




2021 ADVENT GUIDE



Park Cities
BAPTIST CHURCH


Jesus,
WHO, THOUGH
HE WAS IN THE FORM
OF GOD, DID NOT COUNT
EQUALITY WITH GOD A
THING TO BE GRASPED,
BUT EMPTIED HIMSELF,
BY TAKING THE FORM OF
A SERVANT, BEING BORN
IN THE LIKENESS OF MEN.
PHILIPPIANS 2:6-7



Awaiting Advent

IF YOU LOOK UP THE WORD “AWAIT” IN THE DICTIONARY, YOU WILL SEE IT DEFINED AS, “TO WAIT, EXPECT, LOOK FOR.”

Hope builds within the very definition of await.

TO WAIT:

There is a passive sense to *waiting*. Waiting is our default response to a future that is indefinite, unknown, and out of our hands. We do not often need to remind ourselves to wait. Waiting is rarely a choice we make, but a reality we accept. It is the way we view our waiting, and what we choose to do in our waiting that distinguishes us.

TO EXPECT:

Expecting carries significantly more weight than *waiting*. When a woman is pregnant, we do not say she is “waiting” for a baby, but rather, she is “expecting” a baby. When it comes to seasons of expectation, we tend to be more positive, alert, and hopeful than we are in seasons of waiting, as we anticipate a definite arrival of what we hope for.

TO LOOK FOR:

To look for has a completely different character than *to wait* or *expect*. To look for is to get up and actively seek to find what we hope for. None of us are going to waste our time searching for something we do not believe we will find. Waiting and expecting can play on in the background of our lives, but looking for something has a way of totally taking over. Everything else fades in comparison to what we are looking for.

Advent is the coming of Christ Jesus.

Throughout history, the people of God have always been awaiting the coming of Christ Jesus.

- In the Old Testament, the Israelites awaited their promised Messiah.
- During the life of Christ, his followers awaited his rescue.
- In the New Testament and still today, followers of Jesus are filled with the presence of his Holy Spirit as we await the day we will see him face-to-face.
- Finally, as citizens of heaven, whether in heaven or on earth, we are all awaiting Christ’s return from heaven to earth.

However you are entering this Christmas season – whatever it is you are waiting for, expecting, or looking for – we pray you will be met with the coming of Christ Jesus. We pray as you journey through these pages, you are encouraged to await the advent of Christ in a fresh way that brings tremendous, enduring hope for you and for others in your life.

Christ is here, and he is coming.

Merry Christmas from your PCBC family!

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER
28

AWAITING HIS PROMISE

BEFORE THE ADVENT
OF CHRIST, THE PEOPLE
OF GOD AWAITED THEIR
PROMISED SAVIOR: THE
MESSIAH. THEY HELD ONTO
THE PROMISES OF GOD AS
THEY LOOKED FORWARD
TO THE COMING OF CHRIST
WITH GREAT EXPECTATION.
IN THE SAME WAY, WE CAN
CLING TO THE PROMISES OF
GOD IN OUR OWN WAITING
WITH GREAT EXPECTATION.
CHRIST IS HERE, AND HE
IS COMING.

Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign.
Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son,
and shall call his name Immanuel.

Isaiah 7:14

WORSHIP WITH US

You are invited to join us
for worship every
Sunday morning, online
and in person!

9:30 a.m. - Great Hall
and Chapel Worship

11:00 a.m. - Great Hall
and Sanctuary Worship

11:00 a.m. - Wee Worship
and Kids Worship

11:00 a.m. - Middle School
and High School LIVE

12:30 p.m. - En Español
Worship in the Great Hall

Online worship
pcbc.org/live

SERMON RESPONSE GUIDE



Far
to us a
child is
born

MONDAY, NOVEMBER
29
AWAITING
HIS PROMISE

ISAIAH 9:2, 6-7

Light shines brightest in the deepest darkness. Perhaps you are coming into this Christmas season having walked and lived through what feels like deep darkness. Know that you are not alone.

Before the coming of Christ, the people of God often wandered and wondered in the dark. And yet, God promised them a Savior. God promised them light and life.

Let the promises of Christ's coming be promises spoken over your own life today:

Though you have walked through darkness, may you see a great light.
Though you have lived in darkness, may the light of Christ shine upon you.

Christ is here, and he is coming.

How do you need the light of Christ to shine upon the darkness of your life this Christmas?

LORD, YOU ARE WONDERFUL COUNSELOR, MIGHTY GOD, EVERLASTING FATHER, PRINCE OF PEACE. LET YOUR LIGHT SHINE IN OUR DARKNESS, AND LORD, LET YOUR LIGHT SHINE ON US.

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER
30
AWAITING
HIS PROMISE

MICAH 5:2-4

Do you ever feel too small to do the big things before you, or too small to even be noticed?

From the little town of Bethlehem, God promised the King of kings and Lord of lords would be born. In a town too little to be among the clans of Judah, the Ancient of Days was revealed.

Whether it is a young boy's slingshot, or another boy's fish and loaves, God takes what seems small and reveals its true significance.

Let the promises of God encourage you today:

The majesty of the Lord is our strength, the greatness of the Lord is our security, and Christ himself is our peace.

Christ is here, and he is coming.

Where do you need to experience the strength, security, and peace of Christ in your own life this Christmas?

LORD, YOU ALONE ARE RULER OF ALL. MAY YOUR NAME BE GREAT TO THE ENDS OF THE EARTH. STAND AND SHEPHERD US AS YOUR CHILDREN, THAT IN YOUR MAJESTY, WE MAY DWELL SECURE.

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER
1
AWAITING
HIS PROMISE

ISAIAH 11:1-10

Are you tired of fighting? Tired of disagreements dominating your encounters with others?

Whatever relational hardships you are suffering as you step into this Christmas season, may you find the courage to entrust them to the Lord of wisdom, understanding, counsel, and might. May you rest in the promise of who God is: full of righteousness, equity, and faithfulness.

