



ASCENSION  
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH  
2014 ADVENT READINGS



Man's maker was made man,  
that He, Ruler of the stars, might nurse at His mother's breast;  
that the Bread might hunger,  
the Fountain thirst,  
the Light sleep,  
the Way be tired on its journey;  
that the Truth might be accused of false witness,  
the Teacher be beaten with whips,  
the Foundation be suspended on wood;  
that Strength might grow weak;  
that the Healer might be wounded;  
that Life might die.

(Augustine of Hippo, 354-430 A.D.)

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 30  
THE FIRST SUNDAY IN ADVENT

Read Genesis 38. (This is today's sermon text.) Tamar was the first woman named in the genealogy of Jesus Christ (Matthew 1). What was the main point of the sermon today? How does it engage you in your life? Talk about it with someone.

MONDAY, DECEMBER 1

Take your bulletin from yesterday's Worship service (you can also get the pdf online at [ascensionpc.org/sermons](http://ascensionpc.org/sermons)), and read or sing the lyrics from a song that catches your interest. Use the lyrics as a prayer about your relationship with God.

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 2

Read Genesis 3:14-15. God cursed the serpent for tempting the original couple to sin. Curiously, included in this curse is the ancient, puzzling promise that the woman's Offspring, or "Seed," would one day vanquish the devil—at some cost to himself. "The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the works of the devil. No one born of God makes a practice of sinning, for God's Seed abides in him..." (1 John 3:8-9). Jesus Christ is the promised Seed, the divine and human Son, whose coming has been long-expected. The One who came to destroy the devil lives in you, to grant you his own victory. "The God of peace will soon crush Satan under your feet. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you" (Romans 16:20).

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 3

Take some time in prayer today to consider these names attributed to Jesus in the Bible. Read them aloud and confess how Jesus is (or is not) these things to you:

Immanuel ("God With Us"); King of Kings and Lord of Lords; Suffering Servant

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 4

Read Daniel 7:13-14. According to this text, what do you imagine the Son of Man would be like? Now read Mark 10:42-45. According to Jesus' words about himself, what is the Son of Man like? Is that surprising, considering what you read in Daniel 7? If so, why? What characterizes Jesus' everlasting dominion and indestructible kingdom? What characterizes those who belong to his kingdom?

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 5

Read Isaiah 11:1-10. Where is the glorious "resting place" of Jesus? Where does he sit, having accomplished his work on earth? He rules in righteousness through his Spirit. What do you think about the universal language of verses 9 and 10? God's plan to fill the earth with the knowledge of the Lord includes you. How do you participate?

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 6

Read Psalm 45. This is a psalm about the beauty and glory of the King and his bride. Now read Revelation 1:12-18 and 19:6-9. Who is the King? Who is the bride? What sorts of feelings are evoked by the thought of a wedding feast? Do these characterize your relationship with God in Christ? Your participation in Worship? Your hope for the future?

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 7  
THE SECOND SUNDAY IN ADVENT

Read Joshua 2. (This is today's sermon text.) Rahab was the second woman named in the genealogy of Jesus Christ (Matthew 1). What was the main point of the sermon today? How does it engage you in your life? Talk about it with someone.

MONDAY, DECEMBER 8

Take your bulletin from yesterday's Worship service (you can also get the pdf online at [ascensionpc.org/sermons](http://ascensionpc.org/sermons)), and read or sing the lyrics from a song that catches your interest. Use the lyrics as a prayer about your relationship with God.

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 9

Read Isaiah 9:1-7 and Philippians 4:4-7. Pray to know Jesus Christ in a way that brings you peace through all circumstances. Pray for his peace to rule in your life. Pray this also for specific family members, friends, city, and nation.

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 10

Take some time in prayer today to consider these names attributed to Jesus in the Bible. Read them aloud and confess how Jesus is (or is not) these things to you:

The Word of God; The Light of the World; Teacher; Wisdom from God

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 11

Read Hebrews 1:1-3. The Nicene Creed says that Jesus, the Son of God, is "very God of very God... of one substance with the Father." Jesus said, "If you had known me, you would have known my Father also. From now on you do know him and have seen him" (John 14:7). It is because Jesus is "the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature" that we can be absolutely sure that, when we know Jesus, we know God as he truly is. Do you know Jesus? If so, are you confident that you know really God through him? How does this confidence affect your other relationships?

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 12

Read Isaiah 45:22-23. The true God is no generic deity. He is a particular God, with unique attributes, unlike anything we could imagine left to ourselves. Now read Philippians 2:1-11. We see God in the Person of his Son, Jesus. What kind of God is he? According to this text, what are the results in your life of him being who he is? In the lives of everyone you know?

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 13

Read John 1:1-18. In the Northern Hemisphere, December sees long nights and dim days. We light up our homes as a symbol of the light of Christ coming into the dark world, the light that pushes the darkness back. *Post Tenebras Lux*: After Darkness, Light. Jesus said that we, his people, are the light of the world. This is especially true as we are gathered in his name to let him work among us through his Spirit. Prepare yourself to join God's people in Worship tomorrow...

