5-Day Devotional

AKRONGRACE

Hanging of the Greens

The Signs of Jesus' Coming



First Sunday of Advent

November 30–December 4, 2026

Scripture

Selected Readings from Hanging of the Greens (NLT)

Isaiah 9:6

For a child is born to us, a son is given to us. The government will rest on his shoulders. And he will be called: Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

Luke 1:31–33

You will conceive and give birth to a son, and you will name him Jesus. He will be very great and will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his ancestor David. And he will reign over Israel forever; his Kingdom will never end!

Luke 2:10–12

but the angel reassured them. “Don’t be afraid!” he said. “I bring you good news that will bring great joy to all people. The Savior—yes, the Messiah, the Lord—has been born today in Bethlehem, the city of David! And you will recognize him by this sign: You will find a baby wrapped snugly in strips of cloth, lying in a manger.”

Matthew 2:10–11

When they saw the star, they were filled with joy! They entered the house and saw the child with his mother, Mary, and they bowed down and worshiped him. Then they opened their treasure chests and gave him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh.

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Day 1 A Promise Worth Waiting For

Monday, November 30

Theme

The first Advent candle reminds us that God kept His promise by sending Jesus.

Scripture

Isaiah 9:6–7 and Luke 1:31–33 (NLT)

Devotional

When the first Advent candle was lit yesterday, there were still three candles to go. It's a small thing to notice, but it fits the beginning of Advent. God's people had lived for generations with promises they were still waiting to see fulfilled.

Isaiah spoke of a child who would reign with justice and peace. Gabriel told Mary she would name her son Jesus and that He would reign forever. We heard those promises close together in worship. This week, a candle on a table or in a window can remind us that the child God promised really came.

Going Deeper

Read Isaiah 9:7 again. Notice what God promises about the character of this King's rule. Bring one place that needs His justice or peace before Him in prayer.

Quote from Sunday's Service

"Let every heart prepare Him room!" (Responsive Reading)

Reflect

1. Which name in Isaiah 9:6 has stayed with me since Sunday?

2. How does remembering that God kept His promise help me with something I'm waiting for?

Today's Practice

Pause when you see a candle or Christmas light. Thank God for sending the King He promised.

Closing Prayer

Our Heavenly Father, thank You for keeping Your promise to send Jesus. Help me hope in Him as I wait for things I cannot yet see. Amen.

Day 2 The Green That Stays

Tuesday, December 1

Theme

The evergreens and wreaths remind us of the enduring love of the God who sent Jesus.

Scripture

Jeremiah 31:1–4 and John 1:14 (NLT)

Devotional

In the sanctuary on Sunday, evergreens appeared where there had been bare spaces. Outside, bare branches are part of the view this time of year. The green that remains can give us a moment to remember how God loves His people.

Jeremiah spoke God's promise of restoration to people who had known loss. God told them His love was everlasting. At Christmas we see how near God comes to us in Jesus. John says the Word became human and made His home among us. When we see a wreath this week, we can remember the love that brought Jesus into our world.

Going Deeper

Read John 1:14 slowly. Notice what John says about the One who lived among us and what His life made visible.

Quote from Sunday's Service

"We are reminded of God's everlasting love for us." (The Wreaths)

Reflect

1. Where in my life do I need the reminder that God still loves me?

2. What does Jesus drawing near show me about the way God loves?

Today's Practice

Give someone a few unhurried minutes today. Ask how they're doing and listen with care.

Closing Prayer

Father, thank You for Your enduring love and for coming near to us in Jesus. Give me time and attention to share with someone today. Amen.

Day 3 A Savior in a Manger

Wednesday, December 2

Theme

The nativity helps us see that the Savior God sent came near in humble circumstances.

Scripture

Luke 2:1–12 (NLT)

Devotional

On Sunday we watched the nativity take shape a few figures at a time. In Luke's account, the baby is laid in a manger, and shepherds hear the news while they are at work in the fields. The angel tells them where to look and calls the child Savior, Messiah, and Lord.

Give yourself a moment to picture those two details together: someone lying in a feeding trough, and an angel saying He is Lord. The manger nails we placed on the tree added a short reminder of where this story leads. Jesus came to save us. The One who lay in the manger gave His life for us and rose again.

Going Deeper

Read Matthew 1:21. How does the angel's announcement to Joseph explain what it means to call Jesus Savior?

Quote from Sunday's Service

"I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people." (The Angels reading)

Reflect

1. What detail of the nativity helps me picture how Jesus came?

2. What does it mean for me today that the child the angels announced is my Savior?

Today's Practice

Stop by a nativity if you see one today. Take fifteen seconds to thank Jesus for coming for you.

Closing Prayer

Jesus, thank You for coming so near and for giving Yourself for us. Let the joy of Your birth bring me back to You today. Amen.

Day 4 Praise and Prayer

Thursday, December 3

Theme

The horns and praying hands help us answer Jesus' coming with praise and trust.

Scripture

Psalm 150:1–6 and Philippians 4:6–7 (NLT)

Devotional

We heard about trumpets in worship and then sang about the angels. A little later, the doves and praying hands went on the tree, and we became quiet enough to pray. There was room for both in the same service.

There is room for both in an ordinary December day too. A song on the way to work may help you thank God for sending Jesus. Later you may need to sit in the car a moment and pray about something you're carrying. Isaiah calls the promised child the Prince of Peace. We can praise Him for coming near and bring Him the concerns that are still with us.

Going Deeper

Read Luke 2:13–14. Listen for what the angels say about glory and peace. How does their praise help you pray?

Quote from Sunday's Service

"Jesus is the Prince of Peace." (The Doves & Praying Hands)

Reflect

1. What would I like to thank God for today?

2. What worry can I bring to Jesus in one honest sentence?

Today's Practice

Name one thing you're grateful for and one thing you need. Offer both to God in prayer.

Closing Prayer

Jesus, Prince of Peace, thank You for coming near. Help me bring You my concerns and remember the reasons I have to praise You. Amen.

Day 5 Come and Worship

Friday, December 4

Theme

The Magi and the shepherds help us see how joy at Jesus' birth can move us to worship and share the news.

Scripture

Matthew 2:9–11 and Luke 2:15–20 (NLT)

Devotional

On Sunday the Magi were set apart from the manger to remind us that their visit came later. Matthew lets us see the moment they reach the child. They are filled with joy, bow down, and offer their gifts. Luke tells us that the shepherds came sooner and that they told people what they had heard and seen.

This weekend there will be another round of Christmas plans and conversations. Where might there be a moment to slow down and worship Jesus? You might read a few verses before you turn on the tree lights. You might also have the chance to mention what made our service meaningful to you. A sentence can be enough to share what you're looking forward to celebrating.

Going Deeper

Read Luke 2:20 again. The shepherds returned to their work praising God. Think about where you'll return after worship this week and how you might carry that joy with you.

Quote from Sunday's Service

"Go, share the good news that Jesus Christ is Born!" (Closing Remarks)

Reflect

1. What about Jesus' birth gives me a reason to worship today?
2. Who might enjoy hearing what one Advent symbol means to me?

Today's Practice

Choose one familiar Advent song and sing or listen to it as a prayer of worship.

Closing Prayer

Jesus, thank You for the joy of Your birth. Receive my worship today and give me simple words to share the good news. Amen.