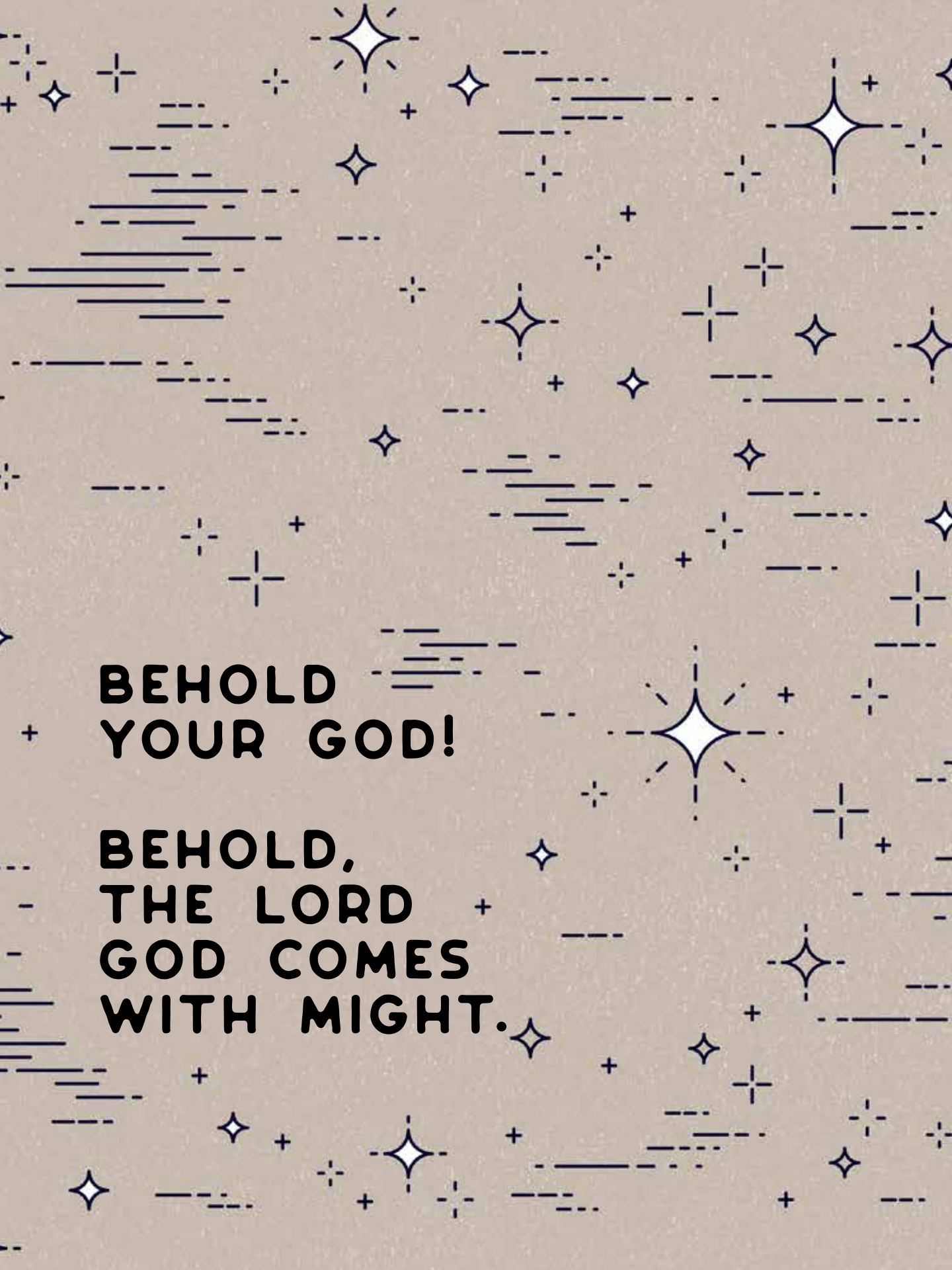
May you hope in the truth that there is coming a day when, as the waters cover the sea, the earth will be full of the knowledge of the Lord our God. Only when we are reconciled to God will we truly be reconciled to one another.

May the promises of this passage ignite your weary heart with fresh hope for today. In the Kingdom of God, the wolf and the lamb can dwell together in peace.

Christ is here, and he is coming.

What relational hardship do you need to entrust to God this Christmas?

LORD, JUST AS THE EARTH WILL ONE DAY BE FILLED WITH THE KNOWLEDGE OF WHO YOU ARE, FILL US WITH THAT KNOWLEDGE TODAY. EVEN NOW, HELP US BELIEVE YOU ARE FULL OF RIGHTEOUSNESS, EQUITY, AND FAITHFULNESS.



**BEHOLD
YOUR GOD!**

**BEHOLD,
THE LORD
GOD COMES
WITH MIGHT.**

THURSDAY, DECEMBER
2

**AWAITING
HIS PROMISE**

ISAIAH 40:1-11

Imagine rough areas of your life smoothed out, unsteady foundations made firm, overwhelming mountains settled down, deep valleys made shallow, the ability to run free through desert places, and a clear way prepared for you to walk with hope in the wilderness.

This is what God promises to do for us in Christ. We are a people of warfare, desperate for someone to speak tenderly to us. We need the comfort only God can provide.

Though we are like withering grass and fading flowers, the Word of our God is eternally enduring. Let us lift up our voices with strength to declare over ourselves and others today, “Behold your God! Behold, the Lord comes with might. He will tend his flock like a shepherd and gently lead us in his arms.”

Christ is here, and he is coming.

Why do you need God to speak tenderly to you and comfort you this Christmas?

LORD, TEND US LIKE A SHEPHERD, GATHER US IN YOUR ARMS, CARRY US IN YOUR BOSOM, AND GENTLY LEAD US TO SEE YOUR GLORY REVEALED AS WE COME TOGETHER IN CHRIST.

FRIDAY, DECEMBER

3

AWAITING
HIS PROMISE

ISAIAH 52:6-15

“Here I am.”

Those three words can cause us to break forth into songs of joy even in seasons we wish to break free from.

God speaks to us in our suffering.

Even if all we can hold onto is the hope that God is with us when we feel stuck in waste places, it is enough. The promise of Immanuel – God with us – is enough.

