

EPIPHANY

Isaiah 60:1-6 | Psalm 72
Ephesians 3:1-12
Matthew 2:1-23

Arise, shine! The Lord God of Israel alone does wondrous things. He delivers the needy, pities the weak, and redeems his children from oppression and violence. He rules and reigns in his wisdom. We look to see his majesty displayed on earth and in the heavenly places.

Heavenly Father, your light has come and shone upon us. Your glory rests upon us. Help us to live in a way that displays the rich variety of your hidden mysteries to all creation! Until you come again.

Advent is the Latin word for *arrival* or *coming* and is the period of four weeks before Christmas when we gratefully remember Jesus coming into our world. We also anticipate Christ's return as a Mighty King and Righteous Judge. A time when he will make all things new, redeem this broken world from its hurt, trouble, and tragedy, and bring the fullness of his rule and reign!

For thousands of years people have created art, written poetry, and sung waiata to remember God's grand story and to prepare to receive him – little acts of human response and worship. These readings and our online creative pieces are this year's offerings from the Laidlaw community. We hope these will encourage you further and deeper on your own journey with Christ as he draws near to you this Advent and Christmas season.

Note: Each week begins on the designated Sunday of Advent. Advent 2022 marks the beginning of "Year A" in the Lectionary Calendar and Church Year.

Read these Scripture passages daily or weekly, and consider how and where you will make room for the coming King.



Scan the QR code for more resources, reflections, and playlists or visit www.laidlaw.ac.nz/advent-readings.

0800 999 777 www.laidlaw.ac.nz



Advent

READINGS



FIRST WEEK OF ADVENT

Isaiah 2:1-5 | Psalm 122
Romans 13:11-14
Matthew 24:36-44

Look! Isaiah tells of a time when the Lord's house will be established and the nations will stream to it. All the nations will come to this Righteous Judge who will arbitrate for many peoples. In the new and coming kingdom, swords will be turned into plowshares, the people will walk in the light of the Lord, and there will be peace. Until the fullness of that time, let us stay alert and pay attention as the Lord draws near.

No one knows the day of your return, Lord! Strengthen us with watchfulness that we might be ready for the unexpected arrival of the Son of Man.

SECOND WEEK OF ADVENT

Isaiah 11:1-10 | Psalm 28
Romans 15:4-13
Matthew 3:1-12

Repent! Turn and return to the Mighty King who promises a truly peaceful kingdom – where predator and prey rest together and enemies no longer destroy. King Jesus, who defends the poor, will judge the people with righteousness and justice. The whole earth will be full of the knowledge of the Lord and his dwelling shall be glorious!

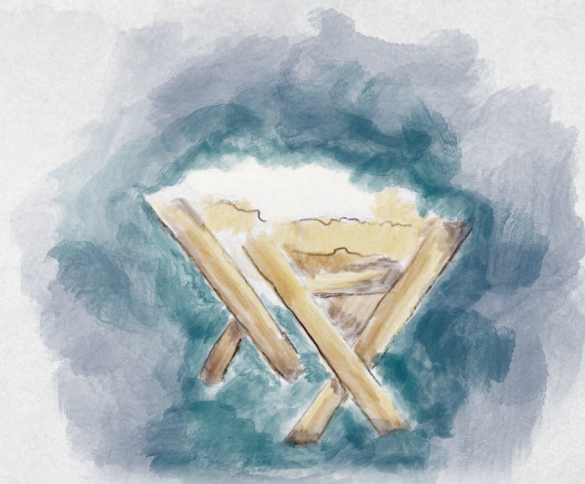
Mighty King, just as a shoot bursts into life from a stump, we tremble and worship in holy awe as your kingdom breaks into our reality.

THIRD WEEK OF ADVENT

Isaiah 35:1-10 | Psalm 146
Luke 1:46-55 | James 5:7-10
Matthew 11:2-11

Rejoice! Be patient. Do not fear. Wait. Be strong. For the Lord is coming and he will save us. Flowers and water will burst forth in the desert. The lame will leap, blind will see, deaf will hear, prisoners be freed, and even the dead will be raised to life! The Lord has done, and continues to do, great things for his people.

Redeemer, help us to wait, watch, and sing until we obtain your joy and gladness – until all sorrow and sighing are gone.



FOURTH WEEK OF ADVENT

Isaiah 7:10-16 | Psalm 80
Romans 1:1-7 | Matthew 1:18-25

Restore us! The good news of God's rescue was promised through the prophets in his Holy Scriptures. A young woman carried the flesh, bones, and breath of Immanuel in her body. Salvation comes to us in the very person of God! The ancient promise of rescue remains true for us today through the gift of this child.

We pray the same words as our ancestors in the faith: Shepherd of Israel who leads Joseph like a flock, stir up your might, and come to save us!

CHRISTMAS WEEK

Isaiah 9:2-7 | Isaiah 52:7-10
Psalm 98 | Hebrews 1:1-12
John 1:1-14

Behold! Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace has come into the darkness and the people have seen his great light. The Word became flesh and lived among us. God, the son, came as a baby. And he will come again as a Glorious King.

Judge of the earth, we have seen your glory and we want to see more of your glory! We bless and praise you for coming to dwell with us as a human. We look forward to your return. Come, Lord Jesus, come!