

# Scriptures for Advent

## First Sunday in Advent - November 29

### **MARK 13:24-37**

<sup>24</sup> “During the days after this trouble comes, The sun will grow dark. And the moon will not give its light.

<sup>25</sup> The stars will fall from the sky. And everything in the sky will be changed.’

<sup>26</sup> “Then people will see the Son of Man coming in clouds with great power and glory. <sup>27</sup> The Son of Man will send his angels all around the earth. They will gather his chosen people from every part of the earth.

<sup>28</sup> “The fig tree teaches us a lesson: When its branches become green and soft, and new leaves begin to grow, then you know that summer is near. <sup>29</sup> So also when you see all these things happening, then you will know that the time is near, ready to come. <sup>30</sup> I tell you the truth. All these things will happen while the people of this time are still living. <sup>31</sup> The whole world, earth and sky, will be destroyed, but the words I have said will never be destroyed.

<sup>32</sup> “No one knows when that day or time will be. The Son and the angels in heaven don’t know. Only the Father knows. <sup>33</sup> Be careful! Always be ready!<sup>[a]</sup> You don’t know when that time will be. <sup>34</sup> It is like a man who goes on a trip. He leaves his house and lets his servants take care of it. He gives each servant a special job to do. One servant has the work of guarding the door. The man tells this servant always to be watchful. This is what I am now telling you. <sup>35</sup> You must always be ready. You don’t know when the owner of the house will come back. He might come in the evening, or at midnight, or in the early morning, or when the sun rises. <sup>36</sup> He might come back quickly. If you are always ready, then he will not find you sleeping. <sup>37</sup> I tell you this, and I say this to everyone: ‘Be ready!’”

### **Isaiah 64:1-9**

<sup>64</sup> Tear open the skies and come down to earth. The mountains would tremble before you.

<sup>2</sup> Be like a fire that burns twigs. Be like a fire that makes water boil.

Do this so that your enemies will know who you are. Then all nations will shake with fear when they see you.

<sup>3</sup> You have done amazing things that we did not expect. You came down, and the mountains trembled before you. <sup>4</sup> From long ago no one has ever heard of a God like you. No one has ever seen a God besides you. You help the people who trust you. <sup>5</sup> You help those who enjoy doing good. You help those who remember how you want them to live. But you were angry because we sinned. For a long time we disobeyed. How will we be saved? <sup>6</sup> All of us are dirty with sin. All the right things we have done are like filthy pieces of cloth. All of us are like dead leaves. Like the wind our sins have carried us away.

<sup>7</sup> No one worships you. No one even asks you to help us. So you have turned away from us. And we are destroyed because of our sins. <sup>8</sup> But Lord, you are our father. We are like clay, and you are the potter.

Your hands made us all. <sup>9</sup> Lord, don’t continue to be angry with us. Don’t remember our sins forever. Please, look at us because we are your people.

### **PSALM 80:1-7, 17-19 A Prayer to Bring Israel Back.**

<sup>80</sup> Shepherd of Israel, listen to us. You lead the people of Joseph like a flock.

You sit on your throne between the gold creatures with wings. Show your greatness <sup>2</sup> to the people of Ephraim, Benjamin and Manasseh. Use your strength. Come and save us. <sup>3</sup> God, take us back. Show us your kindness so we can be saved. <sup>4</sup> Lord God of heaven’s armies, how long will you be angry at the prayers of your people?

<sup>5</sup> You have fed your people tears. You have made them drink many tears. <sup>6</sup> You made those around us fight over us. Our enemies make fun of us. <sup>7</sup> God of heaven’s armies, take us back. Show us your kindness so we can be saved.

### **Psalms 80:17-19 International Children’s Bible**

<sup>17</sup> Help the man you have chosen. Make this human being strong for your service. <sup>18</sup> Then we will not turn away from you. Give us life again, and we will call to you for help. <sup>19</sup> Lord God of heaven’s armies, take us back. Show us your kindness so we can be saved.