The fact that we know his name and we hear him say, “Here I am,” is enough for us to sing for joy. Even if we do not yet see him here with us, the promise of his presence is a platform for praise.

Christ is here, and he is coming.

Why do you think we often talk about singing **for** joy, rather than singing from joy or with joy?

LORD, EACH DAY, IN EVERY MOMENT, WE WANT TO HEAR YOU SAY TO US, “HERE I AM.” BUT ESPECIALLY TODAY, IN THIS MOMENT. IN THE MIDST OF OUR SORROW, EMPOWER US TO LIFT UP OUR VOICES AND SING FOR JOY.

SATURDAY, DECEMBER

4

AWAITING HIS PROMISE

THEREFORE

the Lord

HIMSELF WILL
GIVE YOU A SIGN.
BEHOLD, THE VIRGIN
SHALL CONCEIVE
AND BEAR A SON,
AND SHALL CALL
HIS NAME
Immanuel.

ISAIAH 7:14



ON THIS DAY OF REST, WE INVITE YOU TO
PRAY AND REFLECT ON THIS SCRIPTURE.

Together Time

AWAITING HIS
PROMISE



READ THIS WEEK'S MEMORY
VERSE TOGETHER:

THEREFORE THE LORD
HIMSELF WILL GIVE
YOU A SIGN. BEHOLD,
THE VIRGIN SHALL
CONCEIVE AND
BEAR A SON,
AND SHALL
CALL HIS
NAME
IMMANUEL.

ISAIAH 7:14



PLAY

AN OLD-FASHIONED GAME
OF I SPY TOGETHER:

The player thinking of the item
needs to exercise the habit of
keeping their word as they respond
with yes or no to the others'
guesses. Once the players have
guessed the item, talk about
how God keeps his promises to
us. Discuss how God gave signs
to others to point to the
birth of Jesus.

RESPOND TO THESE
QUESTIONS TOGETHER:

- 1 Do you feel too small to be noticed? What encourages you when you know Jesus came for all of us as a small baby?
- 2 Why can waiting for something be so difficult? What is something you are waiting for now?
- 3 How can it actually be fun to wait for an event? Does waiting increase your excitement?

SUNDAY, DECEMBER
5

AWAITING HIS RESCUE

ONCE CHRIST CAME AS PROMISED, THE PEOPLE OF GOD AWAITED HIS PROMISED RESCUE. CHRIST CAME TO BRING SALVATION TO ALL THE NATIONS, BUT HIS RESCUE LOOKED DIFFERENT THAN PEOPLE EXPECTED. THEREFORE, MANY WHO HAD GROWN UP HEARING THE PROPHECIES OF THE COMING MESSIAH FAILED TO SEE HIM STANDING RIGHT BEFORE THEIR EYES. LIKEWISE, MANY OF US FAIL TO WELCOME CHRIST'S RESCUE IN OUR OWN LIVES BECAUSE HIS RESCUE MAY LOOK DIFFERENT THAN WE EXPECT. EVEN SO, CHRIST IS HERE, AND HE IS COMING.

Fear not, for I am with you;
be not dismayed, for I am your God;
I will strengthen you, I will help you,
I will uphold you with my
righteous right hand.

Isaiah 41:10

WORSHIP WITH US

You are invited to join us
for worship every
Sunday morning, online
and in person!

9:30 a.m. - Great Hall
and Chapel Worship

11:00 a.m. - Great Hall
and Sanctuary Worship

11:00 a.m. - Wee Worship
and Kids Worship

11:00 a.m. - Middle School
and High School LIVE

12:30 p.m. - En Español
Worship in the Great Hall

Online worship
pcbc.org/live

SERMON RESPONSE GUIDE





MONDAY, DECEMBER
6

AWAITING HIS RESCUE

ISAIAH 43:1-3

In this passage, there is no helicopter with a rescue basket to air lift us out of the rushing water. There is no fireman to snatch us out of the fiery flames.

The Lord says, when we pass through the waters, and when we walk through the fire, he will be with us. It's not an if, but a when.

Three men who refused to bow down to worship a king's idol were bound and thrown into a fiery furnace, only to be found unbound and freely walking around the furnace, untouched by the flames and in the presence of a fourth man who the king said looked like "a son of the gods," (Daniel 3).

The same God who was with those three men then, is with us now. His presence is our rescue.

Christ is here, and he is coming.

How does this passage in Isaiah 43 affect your understanding of God's rescue?

LORD, YOU ARE THE HOLY ONE OF ISRAEL, OUR SAVIOR, AND OUR GOD. YOU HAVE REDEEMED US AND CALLED US BY NAME, SO WE HAVE NO NEED TO FEAR THE FLAMES OR THE WAVES. YOU CREATED US, AND YOU ARE WITH US, SO WE WILL NOT BE CONSUMED.

TUESDAY, DECEMBER
7

AWAITING HIS RESCUE

ISAIAH 53:1-12

Jesus is a man of sorrows acquainted with grief. This is not who the people of God envisioned their promised Messiah looking like.

Jesus poured out his soul to death and was numbered among the transgressors. This is not what the people of God envisioned their promised rescue looking like.

Yet, the only one who is truly righteous bore our iniquities and continues to intercede for us, that we might be counted as righteous.

Out of the anguish of his soul he shall see and be satisfied. God loves to rescue his people, but as we praise him for his rescue, let us also thank him for his anguish, his grief, and his sorrow. With his wounds, we are healed.

Christ is here, and he is coming.

What does Isaiah 53:11 have to do with Christmas?

LORD, YOU HAD NO MAJESTY THAT WE SHOULD LOOK AT YOU. NO BEAUTY THAT WE SHOULD DESIRE YOU, AND YET, YOU ARE MOST BEAUTIFUL AND MAJESTIC. DON'T LET US GET SO CAUGHT UP IN THE BEAUTY AND MAJESTY OF THE CHRISTMAS SEASON THAT WE FORGET WHAT IT COST YOU TO COME TO US, AND TO COME FOR US.

