



Advent 2024 -- Major Messages from Minor Prophets and Waiting for the World to Change

Advent is the time of waiting. In the hundreds of years before Jesus came to our world, the people of God listened—and didn't listen—to the prophets. And they waited. And waited. And waited. While we wait for Jesus to return once again and make all the wrongs into right relationships between God and people and the created world, I think we can learn from the prophets and put some of their lessons into practice. Join us in this season of Advent by listening and doing. We have things to do while we wait.

-- *Pastor Joanna*



December 1

Now this is what the Lord Almighty says: "Give careful thought to your ways. You have planted much, but harvested little. You eat, but never have enough. You drink, but never have your fill. You put on clothes, but are not warm. You earn wages, only to put them in a purse with holes in it." This is what the Lord Almighty says: "Give careful thought to your ways." -- Haggai 1:5-7

Look at your plans for December. Schedule time to spend with Jesus every day to find your contentment in him and not in more things.

December 2

"But now be strong, Zerubbabel," declares the Lord. "Be strong, Joshua son of Jozadak, the high priest. Be strong, all you people of the land," declares the Lord, "and work. For I am with you," declares the Lord Almighty." -- Haggai 2:4

December can be overwhelming. Spend some time in prayer asking God to give you strength to do the work he has called you to do. Then make a card and write the key portions of this verse on it. "But now be strong. Be strong. Be strong... and work. For I am with you."

December 3

"My Spirit remains among you. Do not fear." -- Haggai 2:5

"Since we live by the Spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit." -- Galatians 5:25

What are you afraid of today? Bring that fear to Jesus and listen to the Holy Spirit remind you of the promises he has made to be with you and fill you with strength. Who around you is afraid? Pray for them and then send them a message of encouragement.

December 4

My people are destroyed from lack of knowledge. Because you have rejected knowledge, I also reject you as my priests; because you have ignored the law of your God, I also will ignore your children. The more priests there were, the more they sinned against me; they exchanged their glorious God for something disgraceful. -- Hosea 4:6-7

Who is someone you admire for their relationship with God? Ask them what resource (book of the Bible, Christian book, preacher) has helped them trust and follow Jesus better. Then pursue that knowledge.

December 5

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What Christian book has helped you to grow closer to Jesus? Buy it and give it to someone who could also be helped.

December 6

He has shown all you people what is good. And what does the LORD require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God. -- Micah 6:8

Pray for the justice and mercy ministry of Wunders and consider giving a donation. Scan the QR code for more information or to donate.



December 7

“Gather together...seek the Lord, all you humble of the land, you who do what he commands. Seek righteousness, seek humility...” -- Zephaniah 2:1-3 (selected)

Come tomorrow to church, the Christmas potluck and to our society meeting gathering. Listen to what the Lord is doing at Central and seek his direction to do it together.

December 8

Look, there on the mountains, the feet of one who brings good news, who proclaims peace! -- Nahum 1:15

“your feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace.” -- Ephesians 5:15

Who can you send a message of peace or share good news with today? Maybe it is a friend who needs a phone call or a visit. Look for specific ways to share encouraging words.

December 9

“And afterward, I will pour out my Spirit on all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your old men will dream dreams, your young men will see visions.” -- Joel 2:28

Set up a time to spend with someone older or younger than you. Ask about their dreams and hopes for the future. Pray together for the future.

December 10

On that day... someone will wail bitterly: “We are utterly destroyed! He exchanges the portion of my people; he removes what belongs to me; he gives away our fields to a rebel. – Micah 2:4

Write out a prayer of lament today. Tell God the sadness or anger or hopelessness that you feel. Trust that he can handle your pain.

December 11

He will judge between many peoples and will settle disputes for strong nations far and wide. They will beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks. Nation will not take up sword against nation, nor will they train for war anymore. – Micah 3:3,4

Pray for peace in our world. Pray for people who are working for peace and for people who are living in wartorn areas who long for peace.

December 12

How long, LORD, must I call for help, but you do not listen? Or cry out to you, “Violence!” but you do not save?
–Habakkuk 1:2

****Tonight is the Blue Christmas service. Join us at 7:00 p.m. to lament and reach out for God’s hope together.*

December 13

The Lord your God is with you, the Mighty Warrior who saves. He will take great delight in you; in his love he will no longer rebuke you, but will rejoice over you with singing.” – Zephaniah 3:17

What is a worship song that brings you comfort and joy? Listen to it today. And then text/email/message it to someone you think may find comfort and joy from it as well.

December 14

“Return to me, declares the Lord, “and I will return to you.” – Zechariah 1:3

Take a heart inventory today. Is there something you have not been releasing to God? Say a prayer of open hands. Then ask him if there is something He would like you to do or not do related to it.