## **SECOND SUNDAY IN ADVENT DECEMBER 6**

### **Mark 1:1-8 John Prepares for Jesus**

**1** This is the beginning of the Good News about Jesus Christ, the Son of God, <sup>2</sup> as the prophet Isaiah wrote: “I will send my messenger ahead of you. He will prepare your way.” <sup>3</sup> “There is a voice of a man who calls out in the desert: ‘Prepare the way for the Lord. Make the road straight for him.’”

<sup>4</sup> John was baptizing people in the desert. He preached a baptism of changed hearts and lives for the forgiveness of sins. <sup>5</sup> All the people from Judea and Jerusalem were going out to John. They told about the sins they had done. Then they were baptized by him in the Jordan River. <sup>6</sup> John wore clothes made from camel’s hair and had a leather belt around his waist. He ate locusts and wild honey. <sup>7</sup> This is what John preached to the people: “There is one coming later who is greater than I. I am not good enough even to kneel down and untie his sandals. <sup>8</sup> I baptize you with water. But the one who is coming will baptize you with the Holy Spirit.”

### **Isaiah 40:1-11 Israel’s Punishment Will End**

**40** Your God says, “Comfort, comfort my people.

<sup>2</sup> Speak kindly to the people of Jerusalem. Tell them that their time of service is finished.

Tell them that they have paid for their sins. Tell them that the Lord has punished Jerusalem twice for every sin they did.” <sup>3</sup> This is the voice of a man who calls out: “Prepare in the desert the way for the Lord.

Make the road in the dry lands straight for our God.

<sup>4</sup> Every valley should be raised up. Every mountain and hill should be made flat. The rough ground should be made level. The rugged ground should be made smooth.

<sup>5</sup> Then the glory of the Lord will be shown. All people together will see it. The Lord himself said these things.”

<sup>6</sup> A voice says, “Cry out!” Then I said, “What shall I cry out?” “Say all people are like the grass.

And all their strength is like the flowers of the field. <sup>7</sup> The grass dies, and the flowers fall. This is because the breath of the Lord blows on them. Surely the people are like grass. <sup>8</sup> The grass dies, and the flowers fall.

But the word of our God will live forever.” <sup>9</sup> Jerusalem, you have good news to tell. Go up on a high mountain. Jerusalem, you have good news to tell. Shout out loud the good news. Shout it out and don’t be afraid. Say to the towns of Judah, “Here is your God.” <sup>10</sup> Look, the Lord God is coming with power.

He will use his power to rule all the people. Look, he will bring reward for his people. He will have their payment with him. <sup>11</sup> The Lord takes care of his people like a shepherd. He gathers the people like lambs in his arms. He carries them close to him. He gently leads the mothers of the lambs.

### **Psalm 85:1-2 A Prayer for the Nation**

**85** Lord, you have been kind to your land. You gave the people of Jacob back their riches.

<sup>2</sup> You forgave the guilt of the people. You covered all their sins.

### **Psalm 85:8-13**

<sup>8</sup> I will listen to God the Lord. He has ordered peace for his people who worship him. Don’t let them go back to foolishness. <sup>9</sup> God will soon save those who respect him. And his greatness will be seen in our land.

<sup>10</sup> Love and truth will belong to God’s people. Goodness and peace will be theirs. <sup>11</sup> On earth people will be loyal to God. And God’s goodness will shine down from heaven. <sup>12</sup> The Lord will give his goodness.

And the land will give its crops. <sup>13</sup> Goodness will go before God and prepare the way for him.

## **THIRD SUNDAY IN ADVENT DECEMBER 13**

### **Luke 1:46-55 Mary Praises God**

<sup>46</sup> Then Mary said, “My soul praises the Lord; <sup>47</sup> my heart is happy because God is my Savior.

<sup>48</sup> I am not important, but God has shown his care for me, his servant girl. From now on, all people will say that I am blessed, <sup>49</sup> because the Powerful One has done great things for me. His name is holy. <sup>50</sup> God will always give mercy to those who worship him. <sup>51</sup> God’s arm is strong. He scatters the people who are proud and think great things about themselves. <sup>52</sup> God brings down rulers from their thrones, and he raises up the humble.