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER
8

AWAITING HIS RESCUE

JOHN 1:1-5, 9-18

Jesus, the only Son of God, was with God in the beginning, and is at the Father's side still today. Jesus, who is fully God and lives with God, chose to become fully human and live with us.

Jesus, full of light, chose to shine his light in our darkness, and the darkness will never overcome it. Jesus, full of grace, chose to give us grace upon grace. Jesus, who is the truth, chose to fill us with truth.

No one has ever seen God, but Jesus, who is at the Father's side, shows us who God is, and who God created us to be. The rescue Jesus offers us looks like adoption, as he gives us the right to become children of God.

Jesus drew near to us so we could draw near to our Father God, just as he does. Jesus came to live with us so we might live with him forever.

Christ is here, and he is coming.

How does your understanding of Christmas – and life itself – shift when you consider how Jesus drew near to us so we could draw near to our Father God, just as he does?

LORD, YOU ARE GOD AND HAVE BEEN WITH GOD FROM THE BEGINNING. AND YOU ARE GOD WITH US AND PROMISE TO BE HERE WITH US ALWAYS. THIS CHRISTMAS, OPEN OUR EYES TO SEE IT'S ALWAYS BEEN ABOUT BEING WITH YOU. TO BE WITH YOU IS RESCUE.



THURSDAY, DECEMBER
9

AWAITING HIS RESCUE

JOHN 3:13-19

Whether it be in Jesus Christ or Santa Claus, Christmas is a time for believing. The word believe appears five times in these six verses. When we look at the way Jesus lived his life, he continually challenged those he spent time with to believe.

God uniquely created us to *believe* in him, and we're not truly living until we do. Jesus said, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me," (John 14:6).

Belief is both beautiful and brave. When we find the courage to believe, we cultivate hope deep within us.

Why do you think belief in Jesus is so key to eternal life? Because eternal life is not simply living forever. Eternal life is living forever with Jesus – starting now.

Christ is here, and he is coming.

Why do you think Jesus said to his first followers, and still says to us today, "Come, follow me?"

LORD, WE CONFESS WE HAVE OFTEN LOVED THE DARKNESS RATHER THAN THE LIGHT. YET, YOU CAME NOT TO CONDEMN US, BUT TO SAVE US. SO, SAVE US, LORD! SAVE US FROM OUR LOVE FOR THE DARKNESS AND CARRY US INTO THE LIGHT OF YOUR LOVE. HELP US BELIEVE IN YOU SO WE MAY TRULY HOPE IN YOU.

FRIDAY, DECEMBER
10

AWAITING HIS RESCUE

LUKE 4:16-21

When Jesus stood up to read the scroll of Isaiah at the synagogue in Nazareth, what did he say the Spirit of the Lord anointed him to proclaim?

Jesus was reading from Isaiah 61:1-2, but he stopped, rolled up the scroll, and sat down before ever uttering the words that complete the second verse, “to proclaim the year of the LORD’s favor... and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all who mourn.”

When every eye in the synagogue was glued on him, Jesus announced, “Today this Scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing.”

Jesus did not proclaim vengeance from God. Rather, Jesus proclaimed good news, liberty, vision, freedom, and favor from God.

Christ’s promised rescue was always an invitation, never a condemnation.

Christ is here, and he is coming.

How does this passage in Luke 4 help you to understand who Jesus is and why Jesus came?

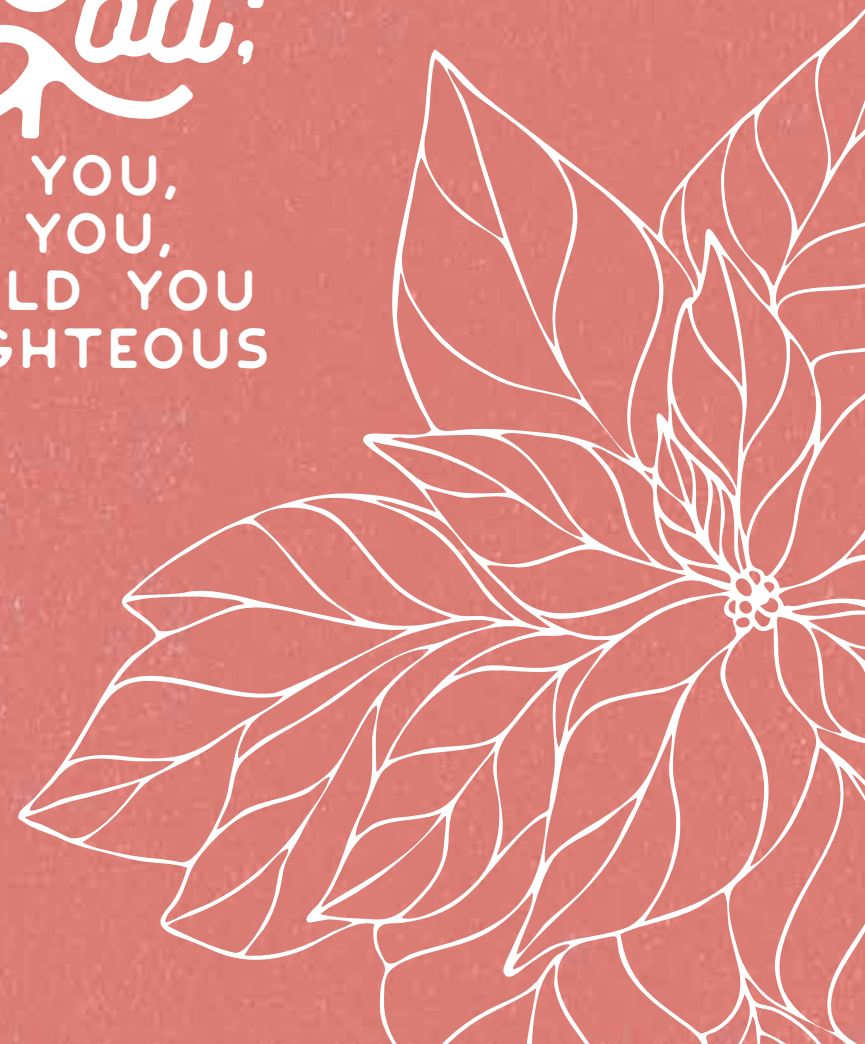
LORD, THANK YOU FOR YOUR GOOD NEWS, YOUR LIBERTY, YOUR VISION, YOUR FREEDOM, AND YOUR FAVOR. IN THE SAME WAY YOU SPOKE TRUTH IN THAT SYNAGOGUE ON THE SABBATH YEARS AGO, SPEAK TRUTH INTO OUR HEARTS TODAY. YOU ALONE ARE OUR RESCUE.

