

2025

A warm, golden-toned photograph of a Nativity scene. Mary is seated on the left, holding the infant Jesus. Joseph stands on the right. The scene is set in a stable with wooden beams and straw bedding. The background is dark, with some figures visible in the upper corners.

Let HEAVEN AND NATURE SING

Season of the Nativity Devotional

Fayetteville First United Methodist Church

Week 2

Hello!

Welcome to the second week of our Season of the Nativity Devotional:
Let Heaven and Nature Sing.

In this holy season, we join heaven and nature as they worship in hopeful expectation of Christ's return, when everything will be made new. Worship, however, is not just confined to singing or going to a worship service. Indeed, because of the gifts of Christ, worship becomes our primary vocation. We become living sacrifices.

We also know this season as Advent. Advent comes from the Latin *adventus*, meaning "coming"—a reminder that we wait not in idleness, but with anticipation and longing.

This time of year is busy, of course; life always seems to be speeding up. Instead of being swept up in the rush, we invite you to pause, to reflect, and to consider how you might join the song that is already rising all around us.

Let heaven and nature sing!



*“O Come, O Come Emmanuel
And ransom captive Israel
That mourns in lonely exile here
Until the Son of God appear.
Rejoice, Rejoice - Emmanuel
Shall come to you, O Israel.”
9th Cent. Latin;
translated by Henry Sloane Coffin*

Monday, December 8

*Someone is shouting in the wilderness, “Get the road ready for the Lord,
make a straight path for him to travel!”
-Mark 1:3 (GNB)*

It can be easy to overlook, but each day we’re given the privilege of helping clear the way for God’s Kingdom in this world. We do this through the ways we act and treat others, and by making intentional space in our lives to grow closer to Jesus.

On the lines below, take a moment to reflect on what that might look like in your life. Where is there a need for peace? Where is there a need for grace and generosity? Where is there a need for nearness where distance has taken root?

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Tuesday, December 9

“For a child has been born for us, a son given to us; authority rests upon his shoulders, and he is named Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.”
-Isaiah 9:6

“One of the words most often associated with the coming Messiah is *peace*. The peace of Jesus Christ is reconciliation, a putting back together of relationships and realities torn apart by sin and suffering. The coming of Jesus is the beginning of this kind of peace, and while not yet complete, it only grows as we welcome Christ more into our lives and world.” -Adapted quote by Matt Miofsky, *Methodist Book of Daily Prayer*

One of the ways we most need peace is within our inner, anxious, and often distracted spirits. On the lines below, write some of your worries and distractions. Bring them before God in prayer, and ask for God’s peace.

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Wednesday, December 10

“Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled, and do not let them be afraid.” -John 14:27

Faithful living is centered on accepting Christ’s peace and not giving in to fear. We believe that though the night is dark and long, the Light always triumphs. But where do we begin the work of peace in our lives? Tish Harrison Warren writes, “I am increasingly aware that I cannot seek God’s peace and mission in the world without beginning right where I am, in my home, in my neighborhood, in my church, with the real people right around me.” -*Liturgy of the Ordinary*

Take a moment to notice what relationships in your life need the peace that Jesus offers. Write below some names of people you could reach out to or pray for.

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Thursday, December 11

*“And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father’s only son, full of grace and truth.”
-John 1:14*

“With the coming of his Son, God proves to us that he is invested in our everyday experience. Nothing is too ordinary, or boring, or insignificant for God to be involved in—he doesn’t have better things to do. Advent is a time to wake up to the reality that God already is closer to us than we can imagine.” -Josh Noem, *Draw Near: Daily Prayers For Advent and Christmas*

If Christ is truly present with us, then we can move through each day with comfort and peace. What actions have you been putting off because of fear? Write them below, and then spend time in God’s presence, confident that God is with you.

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Friday, December 12

“So faith by itself, if it has no works, is dead.” -James 2:17

“There is no authentic God experience which does not situate us in the world in a different way, and cause us to see things differently and act accordingly.”-Richard Rohr, *Everything Belongs*

God seeks not only to inform us through divine revelation and scripture, but also to shape how we live. God desires that we apply what we learn by grace so that we can be empowered to live in ways that reflect God’s gracious and renewing character.

In prayer, ask God to help you see the world anew. Then write below how you might show God’s love to people and creation.

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*“To shine upon those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death,
to guide our feet into the way of peace.” -Luke 1:79*

Some of the biblical writers draw deeply on the idea that people of faith are living in exile—that even when our present circumstances are blessed, life can still feel dark and difficult. C. S. Lewis wrote in *Mere Christianity*, “If I find in myself a desire which no experience in this world can satisfy, the most probable explanation is that I was made for another world.”

The Season of the Nativity reminds us that God shines light upon us and offers glimpses of the renewed world to come, even amid present darkness. On the lines below, write down some of your current challenges. Ask God to shine his light upon them and grant you peace.

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We'd love to worship with you this season.

Sunday Worship

8:45 a.m. — Chapel

11:00 a.m. — Sanctuary

Christmas Eve Services

4:00 p.m. — Sanctuary

6:00 p.m. — Sanctuary

11:00 p.m. — Chapel

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