<sup>53</sup> God fills the hungry with good things, but he sends the rich away with nothing. <sup>54</sup> God has helped his people Israel who serve him. He gave them his mercy. <sup>55</sup> God has done what he promised to our ancestors, to Abraham and to his children forever.”

### **Isaiah 61:1-4**

**61** The Lord God has put his Spirit in me. This is because he has appointed me to tell the good news to the poor. He has sent me to comfort those whose hearts are broken. He has sent me to tell the captives they are free. He has sent me to tell the prisoners that they are released. <sup>2</sup> He has sent me to announce the time when the Lord will show his kindness and the time when our God will punish evil people. He has sent me to comfort all those who are sad. <sup>3</sup> He has sent me to the sorrowing people of Jerusalem. I will give them a crown to replace their ashes. I will give them the oil of gladness to replace their sorrow. I will give them clothes of praise to replace their spirit of sadness. Then they will be called Trees of Goodness. They will be like trees planted by the Lord and will show his greatness. <sup>4</sup> They will rebuild the old ruins. They will build up the places destroyed long ago. They will repair the ruined cities that were destroyed for so long.

### **Isaiah 61:8-11**

<sup>8</sup> The Lord says, "I love justice. I hate stealing and everything that is wrong. I will be fair and give my people what they should have. I will make an agreement with them that will continue forever. <sup>9</sup> Everyone in all nations will know the children of my people. And their children will be known among the nations. Anyone who sees them will know that the Lord blesses them." <sup>10</sup> The Lord makes me very happy. All that I am rejoices in my God. The Lord has covered me with clothes of salvation. He has covered me with a coat of goodness. I am like a bridegroom dressed for his wedding. I am like a bride dressed in jewels. <sup>11</sup> The earth causes plants to grow. And a garden causes the seeds planted there to grow. In the same way the Lord God will make grow what is right. He will make praise come from all the nations.

### **Psalms 126**

**126** When the Lord gave the riches back to Jerusalem, it seemed as if we were dreaming. <sup>2</sup> Then we were filled with laughter, and we sang happy songs. Then the other nations said, "The Lord has done great things for them." <sup>3</sup> The Lord has done great things for us, and we are very glad. <sup>4</sup> Lord, give us back our riches again. Do this as you bring streams to the desert. <sup>5</sup> Those who cry as they plant crops will sing at harvest time. <sup>6</sup> Those who cry as they carry out the seeds will return singing and carrying bundles of grain.

## **FOURTH SUNDAY IN ADVENT DECEMBER 20**

### **Luke 1:26-45** The Virgin Mary

<sup>26-27</sup> During Elizabeth's sixth month of pregnancy, God sent the angel Gabriel to a virgin who lived in Nazareth, a town in Galilee. She was engaged to marry a man named Joseph from the family of David. Her name was Mary. <sup>28</sup> The angel came to her and said, "Greetings! The Lord has blessed you and is with you."

<sup>29</sup> But Mary was very confused by what the angel said. Mary wondered, "What does this mean?"

<sup>30</sup> The angel said to her, "Don't be afraid, Mary, because God is pleased with you. <sup>31</sup> Listen! You will become pregnant. You will give birth to a son, and you will name him Jesus. <sup>32</sup> He will be great, and people will call him the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of King David, his ancestor. <sup>33</sup> He will rule over the people of Jacob forever. His kingdom will never end." <sup>34</sup> Mary said to the angel, "How will this happen? I am a virgin!" <sup>35</sup> The angel said to Mary, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will cover you. The baby will be holy. He will be called the Son of God. <sup>36</sup> Now listen! Elizabeth, your relative, is very old. But she is also pregnant with a son. Everyone thought she could not have a baby, but she has been pregnant for six months. <sup>37</sup> God can do everything!" <sup>38</sup> Mary said, "I am the servant girl of the Lord. Let this happen to me as you say!" Then the angel went away.