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 14  
THE THIRD SUNDAY IN ADVENT

Read the Book of Ruth. (It won't take too long!) Ruth was the third woman named in the genealogy of Jesus Christ (Matthew 1). What was the main point of the sermon today? How does it engage you in your life? Talk about it with someone.

MONDAY, DECEMBER 15

Take your bulletin from yesterday's Worship service (you can also get the pdf online at [ascensionpc.org/sermons](http://ascensionpc.org/sermons)), and read or sing the lyrics from a song that catches your interest. Use the lyrics as a prayer about your relationship with God.

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 16

Read Micah 5:2-5a. Jesus' "coming forth is from of old, from ancient days." He is the first and the last, the beginning and the end. Not only is he eternal, but he is eternally for us, and when he came into time, into history, it was to care for us as a shepherd cares for his sheep. Now read John 10:1-18. Do you listen to his voice? Do you trust that he's worth following? Do you trust that he can protect you from any and every real danger?

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 17

Take some time in prayer today to consider these names attributed to Jesus in the Bible. Read them aloud and confess how Jesus is (or is not) these things to you:

Alpha and Omega; The Way, the Truth, and the Life;  
The Door of the Sheep; The Good Shepherd

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 18

Read Ezekiel 34:1-16. Have you been "burned" by the Church? Unfortunately, it has been too common an occurrence throughout the history of God's people—those in positions of authority tend to abuse that authority and oppress others. But that's a problem with sinners, not a problem with God or true authority. God doesn't ignore injustice, he hates it, and will eventually right all wrongs. His power, his authority, is one of love and healing. Jesus came to seek and to save the lost (Luke 19:10).

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 19

Read Revelation 21:1-8. One day, Jesus will come again to fix the world forever. He stands not just at the Beginning, but at the End as well. But this End will be, in a sense, a new Beginning that will never end. Right now, as our Great Shepherd (Hebrews 13:20-21), he is moving us along from sin to holiness and glory, and while that process includes some discipline, which may be unpleasant for a time, the ultimate purpose of his close personal attention to our lives is everlasting healing and flourishing.

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 20

Read Psalm 23. Where God's people gather is called the house of the Lord, the temple. Do you have a sufficiently corporate picture of your relationship with God in Christ? Sheep are usually found in a flock—when they're out on their own, something's wrong. Prepare yourself to join God's people in Worship tomorrow...

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 21  
THE FOURTH SUNDAY IN ADVENT

Read 2 Samuel 11. (This is today's sermon text.) Uriah's wife was the fourth woman named in the genealogy of Jesus Christ (Matthew 1). What was the main point of the sermon today? How does it engage you in your life? Talk about it with someone.

MONDAY, DECEMBER 22

Take your bulletin from yesterday's Worship service (you can also get the pdf online at [ascensionpc.org/sermons](http://ascensionpc.org/sermons)), and read or sing the lyrics from a song that catches your interest. Use the lyrics as a prayer about your relationship with God.

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 23

Read Luke 1:26-38. Consider the willingness of Mary to endure, for the rest of her life, suspicion about the origin of her Son. Is a relationship with Jesus worth public ridicule?

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 24  
CHRISTMAS EVE

Read Luke 2:1-20. Take five minutes from your busy day and spend it in silent praise. Also join God's people in praising him. Consider the Augustine quote on the inside front cover.

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 25  
CHRISTMAS DAY

Read Colossians 1:15-20. "He became what we are in order to enable us to become what he is" (Irenaeus, 2nd century). "What has not been assumed cannot be restored; it is what is united with God that is saved" (Gregory of Nazianzus, 4th century). "Christianity is a faith with Christmas in its DNA" (Peter Mead). "It was God who went into the far country, and it is man who returns home" (Karl Barth). "Christmas is not a dream, a moment of escapism. Christmas is the reality which shows up the rest of 'reality'" (N. T. Wright). The Incarnation of the Son of God—when God became flesh in the person of Jesus Christ—is the decisive, historical turning point that means joy. Celebrate!

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 26

Take some time in prayer today to consider these names attributed to Jesus in the Bible. Read them aloud and confess how Jesus is (or is not) these things to you:

Redeemer; Lamb of God; Friend of Sinners

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 27

Read Isaiah 52:13 – 53:12. How did God say he would provide for the forgiveness of your sins? What did he say would be the result? This was planned long before you were born—long before Jesus was born. Now read Ephesians 1:1-14. In fact, there was never a time, throughout eternity, before God loved you and planned to work through his Son to forgive you and unite you to himself. The result of your salvation is "the praise of his glory." Prepare yourself to join God's people in Worship tomorrow...

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 28  
CHRISTMAS SUNDAY

Read Luke 1:46-55. (This is today's sermon text.) Mary was Jesus' mother, the last woman named in his genealogy (Matthew 1). What was the main point of the sermon today? How does it engage you in your life? Talk about it with someone.