

In the Waiting...

Weekly Advent Devotional 2018

Sunday December 16 – Saturday December 25

In the Waiting... is a weekly devotional booklet from Dec. 2 – Dec. 25, compiled of reflections written by Ascension members and friends. May this booklet be a support for you in your reflection and prayer time through this Advent season.



Drawing by Megan Johnson
From the 2012 Advent Devotional,
In God We Hope

Sunday December 16, 2018

This morning Ascension Lutheran Church's choir presented the good news of our Savior's birth in Joseph M. Martin's Cantata, "Invitation to a Miracle". We are blessed in this Advent season by all that were involved in this offering. Thank you!

Reflection question: How do you hear the Good News of Jesus' birth differently when sung versus spoken?

Prayer: *Stir up the wills of your faithful people, Lord God, and open our ears to the preaching of John, that, rejoicing in your salvation, we may bring forth the fruits of repentance; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.*

Monday December 17, 2018

"It's not time yet." I really disliked those words when I was a kid. Whether it was that the cookies had five more minutes to bake, or that it was five more weeks until my birthday, "It's not time yet" always meant that I had to wait, and waiting was hard. It still is. However, if I was able to wait patiently, there was a reward - a yummy chocolate chip cookie or presents to unwrap.

When I reread Matthew 1 and 2, I noticed how many times people had to wait because it wasn't time yet. Not only did Mary and Joseph have to wait for Jesus to be born, but they had to wait to come back from Egypt. It seems to me that this waiting for the right time is part of the story - part of God's plan. It is never easy to wait, but maybe that is the point - the discipline of waiting gives us and the world time to get ready for what is coming next. And, if we can wait patiently, there will be a reward.

Prayer: *Dear Lord, please help us find the patience to wait. Help us to remember that Your plans will come together in time, and that if we wait patiently, rewards will come. In Jesus' name, Amen.*

~Ingrid Daniels

Tuesday December 18, 2018

When I left Colorado, I was in the fourth grade. I was terribly sad to move to Kentucky because my family and I loved our house, neighbors, and our church. My dad promised we would move back eventually. I couldn't wait to move back to colorful Colorado. I couldn't wait for the sunny summer days, the mountains, my old friends from church, and bonfires with neighbors. I would miss a few things about Kentucky, but Colorado was where I belonged.

The trip from state to state was long. Not only had we hit a tremendous amount of weather, but on top of that, the RV had many complications. I was growing impatient by the time we were in Limon, Colorado. I had missed out on so much with my friends when I was gone. I was so anxious to see my home again.

I knew things would be different and that made me glum. I knew God was with me though. I knew that great new memories would happen. Colorado was so worth the wait. I have made and lost friends. I have had good and bad days. A lot has changed, but certain aspects of my life will always remain: the mountains, my family, my church, and my faith.

Prayer: *Lord, help me remember that you always have a plan. Let my faith be bigger than my fear. Help me trust that you will always be here. In your name we pray, Amen.*

~Emmalee Krieg

Wednesday December 19, 2018

When I was very young boy, I remember one Christmas Eve my father had me read the Christmas story. This was going against the tradition in our family. For as long as I could remember, we had gathered together on Christmas Eve in the library, after church, and after dinner, and my dad had read the Christmas story to us. Like any other kid, I wasn't really interested in hearing somebody talk even more than I'd already been preached to for one day. I wanted to open "those gifts". The gifts that had been sitting under the tree for almost a week, 168 hours, 10,080 minutes, 604 thousand . . . well, you get the idea.

When I finished, it wasn't the same. I couldn't quite make out what was different, but it wasn't the same. The thrill of opening up "those gifts" wasn't there and in fact I kind of just went through the motions. This was a strange situation for me, especially at that age, and especially at that time of year. I went through the motions and that night when I went to bed my mind turned. I had grown up in the house of an officer, an officer who as a child had nothing. He had literally cleaned out the stables on his farm as a child - a smelly, dank place and yet the son of God would come from such a place. As I lay in bed thinking about all these things, I really didn't have it that bad. There were other kids out there that were really struggling. Who is to say that one of these kids wouldn't find the cure for a disease that's the bane of our civilization, or be the spiritual leader of our civilization... makes you think, doesn't it!?

It all started with a little baby who came in to this world just like us -or worse ...

Prayer: *Dear Heavenly Father, help us to realize what we have and appreciate it ... and what you have given us so dearly - your only Son, who was born to this world under such meager circumstances and rose to such greatness, and give us the strength to follow his example.. . . in your Son's Name we pray, Amen.*

~Marshall Nielsen

Thursday December 20, 2018

Waiting for Christmas as a child was painful, all I wanted as a young child were the gifts. As I grew older, Christmas was still painful to wait for, but not for the gifts. I transitioned from waiting for gifts to waiting to see family and for Christmas Eve service. Waiting seems to constantly occur and seems never ending. I feel like at this point in my life I am waiting on the “real” adulthood to start.