### Mary's Visit

<sup>39</sup> Mary got up and went quickly to a town in the mountains of Judea. <sup>40</sup> She went to Zechariah's house and greeted Elizabeth. <sup>41</sup> When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the unborn baby inside Elizabeth jumped. Then Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit. <sup>42</sup> She cried out in a loud voice, "God has blessed you more than any other woman. And God has blessed the baby which you will give birth to. <sup>43</sup> You are the mother of my Lord, and you have come to me! Why has something so good happened to me? <sup>44</sup> When I heard your voice, the baby inside me jumped with joy. <sup>45</sup> You are blessed because you believed what the Lord said to you would really happen."

## **2 Samuel 7:1-11**

**7** King David was living in his palace. And the Lord gave him peace from all his enemies around him. <sup>2</sup> David said to Nathan the prophet, “Look, I am living in a palace made of cedar wood. But the Ark of the Covenant of God is still kept in a tent!” <sup>3</sup> Nathan said to the king, “Go and do what you really want to do. The Lord is with you.” <sup>4</sup> But that night the Lord spoke his word to Nathan. The Lord said, <sup>5</sup> “Go and tell my servant David, ‘This is what the Lord says: You are not the person to build a house for me to live in. <sup>6</sup> I did not live in a house when I brought the Israelites out of Egypt. I have been moving around all this time with a tent as my home. <sup>7</sup> I have continued to move with the tribes of Israel. But I have never asked their leaders who take care of them to build me a house of cedar wood.’ <sup>8</sup> “You must tell my servant David, ‘This is what the Lord of heaven’s armies says: I took you from the pasture when you were following the sheep. I took you to become leader of my people, the Israelites. <sup>9</sup> I have been with you everywhere you have gone. I have defeated your enemies for you. I will make you as famous as any of the great men on the earth. <sup>10</sup> Also I will choose a place for my people, the Israelites. I will plant them so they can live in their own home. They will not be bothered anymore. Wicked people will no longer make them suffer as they have in the past. <sup>11</sup> Wicked people continued to do this even when I appointed judges. But I will give you peace from all your enemies. I also tell you that I will make your descendants kings of Israel after you.”

## **2 Samuel 7:16**

<sup>16</sup> But your family and your kingdom will continue forever before me. Your rule will last forever.”

## **Psalms 89:1-4**

**89** I will always sing about the Lord’s love. I will tell of his loyalty from now on. <sup>2</sup> I will say, “Your love continues forever. Your loyalty goes on and on like the sky.” <sup>3</sup> You said, “I made an agreement with the man of my choice. I made a promise to my servant David. <sup>4</sup> I told him, ‘I will make your family continue forever. Your kingdom will continue from now on.’”

## **Psalms 89:19-26**

<sup>19</sup> Once, in a vision, you spoke to those who worship you. You said, “I have given strength to a warrior. I have selected a young man from my people. <sup>20</sup> I have found my servant David. I appointed him by pouring holy oil on him. <sup>21</sup> I will steady him with my hand. I will strengthen him with my arm. <sup>22</sup> No enemy will make him give forced payments. Wicked people will not defeat him. <sup>23</sup> I will crush his enemies in front of him. I will defeat those who hate him. <sup>24</sup> My loyalty and love will be with him. Through me he will be strong. <sup>25</sup> I will give him power over the sea and control over the rivers. <sup>26</sup> He will say to me, ‘You are my father, my God, the Rock, the one who saves me.’”

## **CHRISTMAS EVE DECEMBER 24**

### **Luke 2:1-20 The Birth of Jesus**

**2** At that time, Augustus Caesar sent an order to all people in the countries that were under Roman rule. The order said that they must list their names in a register. <sup>2</sup> This was the first registration taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. <sup>3</sup> And everyone went to their own towns to be registered. <sup>4</sup> So Joseph left Nazareth, a town in Galilee. He went to the town of Bethlehem in Judea. This town was known as the town of David. Joseph went there because he was from the family of David. <sup>5</sup> Joseph registered with Mary because she was engaged to marry him. (Mary was now pregnant.) <sup>6</sup> While Joseph and Mary were in Bethlehem, the time came for her to have the baby. <sup>7</sup> She gave birth to her first son. There were no rooms left in the inn. So she wrapped the baby with cloths and laid him in a box where animals are fed.