SATURDAY, DECEMBER **11** AWAITING HIS RESCUE

Fear not,
FOR I AM WITH
YOU; BE NOT DISMAYED,
FOR I AM
your God;
I WILL
STRENGTHEN YOU,
I WILL HELP YOU,
I WILL UPHOLD YOU
WITH MY RIGHTEOUS
RIGHT HAND.

ISAIAH 41:10

ON THIS DAY OF REST,
WE INVITE YOU TO
PRAY AND REFLECT
ON THIS SCRIPTURE.



Together Time

AWAITING HIS
RESCUE



READ THIS WEEK'S MEMORY VERSE TOGETHER:

FEAR NOT, FOR I AM WITH YOU; BE
NOT DISMAYED, FOR I AM YOUR GOD;
I WILL STRENGTHEN YOU, I WILL HELP
YOU, I WILL UPHOLD YOU WITH MY
RIGHTEOUS RIGHT HAND.

ISAIAH 41:10

RESPOND TO THESE
QUESTIONS TOGETHER:

- 1 How did God provide our rescue through Christmas?
- 2 How can you help to rescue others by telling them the story of Jesus' birth?
- 3 When you hear the words, "Fear not, for I am with you," are you comforted that God will rescue you?

PLAY

A GAME OF FREEZE
TAG TOGETHER:

If the other players are not frozen, they can rescue others by unfreezing them. Afterward, talk about how God desires to rescue us and save us from our sins.

SUNDAY, DECEMBER
12

AWAITING HIS PRESENCE

AFTER CHRIST DEFEATED
DEATH ON OUR BEHALF BY
DYING ON THE CROSS FOR
OUR SINS AND BEING RAISED
TO LIFE AGAIN, THE PEOPLE
OF GOD AWAITED HIS
PRESENCE IN A NEW WAY.
JESUS SENT HIS VERY OWN
SPIRIT TO NOT ONLY LIVE
AMONG US, BUT TO LIVE
WITHIN US UNTIL HE COMES
AGAIN. CHRIST IS HERE, AND
HE IS COMING.

Nevertheless, I tell you
the truth: it is to your advantage
that I go away, for if I do not go away,
the Helper will not come to you.
But if I go, I will send him to you.

John 16:7

WORSHIP WITH US

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for worship every
Sunday morning, online
and in person!

9:30 a.m. - Great Hall
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11:00 a.m. - Great Hall
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Worship in the Great Hall

Online worship
pcbc.org/live

SERMON RESPONSE GUIDE





MONDAY, DECEMBER
13

AWAITING HIS PRESENCE

ROMANS 5:1-6

By faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, we stand in grace, and we rejoice in hope.

Of all the ways God could pour his love upon us, God chose to give us the gift of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit does not just fall on us. The Holy Spirit makes a home within us.

Nearer than anyone else ever could be, the Holy Spirit searches our hearts and leads us into all truth. When we don't know what to pray, the Holy Spirit intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words.

By the power and the presence of the Holy Spirit, we can live with abundant hope in the God of hope, who will not put us to shame.

Christ is here, and he is coming.

What is our hope that is ultimately produced by suffering – our hope we rejoice in that does not put us to shame?

LORD, WHILE WE WERE STILL WEAK, AT THE RIGHT TIME, YOU DIED FOR US. YOU SUFFERED AND ENDURED, REVEALING YOUR TRUE CHARACTER, WHICH GIVES US GREAT HOPE. YOU ARE THE GOD OF HOPE WHO FILLS US WITH HOPE THAT WILL NOT PUT US TO SHAME. LORD, WE REJOICE IN THE HOPE OF YOUR GLORY.

TUESDAY, DECEMBER
14

AWAITING HIS PRESENCE



The birth of Jesus brought tremendous hope for the people of God.

Today, the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit gives each of us enduring hope that makes us bold and free.

Free to behold the glory of the Lord – who is the Spirit – and emboldened to walk in the way the Spirit leads.

As we continue to live in the presence of God, we are continually being transformed into the image of Christ.

In Christ, the veil is removed, and we are free to be bold in hope.

In Christ, we are free to await – to look for – the active, transforming presence of God in our lives, and in the lives of those around us.

Christ is here, and he is coming.

LORD, WHEREVER YOUR SPIRIT IS, THERE IS FREEDOM. OPEN OUR EYES TO YOUR INVITATION TO WALK IN YOUR WAY OF FREEDOM. STIR OUR HEARTS AND MINDS TO BEHOLD YOU, AND IN SO DOING, BE EMBOLDENED BY YOU. LORD JESUS, MAKE US BOLD AND FREE IN HOPE.

How is the Lord inviting you to turn to him to better experience his freedom, hope, and boldness this Christmas?

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER
15

AWAITING HIS PRESENCE



We are quick to say Jesus Christ is fully God, but not as quick to say the Holy Spirit is fully God. Yet, just as the Word was with God in the beginning, so was the Spirit.

The psalmist is acquainted with the Spirit of God, and asks a profound question: “Where shall I go from your Spirit? Or where shall I flee from your presence?”

Even before the advent of Christ, the Spirit of God was with God and with people. But now, the Spirit is not only with us, but within all of us who are in Christ.

Every identity statement about the Spirit of God in this passage from ages past is true about the Spirit of God who lives and reigns in our hearts today.

Christ is here, and he is coming.

Of all the descriptions of the activity of the Spirit of God in this passage, which most resonates with you this Christmas?

