint to show the love of Jesus in practical ways. We want to truly be the hands and feet of Jesus as we serve outside the walls of the church building.

GIVE: Mission & Mortgage | GOAL: \$300K

In keeping with CrossPoint's heart of generosity, we'll give our first fruits (\$30,000) to ministry partners sharing the gospel in our neighborhoods and in the nations. We want to eliminate the mortgage on our building (\$270,000), freeing up over 15% of our budget to invest in future innovative mission through the development of emerging ministry leaders, strategic outreach ministries, and plans for future church multiplication.

DEBT FREE IN 2023!

This year's Advent Initiative will include a special offering on Sunday, December 17, during our weekend gatherings (though you are welcome to give anytime during the season, including online).

CROSSPOINTLEW.ORG/ADVENT

Check Out Our Special Advent Podcast

Advent is an invitation to slow down, to steady our souls
as we focus on Jesus, Immanuel, God with us.

**We invite you to listen to our special Advent podcast
Mondays through Saturdays, from December 4 to 30.**

Each episode will draw you closer to that day's
Scripture found here in this guide.

CROSSPOINTLEW.ORG/PODCAST

CHRISTMAS WEEKEND GATHERINGS **2 VENUES, 1 CAMPUS**

WORSHIP CENTER

Saturday, December 23 @ 5 p.m.
Sunday, December 24 @ 8, 9:30, & 11:15 a.m.

SUMMIT VENUE

Saturday, December 23 @ 5 p.m.
Sunday, December 24 @ 9:30 a.m.

Live Worship + Same Message in Both Venues

ONLINE SERVICE | CROSSPOINTLEW.ORG/LIVE
Sunday, December 24 @ 9:30 a.m.

CrossPoint Alliance Church

1330 Powers Avenue
Lewiston, ID 83501

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