

**Advent Daily Office**  
**Week of December 13**

**Morning**

**Intro**

Welcome to the practice of the Daily Office. In this practice we are seeking to ground our lives more deeply in God's presence as we pause each morning, mid-day, and evening for silence, scripture, and prayer. This is the season of Advent. On the church calendar these four weeks are a time of preparation for Christmas. It is a time to get in touch with our deepest desires and the expectations we place on God. What do you desire this year; what are you longing for today? Advent is a time on the church calendar to get in touch with these desires and to wait expectantly for God to meet the deepest of our desires, the fruit of a life lived in the presence of Jesus.

Will you join us in this journey?

**Silence**

Let's begin in silence. Silence helps us to settle the internal and external noise and distractions that so often stand in the way of our ability to hear the Lord.

Take a deep breath.

Remember, right now, that God is personally present with you. The coming of Jesus, his incarnation, is a sign of God's incredible desire to be with us. Have you ever considered this? God wants so badly to be with you, that Jesus emptied himself and became one of us.

Take another deep breath. Remember that even now, scripture teaches, God is with you.

Take two minutes of silence to rest in the presence of the Lord.

**Scripture**

This morning, let's read Mary song of praise. This song is commonly called The Magnificat. It is one of the oldest Christian hymns. In Luke 1:46-55, Mary sings this song in respond to Elizabeth's pronouncement that the child in Mary's womb was the Messiah. Have you ever noticed that the first two people to recognize Jesus as the Messiah were women, Mary and Elizabeth?

In the story, Mary visits her cousin, and at the sound of her greeting Elizabeth's own child, John the Baptist, leaped in her womb. Elizabeth declares, "'God has blessed you above all women, and your child is blessed. Why am I so honored, that the mother of my Lord should visit me? When I heard your greeting, the baby in my womb jumped for joy. You are blessed because you believed that the Lord would do what he said."

Read Mary's response. Pay attention to the kind of kingdom described in Mary's song.

"Oh, how my soul praises the Lord.  
How my spirit rejoices in God my Savior!  
For he took notice of his lowly servant girl,  
and from now on all generations will call me blessed.  
For the Mighty One is holy,  
and he has done great things for me.  
He shows mercy from generation to generation  
to all who fear him.  
His mighty arm has done tremendous things!  
He has scattered the proud and haughty ones.  
He has brought down princes from their thrones  
and exalted the humble.  
He has filled the hungry with good things  
and sent the rich away with empty hands.  
He has helped his servant Israel

and remembered to be merciful.  
For he made this promise to our ancestors,  
to Abraham and his children forever.”

I invite you to read this scripture again. Is there a word or a phrase that stands out? Do you find yourself drawn to a particular part of the passage? Is the Holy Spirit shining a light on anything in these words?

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For he made this promise to our ancestors,  
to Abraham and his children forever.”

What word or phrase stood out?

Take a moment now and consider these words. What does the Lord have to say to you personally in them today?

Now I invite you to offer a prayer to the Lord. What do you want to say to God? What do you want to ask? Speak to the Lord and listen now. How is God responding to you?

Read this passage one final time. This time allow yourself to simply soak in the Word of God.

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and remembered to be merciful.  
For he made this promise to our ancestors,  
to Abraham and his children forever.”

Glory be to the Father, and to the son, and to the Holy Spirit. Amen.

**Mid-day**

We pause now in mid-day. How have you expected Jesus to be present today? How have you waited on the Lord?

**Silence**

Let's allow the hurry, anxiety, and distractions of the day to settle now as we let go and entrust it all to the one who is with us and loves us more than we can possibly understand.

Take a deep breath. Madeline L'Engle wrote, "There is nothing so secular that it cannot be sacred, and that is one of the deepest messages of the Incarnation." This means that Jesus is present in all of life, and he is present with you now.

Take another deep breath.

Take two minutes of silence to rest in the presence of the Lord.

**Prayer**

Will you join me in praying the third verse of O Come, Emmanuel?

O come, Thou Dayspring, from on high,  
And cheer us by Thy drawing nigh;  
Disperse the gloomy clouds of night,  
And death's dark shadows put to flight.

Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel  
Shall come to thee, O Israel.

Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel  
Shall come to thee, O Israel.

Amen

## **Evening**

### **Silence**

Tonight, we pause to rest in humble expectation for the Lord to come.

Let us first pause in silence, so the busyness of our day might settle and allow us to become more aware of our desires.

Take a deep breath.

Remember Jesus not only *is* with you, but Jesus *wants* to be with you.

Take another deep breath.

Take two minutes now to rest in the loving presence of Jesus.

### **Prayer**

In this season of expectation and waiting, we are coming to grips with the truth that our deepest desires are for love and joy and peace, but we cannot produce this fruit on our own. It is the fruit of the Spirit after all, not the fruit of our strength and will. Our desires are only fulfilled in the presence of Jesus.

Throughout this Advent season, our evening prayer will be the same, a simple prayer of reflection. Let's examine our day and notice when we waiting on the presence of the Lord and when we moved through the day in our own strength and will.

But let's begin by reviewing our day in gratitude. As you look back on the events of the day, for what are you grateful. Take a moment now and name your gratitude in the presence of Jesus

Now examine your day. When were you waiting on the presence of Jesus? How did you notice that God was with you as you went about the ordinary tasks of life? How did you trust God to meet your deepest desires? Pause now to consider.

As you continue examining your day, how did you move through the day in your own strength and will? When did you feel God was absent from your ordinary life? How did you try to bring about your deepest desires on your own? Pause now to consider.

Now choose one moment from your day and talk to the Lord about it. It may be a moment when you waiting on Jesus or one in which you worked alone, but take this time to have a conversation with God.

Finally, let's look ahead to tomorrow. How might God be inviting you to walk more fully with Jesus tomorrow?

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit. Amen.