LORD, EVEN THE DARKNESS IS NOT DARK TO YOU. EVEN THERE, YOUR HAND SHALL LEAD US, AND YOUR RIGHT HAND SHALL HOLD US. SO, HOLD US AND LEAD US, LORD. MAY THE NIGHT BE BRIGHT AS THE DAY, AS YOU TURN OUR DARKNESS INTO LIGHT BY THE PRESENCE OF YOUR SPIRIT.

I AM SENDING
the
PROMISE
OF MY
FATHER
UPON YOU

THURSDAY, DECEMBER
16
**AWAITING
HIS PRESENCE**

LUKE 24:44-53

Isn't it interesting that Jesus declared to his disciples, "repentance for the forgiveness of sins should be proclaimed in his name to all nations beginning from Jerusalem," and then he asked them to wait? What were they waiting for?

While being witnesses is core to our identity as Christ followers, we cannot be witnesses apart from the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is the promise of the Father and the power from on high.

Jesus sends out his disciples to make disciples of all nations, but not without the presence of the Holy Spirit.

Read Acts 1:8. What promise precedes Christ's promise, "you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth?"

Christ is here, and he is coming.

What role does the presence of the Holy Spirit play in our being witnesses to the ends of the earth?

LORD, WHEN YOUR DISCIPLES SAW YOU ASCEND TO HEAVEN, THEY WORSHIPED YOU AND RETURNED TO JERUSALEM WITH GREAT JOY, CONTINUALLY BLESSING GOD. IN THE SAME WAY, OPEN OUR EYES TO SEE YOU HIGH AND LIFTED UP IN OUR OWN LIVES, THAT WE MAY WORSHIP YOU AND BE FILLED WITH GREAT JOY, COMMITTED TO SPENDING OUR LIVES BLESSING YOU, LORD.

FRIDAY, DECEMBER

17

AWAITING HIS PRESENCE

JOHN 14:12-19, 25-27

Jesus said whoever believes in him will do what he did, and even more.

Not only does the Holy Spirit live within us, empower us, and intercede for us, but Jesus actively intercedes for us before the Father, too.

Whatever we ask in the name of Jesus, he will do. Jesus remains at work in the world as he works in and through us, his followers.

The same Spirit that raised Jesus from the dead lives in all of us who are in Christ.

It is grace that we can know the power and the presence of the Holy Spirit, grace that we are made alive in Christ, and grace that we can live in peace.

Christ is here, and he is coming.

What do you think Jesus means when he says, "I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you," (John 14:18)?

LORD, THANK YOU FOR THE GIFT OF YOUR PEACE AND YOUR HOLY SPIRIT. BECAUSE YOU LIVE, WE LIVE. BECAUSE YOU ARE WITH US, THERE IS NO NEED FOR OUR HEARTS TO BE TROUBLED OR AFRAID. REIGN IN US, LORD. MAY WE ASK GREAT THINGS IN YOUR NAME ABOVE ALL NAMES, BELIEVING YOU WILL ANSWER.

SATURDAY, DECEMBER

18

AWAITING HIS PRESENCE



**NEVERTHELESS, I TELL
YOU THE TRUTH: IT IS
TO YOUR ADVANTAGE
THAT I GO AWAY, FOR
IF I DO NOT GO AWAY,
THE HELPER WILL NOT
COME TO YOU. BUT IF
I GO, I WILL SEND HIM
TO YOU. JOHN 16:7**

ON THIS DAY OF REST, WE INVITE YOU TO
PRAY AND REFLECT ON THIS SCRIPTURE.



READ THIS WEEK'S MEMORY VERSE TOGETHER:

NEVERTHELESS, I TELL YOU THE TRUTH:
IT IS TO YOUR ADVANTAGE THAT I GO
AWAY, FOR IF I DO NOT GO AWAY, THE
HELPER WILL NOT COME TO YOU. BUT
IF I GO, I WILL SEND HIM TO YOU.

JOHN 16:7



RESPOND TO THESE
QUESTIONS TOGETHER:

- 1 What is the difference between presents and presence? Do you pray for God's presence at Christmas?
- 2 How do you treat your friends if God is present in your life?
- 3 God sent Jesus to die on the cross for you and me! How does Jesus become truly present in your life?

He who
testifies to
these things
says, "Surely
I am coming
soon." Amen,
Come, Lord Jesus!

Revelation 22:20

SUNDAY, DECEMBER
19

AWAITING HIS RETURN

JESUS PROMISED TO COME BACK AGAIN AT A TIME NO ONE KNOWS EXCEPT THE FATHER. UNTIL THAT LONG-AWAITED DAY ARRIVES, WE WAIT, EXPECT, AND LOOK FOR HIS RETURN. UNLIKE THE PEOPLE OF GOD IN THE OLD TESTAMENT, ALL OF US WHO ARE IN CHRIST ARE PERSONALLY EMPOWERED BY THE HOLY SPIRIT OF THE LIVING GOD AND SENT OUT TO MAKE DISCIPLES OF ALL NATIONS. THESE ARE THE DAYS OF GREATEST EXPECTATION AS WE PREPARE OURSELVES AND ONE ANOTHER FOR CHRIST'S PROMISED RETURN. CHRIST IS HERE, AND HE IS COMING AGAIN.

WORSHIP WITH US

You are invited to join us for worship every Sunday morning, online and in person!