I am waiting to graduate college and move onto graduate school. I am waiting to be financially stable, so I can travel and buy a house. I am especially waiting to find a spouse, someone who meets my expectations and will love me unconditionally. I feel like lately all I have been doing is waiting. I know though, that patience is key.

Waiting for Christ to come into this world was not easy, but the consequence was unbeatable. Waiting can feel unbearable, like “when will this semester be over?” and “when will I find a guy that actually gets me?” or even “when will my tax return come in?” The reality is, waiting is inevitable, but it is important to remember our patience will be rewarded. Christ was eventually born, and I know that someday all my waiting will end as well. It is our faith and hope that gets us through this season of waiting because eventually the waiting will end, and the joy will begin.

Prayer: *Dear Lord, I ask that you stay close in this time of waiting. Allow for me to be stung in my faith and not to wonder. As I know Lord waiting can seem like you are absent or not with me, but I know you have joy and happiness planned out for me. Lord guide me and keep me safe through this time in my life. Amen.*

~Selina Krieg

Friday December 21, 2018

“It is Christmas every time you let God love others through you...yes, it is Christmas every time you smile at your brother and offer him your hand.”

~Mother Teresa

Saturday December 22, 2018

Wait is a four-letter word. Wait in line. Wait at the red light. Wait for the weekend. Wait for the vacation. Wait for life to show us what we're waiting for. Hurry up and wait. *!#% . Waiting is uncomfortable.

Waiting creates anticipation about what is unknown to become known and anticipation about what is known to come to pass. When we're young, we wait for life's milestones to come to pass and when we're old, we wait for what's unknown to become known.

As a somewhat older person, many of the things I waited for I now see in the rearview mirror. Careers, marriage, living to accomplish goals and tangible things...been there, done that. Now that all that's been done, what's next? I'm waiting for that to become known.

I have experience waiting. It's still uncomfortable and being the first car at every red light makes this old lady want to get out and have a fit in the middle of the street. I don't know what my old age will bring or even what I want to do. Waiting has given me the belief that

I'll know what I need to know when it's time to know it. So instead of a lot of anticipating, I'll take a cue from my cat and live in the present.



~Arlayne McKee

Sunday December 23, 2018

Prayer: *Stir up your power, Lord Christ, and come. With your abundant grace and might, free us from the sin that binds us, that we may receive you in joy and serve you always, for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.*

Monday December 24, 2018

Christmas Eve

Waiting. A term that I am becoming more and more familiar with. When you are little, you wait FOREVER to get older, taller, less awkward and clumsy. Waiting becomes majority of your life. Even now, I am always anticipating the nearest break, to get my driver's license, to graduate high school. A lot of life revolves around waiting.

In the story of Jesus's birth, we are all reminded of the joys that can come from an eternity of waiting. Mary waited for 9 long months, unsure of everything in her future. A dreading teenager anticipating her life to come is a tale all too familiar to us.

But once her child was born, Mary is overcome with joy. Her heart fills with pure love. The entire world rejoices for the newborn King. The product of those countless moments of utter terror all paid off the second she saw the man people would call Love himself. Waiting, although one of the most challenging things to do, produces the most happiness, the most wonder, and the most joy.

Prayer: *Dear Lord, as we are in this time of waiting, help us to remember you are with us. Remind us that through the difficulty of waiting comes the most joy. Guide us through the challenges of anticipating and remind us of the good to come. Amen.*

~Millie Bramschreiber

Tuesday December 25, 2018

Christmas Day

Advent, as we know from the dictionary definition, is the arrival of a notable person, thing or event. Our spiritual connotation of Advent, again, as we know it, is the time of expectant waiting and preparation for the celebration of the Nativity of Jesus.

As a small child, I already understood the meaning of expectant waiting for the celebration of the Nativity of Jesus thanks to the education of my parents and the Catholic Sisters. I was about to learn the dictionary definition of the word advent as well. On December 16, my parents, brother Jim, and I were in a car riding to upstate New York to visit our relatives to celebrate our Christmas with them. Approximately 25 minutes into the drive, an off-duty policeman swerved into our lane, hit our car and forced my dad, mom, and brother and I to be passengers of a vehicle that was turned upside down and in a ravine.

All of us were relatively fine except for my dad. He was pinned under the car. When they removed him, they put us in an ambulance and he reached over to me and told me everything would be alright. I knew it would be even though he was covered in blood and almost unrecognizable. I started praying then and there during this Advent Season while I awaited the coming of Jesus, I would also wait for my dad to come home to me healthy.

I was many nights of praying before I could even see my dad. However, my waiting was over. On Christmas morning, my prayers were answered. We not only celebrated the end of our waiting for the arrival of Jesus in our celebration, but we celebrated the arrival of my dad Christmas Day. He was in a wheel chair and had to return to the hospital, but I knew my prayers were answered by our Savior and that one day soon my dad would be home to stay. Many months later he was. This man who care more for his faith and family than life itself lived another 42 years. He taught me the patience of waiting and the power of prayer. I miss him. However, I have started waiting and praying again. See you soon dad.



~Jim DeLoughry
2013 Advent Devotional,
The Light Shine in the Darkness