### **Some Shepherds Hear About Jesus**

<sup>8</sup> That night, some shepherds were in the fields nearby watching their sheep. <sup>9</sup> An angel of the Lord stood before them. The glory of the Lord was shining around them, and suddenly they became very frightened. <sup>10</sup> The angel said to them, “Don’t be afraid, because I am bringing you some good news. It will be a joy to all the people. <sup>11</sup> Today your Savior was born in David’s town. He is Christ, the Lord. <sup>12</sup> This is how you will know him: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a feeding box.”

<sup>13</sup> Then a very large group of angels from heaven joined the first angel. All the angels were praising God, saying: <sup>14</sup> “Give glory to God in heaven, and on earth let there be peace to the people who please God.”

<sup>15</sup> Then the angels left the shepherds and went back to heaven. The shepherds said to each other, "Let us go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened. We will see this thing the Lord told us about." <sup>16</sup> So the shepherds went quickly and found Mary and Joseph. <sup>17</sup> And the shepherds saw the baby lying in a feeding box. Then they told what the angels had said about this child. <sup>18</sup> Everyone was amazed when they heard what the shepherds said to them. <sup>19</sup> Mary hid these things in her heart; she continued to think about them. <sup>20</sup> Then the shepherds went back to their sheep, praising God and thanking him for everything that they had seen and heard. It was just as the angel had told them.

### **Isaiah 9:2-7**

<sup>2</sup> Now those people live in darkness. But they will see a great light. They live in a place that is very dark.

But a light will shine on them. <sup>3</sup> God, you will cause the nation to grow. You will make the people happy. And they will show their happiness to you. It will be like the joy during harvest time. It will be like the joy of people taking what they have won in war. <sup>4</sup> Like the time you defeated Midian, you will take away their heavy load. You will take away the heavy pole from their backs. You will take away the rod the enemy uses to punish your people. <sup>5</sup> Every boot that marched in battle will be destroyed. Every uniform stained with blood will be destroyed. They will be thrown into the fire. <sup>6</sup> A child will be born to us. God will give a son to us. He will be responsible for leading the people. His name will be Wonderful Counselor, Powerful God, Father Who Lives Forever, Prince of Peace. <sup>7</sup> Power and peace will be in his kingdom. It will continue to grow. He will rule as king on David's throne and over David's kingdom. He will make it strong, by ruling with goodness and fair judgment. He will rule it forever and ever. The Lord of heaven's armies will do this because of his strong love for his people.

### **FIRST SUNDAY AFTER CHRISTMAS DECEMBER 27**

**Luke 2:22-40** Jesus Is Presented in the Temple

<sup>22</sup> The time came for Mary and Joseph to do what the law of Moses taught about being made pure. They took Jesus to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord. <sup>23</sup> It is written in the law of the Lord: "Give every firstborn male to the Lord." <sup>24</sup> Mary and Joseph also went to offer a sacrifice, as the law of the Lord says: "You must sacrifice two doves or two young pigeons." <sup>25</sup> A man named Simeon lived in Jerusalem. He was a good man and very religious. He was waiting for the time when God would help Israel. The Holy Spirit was in him. <sup>26</sup> The Holy Spirit told Simeon that he would not die before he saw the Christ promised by the Lord. <sup>27</sup> The Spirit led Simeon to the Temple. Mary and Joseph brought the baby Jesus to the Temple to do what the law said they must do. <sup>28</sup> Then Simeon took the baby in his arms and thanked God: <sup>29</sup> "Now, Lord, you can let me, your servant, die in peace as you said. <sup>30</sup> I have seen your Salvation with my own eyes. <sup>31</sup> You prepared him before all people. <sup>32</sup> He is a light for the non-Jewish people to see. He will bring honor to your people, the Israelites." <sup>33</sup> Jesus' father and mother were amazed at what Simeon had said about him. <sup>34</sup> Then Simeon blessed them and said to Mary, "Many in Israel will fall and many will rise because of this child. He will be a sign from God that many people will not accept. <sup>35</sup> The things they think in secret will be made known. And the things that will happen will make your heart sad, too." <sup>36</sup> Anna, a prophetess, was there at the Temple. She was from the family of Phanuel in the tribe of Asher. Anna was very old. She had once been married for seven years. <sup>37</sup> Then her husband died and she lived alone. She was now 84 years old. Anna never left the Temple. She worshiped God by going without food and praying day and night. <sup>38</sup> She was standing there at that time, thanking God. She talked about Jesus to all who were waiting for God to free Jerusalem. <sup>39</sup> Joseph and Mary finished doing everything that the law of the Lord commanded. Then they went home to Nazareth, their own town in Galilee. <sup>40</sup> The little child began to grow up. He became stronger and wiser, and God's blessings were with him.