9:30 a.m. - Great Hall and Chapel Worship

11:00 a.m. - Great Hall and Sanctuary Worship

11:00 a.m. - Wee Worship and Kids Worship

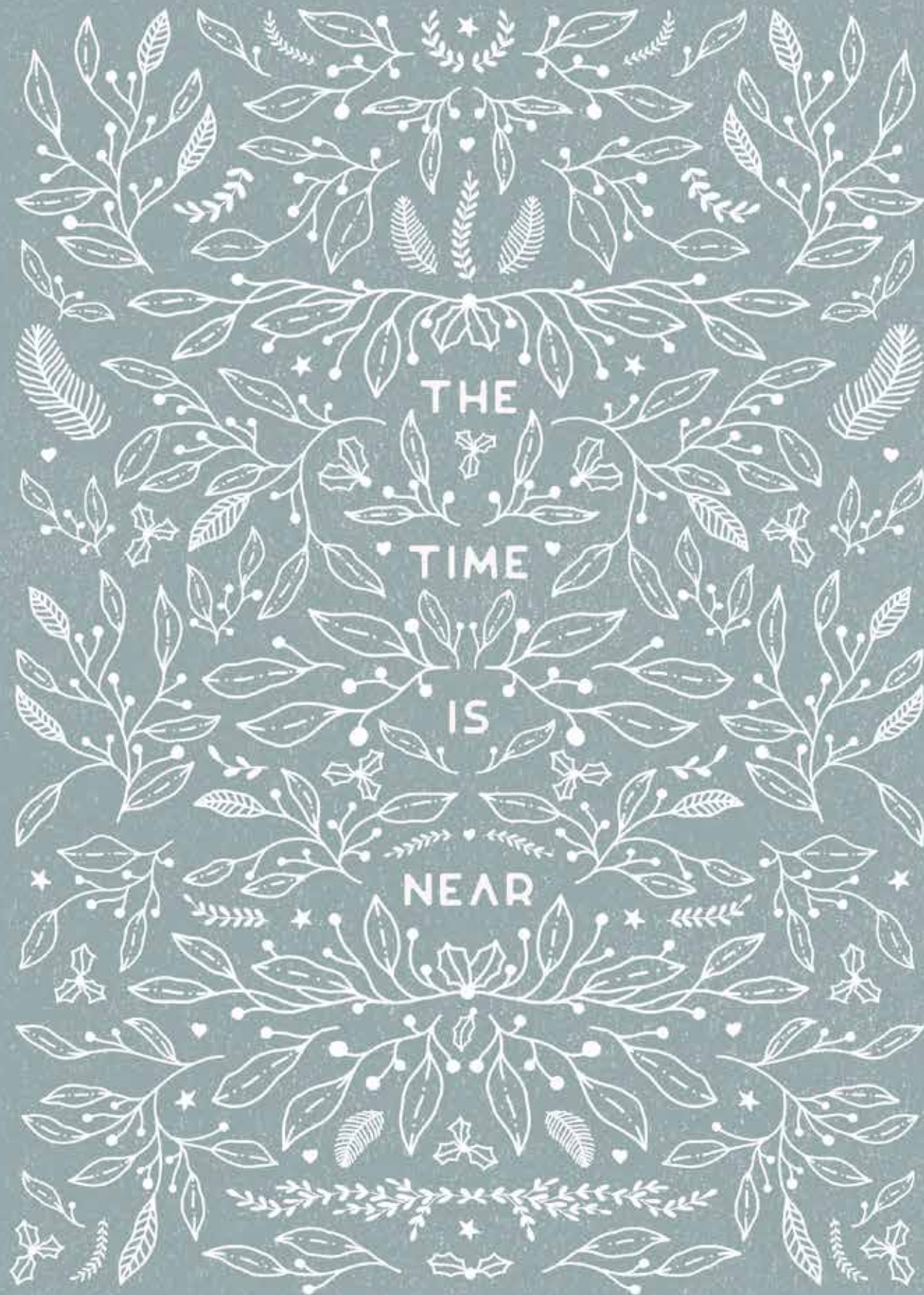
11:00 a.m. - Middle School and High School LIVE

12:30 p.m. - En Español Worship in the Great Hall

Online worship
pcbc.org/live

SERMON RESPONSE GUIDE





MONDAY, DECEMBER
20

AWAITING HIS RETURN

REVELATION 1:1-8

Blessed is the one who reads aloud, who hears, and who keeps the words written in the Scriptures, for the time is near.

As we await the return of Jesus, filled by his Holy Spirit who leads and guides us, God has given us his word to sustain us. By the power of the presence of the Holy Spirit, God's word becomes life for us.

We were never meant to merely read the word of God. God gave us his word to proclaim, to hear, and to keep – that is, to treasure and obey.

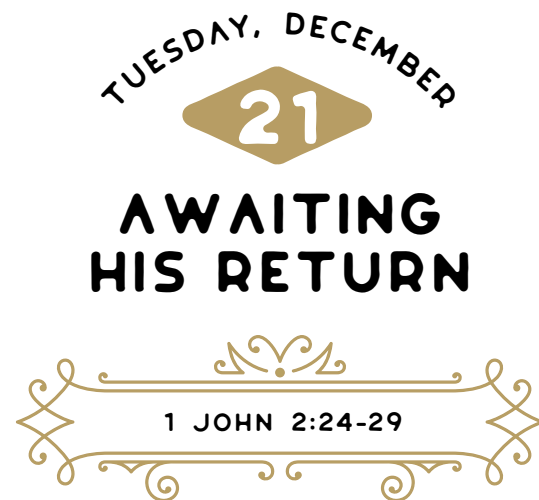
In Revelation 3:11, Jesus says, “I am coming soon. Hold fast what you have, so that no one may seize your crown.”

Are we holding fast to what we have in Christ Jesus until he returns?

Christ is here, and he is coming.

How is God inviting you to proclaim, to hear, and to keep his word today?

LORD, YOU ALONE ARE THE BEGINNING AND THE END WHO WAS, IS, AND IS TO COME. THANK YOU FOR GIVING US YOUR HOLY SPIRIT WHO ILLUMINATES YOUR WORD OF TRUTH FOR US. UNTIL YOU COME AGAIN, SHAPE US INTO PEOPLE WHO GLADLY PROCLAIM, HEAR, AND KEEP YOUR WORD GRACIOUSLY GIVEN TO US.



When we allow the word of God to move in and make itself at home in the depths of our hearts, we truly move in and make ourselves at home in the house of our Father God, and in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Until Jesus returns for us, he invites us to live not only with him, but in him. Christ Jesus is our refuge, our hiding place, and our shelter from the storm. We can find rest beneath the wings of our Almighty God.

Imagine if you wallpapered your house with the word of God, so everywhere you go in your house, you're surrounded by truth. This is what Christ has done for us through his Spirit. Until he carries us home to heaven, he wraps us in his truth and in himself.

Christ is here, and he is coming.

