

ADVENT DEVOTIONAL



ADVENT PROGRAM

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ADVENT DEVOTIONAL DECEMBER 12, 2023

SCRIPTURE

PSALM 33

- 1 Rejoice in the LORD, O you righteous.
Praise befits the upright.
- 2 Praise the LORD with the lyre;
make melody to him with the harp of ten strings.
- 3 Sing to him a new song;
play skillfully on the strings, with loud shouts.
- 4 For the word of the LORD is upright,
and all his work is done in faithfulness.
- 5 He loves righteousness and justice;
the earth is full of the steadfast love of the LORD.
- 6 By the word of the LORD the heavens were made,
and all their host by the breath of his mouth.

7 He gathered the waters of the sea as in a bottle;
he put the deeps in storehouses.
8 Let all the earth fear the LORD;
let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of him.
9 For he spoke, and it came to be;
he commanded, and it stood firm.
10 The LORD brings the counsel of the nations to nothing;
he frustrates the plans of the peoples.
11 The counsel of the LORD stands forever,
the thoughts of his heart to all generations.
12 Happy is the nation whose God is the LORD,
the people whom he has chosen as his heritage.
13 The LORD looks down from heaven;
he sees all humankind.
14 From where he sits enthroned he watches
all the inhabitants of the earth —
15 he who fashions the hearts of them all,
and observes all their deeds.
16 A king is not saved by his great army;
a warrior is not delivered by his great strength.
17 The war horse is a vain hope for victory,
and by its great might it cannot save.
18 Truly the eye of the LORD is on those who fear him,
on those who hope in his steadfast love,
19 to deliver their soul from death,
and to keep them alive in famine.
20 Our soul waits for the LORD;
he is our help and shield.
21 Our heart is glad in him,
because we trust in his holy name.
22 Let your steadfast love, O LORD, be upon us,
even as we hope in you.

DEVOTION

Maj. Corinne Cameron '23, Board Member

Today finds us in mid-December, less than two weeks away from Christmas. A lot of planning has brought us to this point, and we are now fulfilling these plans. For those of us involved in feeding programs, it is quite likely that our initial planning began in the summer with securing locations, obtaining insurance certificates, and ordering food. Choir leaders and bandmasters will have planned (and ordered music) with rehearsals that have been underway for a couple of months. The temptation at this point is to rely upon the plans that we have made, to see us through to the finish line. The morning Psalm for today cautions us from relying upon our own plans as we discover in verse 10: the Lord “frustrates the plans of the peoples.”

While I certainly do not hope that any of our plans are frustrated today, as plans shift, as wrinkles in our day occur, we have the choice to either become frustrated or to seek invitations from God within the wrinkles. To turn away from relying on the counsel of our own plans, to relying on the counsel of God. To see God in the faces of the people we serve, to encounter God in an unplanned line-up, to breathe and turn our eyes away from our human planning and consider the incredible plan that gives to us this season.

As our eyes and hearts return to God’s plan, we will find these invitations from the closing of our psalm: hope in God’s steadfast love (v. 18); our hearts trust and find gladness in God (v. 21); and to feel the steadfast love of God resting upon us (v. 22).

PRAYER

Our steadfast Lord, help us rely upon you today and not just on our human plans. Help us seek you when our plans go astray, and in this seeking help us encounter your invitations to hope in you, find gladness in you, and to rest in you. We give to you this day, we give to you the remaining twelve days of our Advent season. May your plans be our plans. Amen.

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