### **Isaiah 61:10-62:3**

<sup>10</sup> The Lord makes me very happy. All that I am rejoices in my God. The Lord has covered me with clothes of salvation. He has covered me with a coat of goodness. I am like a bridegroom dressed for his wedding. I am like a bride dressed in jewels. <sup>11</sup> The earth causes plants to grow. And a garden causes the seeds planted there to grow. In the same way the Lord God will make grow what is right. He will make praise come from all the nations. **62** Because I love Jerusalem, I will continue to speak for her. For Jerusalem's sake I will not stop speaking. I will speak until her goodness shines like a bright light. I will speak until her salvation burns bright like a flame. <sup>2</sup> Jerusalem, the nations will see your goodness. All kings will see your honor. Then you will have a new name. The Lord himself will give you that new name. <sup>3</sup> You will be like a beautiful crown in the Lord's hand. You will be like a king's crown in your God's hand.

## **EPIPHANY SUNDAY JANUARY 3 (CELEBRATED) JANUARY 6 (ACTUAL)**

### **Matthew 2:1-12** Wise Men Come to Visit Jesus

**2** Jesus was born in the town of Bethlehem in Judea during the time when Herod was king. After Jesus was born, some wise men from the east came to Jerusalem. <sup>2</sup> They asked, “Where is the baby who was born to be the king of the Jews? We saw his star in the east. We came to worship him.” <sup>3</sup> When King Herod heard about this new king of the Jews, he was troubled. And all the people in Jerusalem were worried too. <sup>4</sup> Herod called a meeting of all the leading priests and teachers of the law. He asked them where the Christ would be born. <sup>5</sup> They answered, “In the town of Bethlehem in Judea. The prophet wrote about this in the Scriptures: <sup>6</sup> ‘But you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, you are important among the rulers of Judah. A ruler will come from you. He will be like a shepherd for my people, the Israelites.’” <sup>7</sup> Then Herod had a secret meeting with the wise men from the east. He learned from them the exact time they first saw the star. <sup>8</sup> Then Herod sent the wise men to Bethlehem. He said to them, “Go and look carefully to find the child. When you find him, come tell me. Then I can go worship him too.” <sup>9</sup> The wise men heard the king and then left. They saw the same star they had seen in the east. It went before them until it stopped above the place where the child was. <sup>10</sup> When the wise men saw the star, they were filled with joy. <sup>11</sup> They went to the house where the child was and saw him with his mother, Mary. They bowed down and worshiped the child. They opened the gifts they brought for him. They gave him treasures of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. <sup>12</sup> But God warned the wise men in a dream not to go back to Herod. So they went home to their own country by a different way.

### **Isaiah 60:1-6** Jerusalem Will Be Great

**60** “Jerusalem, get up and shine. Your light has come. The glory of the Lord shines on you. <sup>2</sup> Darkness now covers the earth. Deep darkness covers her people. But the Lord shines on you, and people see his glory around you. <sup>3</sup> Nations will come to your light. Kings will come to the brightness of your sunrise. <sup>4</sup> “Look around you. People are gathering and coming to you. They are your sons coming from far away. And your daughters are coming with them. <sup>5</sup> When you see them, you will shine with happiness. You will be excited and full of joy. The wealth of the nations across the seas will be given to you. The riches of the nations will come to you. <sup>6</sup> Herds of camels will cover your land. Young camels will come from Midian and Ephah. People will come from Sheba bringing gold and incense. And they will sing praises to the Lord.