

# ADVENT DEVOTIONAL



ADVENT PROGRAM

APPLY ONLINE

VISIT CAMPUS

REQUEST INFO



## ADVENT DEVOTIONAL DECEMBER 9, 2024

*Weekly theme: Peace*

### SCRIPTURE

#### PSALM 67

1 May God be gracious to us and bless us  
and make his face to shine upon us, Selah  
2 that your way may be known upon earth,  
your saving power among all nations.  
3 Let the peoples praise you, O God;  
let all the peoples praise you.  
4 Let the nations be glad and sing for joy,  
for you judge the peoples with equity  
and guide the nations upon earth. Selah  
5 Let the peoples praise you, O God;

let all the peoples praise you.  
6 The earth has yielded its increase;  
God, our God, has blessed us.  
7 May God continue to bless us;  
let all the ends of the earth revere him.

## DEVOTION

**The Rev. Lisa J. Lyon '92**

In seven verses, the Psalmist uses “us” four times, “peoples” five times, “nations” three times, “all” four times, combined into “all the nations”, “all the peoples” and “all the ends of the earth.” When a Hebrew word or phrase is repeated, we need to pay attention. This message is important to our understanding of God and ourselves.

In Psalm 67, God’s saving power is for all nations. God’s blessing is for all peoples. God judges the peoples, guides the nations. In response to God’s inclusive love and care, all peoples and all nations are invited to praise God together. Perfect peace!

If God’s graciousness, blessing, salvation, judgment and guidance are all-inclusive, why are peoples and nations so exclusive? In America, Native Americans were excluded from their land. Others were excluded from our country, our neighborhoods, our schools, our churches, and our laws. From 1875 on, immigration law limited or banned Chinese, Japanese, Italian, Polish, Russian, Asian Pacific, Latin American, African and Southeast European peoples. Also at times Jews, Muslims, Arabs, and women traveling alone. African Americans and women were excluded from voting, education, jobs, property ownership. Cities and towns were divided by ethnicity, national origin, religion, class.

Such exclusiveness once gave way to the Christmas spirit. It wasn’t peace, but a temporary cease-fire—a tenuous truce as people put aside their differences in an outburst of civility, charity, friendliness. At least until December 26.

I worry that the Christmas spirit will not be manifest at all this year. How can we welcome the Christ Child who came for all if we exclude members of “the other” political party, the LGBTQ community, refugees, immigrants, authors, naturalized citizens—anyone whose ideas, faith or politics are different from ours?

We can’t.

Sisters and brothers, let us repent, and embrace and share God’s all-inclusive love!

## PRAYER

God who created all people in your image and likeness, God who loves everyone everywhere: thank you. You sent your Son, the embodiment of your all-inclusive love. As we welcome baby Jesus, so may we welcome people you send our way with open minds, open hearts, and open hands. Amen.

## ABOUT PITTSBURGH THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

Rooted in the Reformed tradition, Pittsburgh Theological Seminary is committed to the formation of students for theologically reflective ministry and to scholarship in service to the global Church of Jesus Christ.

## BECOME A HYBRID STUDENT

**Master's**

**Doctor of Ministry**

**Certificates**

**Non-Degree**

## PTS NEIGHBORHOOD COLLABORATIVE RESOURCE PROGRAMS

**Center for Adaptive and Innovative Ministry**

**Continuing Education**

**Faith Forming Families Network**

**Kelso Museum of Near Eastern Archaeology**

**Miller Summer Youth Institute**

**Metro-Urban Institute**

**World Mission Initiative**

## FACULTY

In addition to their on-campus duties, our faculty are experts in their fields and are available to preach and teach. Learn more about their **topics of research and writing** and invite them to present at your congregation or gathering.

## EVENTS

The Seminary hosts a wide range of events—many of them free!—on topics of faith including church planting, mission, vocation, spiritual formation, pastoral care and counseling, archaeology, and many more. Visit our **calendar** often for a listing of upcoming events.

## VISIT PTS

Interested in the Seminary? **Come visit us!**

## STAY IN TOUCH WITH PTS

**Sign-up to receive the Seminary's newsletters:** Seminary News (monthly), Center for Adaptive and Innovative Ministry, Continuing Education, Faith Forming Families Network, Kelso Museum, Metro-Urban Institute, Miller Summer Youth Institute, and World Mission Initiative. Alums, there's also one for you!

Pittsburgh Theological Seminary  
616 North Highland Avenue  
Pittsburgh, PA 15206  
Phone: 412-362-5610



**FIND YOUR PROGRAM**

**REQUEST INFO**

**APPLY ONLINE**

**VISIT THE CAMPUS**

**News & Events****Contact****Directions****Employment** **Save Page As PDF**

**Privacy Policy**

**COVID-19**

**Accessibility**

**Anti-Discrimination**

**Title IX And Anti-Harassment**