LORD, THANK YOU FOR PROMISING US ETERNAL LIFE. AWAKEN US TO SEE ETERNAL LIFE IS LIVING FOREVER WITH YOU, ABIDING IN YOUR PRESENCE. ETERNAL LIFE DOES NOT BEGIN WHEN YOU COME AGAIN. THE MOMENT YOU ADOPT US AS YOUR SONS AND YOUR DAUGHTERS, YOU INVITE US HOME WITH YOU FOREVER.



Since we are waiting for and hastening the return of Christ Jesus, we are to be diligent to be found at peace.

Jesus Christ is known as the Prince of Peace. The peace of Christ, which surpasses all understanding, has the power to guard our hearts and our minds until he returns.

God is never slow to fulfill his promises to us, but patient. God's patience is our salvation, our rescue, and our peace.

Until he comes again, let us live lives that are holy and wholly unto the Lord. Let us live lives of patience toward one another, as God is patient with us. Let us bring peace to others, as Christ first brought peace to us.

Christ is here, and he is coming.

LORD, THANK YOU FOR YOUR PATIENCE AND YOUR PEACE. AS WE AWAIT YOUR RETURN, MAKE US HOLY AND GODLY BY YOUR HOLY SPIRIT AND YOUR WORD OF TRUTH. MAY WE BE FOUND AT PEACE WITH OTHERS, OURSELVES, AND YOU. MAKE US PEOPLE OF PEACE FOR THE GLORY OF YOUR NAME.



Since Christ has come, let us draw near to God, hold fast to hope, come together to stir up and encourage one another to live in love, and do so all the more as we see the Day of Christ's return drawing near.

Let us do so all the more. Let us draw near to God more. Let us hold fast to hope more. Let us come together more. Let us stir up and encourage one another more. Let us live in love more.

And more, and more, for he who promised is faithful. He has washed us clean. He has given us confidence. He has made us new. He has opened a way for us to walk with him.

Christ is here, and he is coming.

Why do you think the author of Hebrews ends this passage by writing, "and all the more as you see the Day drawing near?"

LORD, THANK YOU FOR YOUR BLOOD SHED FOR US AND YOUR BODY RAISED FOR US. THANK YOU FOR YOUR FAITHFULNESS AND YOUR PROMISES THAT IGNITE UNWAVERING HOPE WITHIN US. GIVE US AN HONEST DESIRE AND COMMITMENT TO NOT NEGLECT MEETING TOGETHER WITH YOU AND THE NEW FAMILY YOU HAVE GIVEN US IN YOUR NAME. MAY WE TRULY CONSIDER AND DREAM ABOUT WAYS WE CAN STIR UP AND ENCOURAGE ONE ANOTHER TO LIVE IN LOVE UNTIL YOU RETURN.



Isn't it incredible the Son of God, who was not only a citizen of heaven, but King of heaven, came to earth not simply to visit, but to live with us?

At Jesus' birth, he brought heaven to earth. Jesus established a new Kingdom, and he gave all those who choose to trust in him a new citizenship. In Christ, our true citizenship belongs with him in heaven. We are strangers and sojourners here on earth. To be with Jesus is to be home.

Just as Jesus held a heavenly open house with his life here on earth, so should we. As we wait, expect, and look for Christ's return, we should also look for who we will invite to join us.

After encountering Jesus, his earliest followers ran to tell their friends and family, "come and see!" So should we.

Christ is here, and he is coming.

As you celebrate the advent of Christ this year, who will you invite to join you? Who do you know who needs to hear the good news that Christ is here, and he is coming? Write a brief prayer on their behalf here.

LORD, OUR CITIZENSHIP IS IN HEAVEN, AND FROM IT, WE AWAIT YOU: OUR SAVIOR, JESUS CHRIST. THANK YOU FOR COMING TO LIVE WITH US SO WE CAN LIVE WITH YOU FOREVER. MAY WE LIVE EACH DAY AWAITING YOU, LORD JESUS. MAY WE WAIT, EXPECT, AND LOOK FOR YOU IN EVERY MOMENT. YOU ARE HERE, AND YOU ARE COMING.



SATURDAY, DECEMBER

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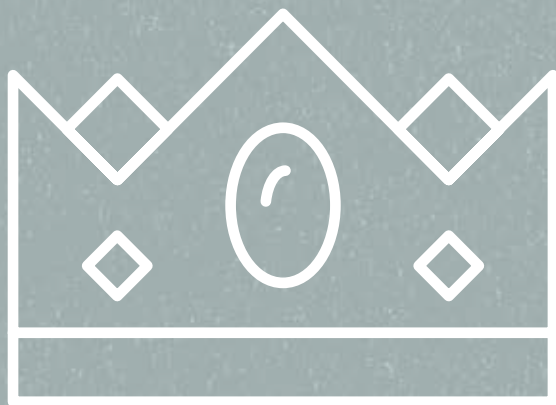
AWAITING HIS RETURN



ON THIS DAY OF REST, WE INVITE YOU TO
PRAY AND REFLECT ON THIS SCRIPTURE.

Together Time

AWAITING HIS
RETURN



READ THIS WEEK'S MEMORY VERSE TOGETHER:

HE WHO TESTIFIES TO THESE THINGS
SAYS, "SURELY I AM COMING SOON."
AMEN, COME, LORD JESUS!

REVELATION 22:20

RESPOND TO THESE QUESTIONS TOGETHER:

- 1 How does it make you feel to know that Jesus will return for you?
- 2 One day Jesus will return for all those who know him. Who can you tell this good news to today?
- 3 As a family, how has God blessed you this past year? How will you focus on God in the coming year?



PLAY A GAME OF THERE AND BACK TOGETHER:

Pick a starting point and a second point for your race (i.e. living room couch and dining room table). See how fast each child can run there and back. For older kids who want a challenge, add in extra elements (i.e. dribbling a basketball or soccer ball to two different locations in the backyard). Discuss how just as Jesus went into heaven, the Bible says he will return one day, just like they ran to a point and came back in the game.

He will be called

WONDERFUL
COUNSELOR,
MIGHTY GOD,
EVERLASTING
FATHER,
PRINCE OF
PEACE

ISAIAH 9:6



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