December 15

“Not by might, not by power, but by my Spirit,” says the Lord Almighty. – Zechariah 4:6

Is there something that feels impossible to you right now but you think God has asked you to be part of doing? Pray about it and ask the Spirit to give you courage to take the next step.

December 16

A book of remembrance was written of those who feared the Lord. -- Malachi 3:16

Send a thank you card today to someone who has been an example of following Jesus to you. Tell them that you see and remember what they have done.

December 17

Mary said, "With all my heart I glorify the Lord! In the depths of who I am I rejoice in God my savior. He has looked with favor on the low status of his servant. Look! From now on, everyone will consider me highly favored because the mighty one has done great things for me. Holy is his name. -- Luke 1:46-49

These are part of Mary's prophetic words. What great thing has God done for you? Who needs God to do a great thing for them? Pray for them today and then let them know that you prayed.

December 18

After Jesus was born in Bethlehem in the territory of Judea during the rule of King Herod, magi came from the east to Jerusalem. They asked, "Where is the newborn king of the Jews? We've seen his star in the east, and we've come to honor him." When King Herod heard this, he was troubled, and everyone in Jerusalem was troubled with him. He gathered all the chief priests and the legal experts and asked them where the Christ was to be born. They said, "In Bethlehem of Judea, for this is what the prophet wrote: You, Bethlehem, land of Judah, by no means are you least among the rulers of Judah, because from you will come one who governs, who will shepherd my people Israel." -- Matthew 2:1-6

***** The wise men reminded Herod of the prophet Micah's words. Come and see the animals they likely rode to see Jesus. Camels: Family Christmas Festival tonight at Central: 6:00-8:00 p.m. Bring a friend:*

December 19

He shows mercy to everyone, from one generation to the next, who honors him as God. -- Luke 1:50

Who is someone over 70 you know who would appreciate an "old-fashioned" expression of Christmas cheer? Like coming to visit and singing Christmas carols. Or bringing a small plate of cookies. Or making a craft together. Or calling just to catch up. Or receiving a Christmas card in the mail. Take some time to do it.

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Who is someone under 10 who would like to be introduced to an "old-fashioned" Christmas? Make plans to do that today:

December 20

He has shown strength with his arm. He has scattered those with arrogant thoughts and proud inclinations. He has pulled the powerful down from their thrones and lifted up the lowly. -- Luke 1:51-52

Sit with these prophetic words from Mary. Where do you fit in that prophecy? Write out a prayer for yourself and for our world.

December 21

He has filled the hungry with good things and sent the rich away empty-handed. He has come to the aid of his servant Israel, remembering his mercy, just as he promised to our ancestors, to Abraham and to Abraham's descendants forever. -- Luke 1:53-55

Hunger still exists in our world. One small program in the hills of Guatemala combats hunger with the love of Jesus. And makes a profound difference in a small community. We will be taking an offering for their work on Christmas Eve. Pray and ask God what he would have you give. (You can also give online at prayamerica.org.)

December 22

"Sing...shout aloud...be glad and rejoice with all your heart. The Lord has taken away your punishment, he has turned back your enemy. The Lord...is with you..." -- Zephaniah 3:14-15 (portions)

*****Join us for Christmas worship today at 11:00am. Declare the whole day a day of rejoicing. Have worship and Christmas music playing anytime you can. And sing along—even if you make a joyful noise.*

December 23

Read Zechariah's song in Luke 1:67-79.

Ask God how you can be like John the Baptist and make a way for someone else to know Jesus.

December 24

Read John 1:1-14 and imagine Jesus moving into your neighborhood. What would that look like today?

*****Join us for the Candlelight Christmas Eve service. Treats at 5:30 p.m. Service starts promptly at 6:00 p.m.*

December 25

Jesus is born! Celebrate by reading John 1:1-14 and/or Luke 2:1-20 out loud. Something special happens when we read God's word out loud as it was most often done in Jesus' time.



Advent & Christmas at Central

Women's Christmas Cocoa

Friday, December 6, 6:00-8:00pm

Ladies, join us for an evening of food, fellowship, and Christmas carols as we kick off the Christmas season. Bring a dish to pass. The more the merrier - feel free to invite a friend or several! Questions? Talk to Susie Kreh, Holly Woodbeck, or Caitlin Barshaw at church on Sunday.

Society Meeting & Christmas Lunch

Sunday, December 8, after 11am service

This is the annual meeting where we approve the 2025 budget and vote on leadership positions. Everyone is invited to meet and eat with us and receive updates. Only members may vote.

Blue Christmas Service

Thursday, December 12, 7:00pm

Blue Christmas service is offered especially for those hurting during the holidays. Some come because they are mourning the death of a loved one. Some suffer from illness, addiction, or estrangement. Some are lonely, struggling financially, or in conflict with another. Some hurt because of the great pain, need, and violence in our nation and world. The reasons for our coming are many. We gather in the midst of suffering to remember God is good. God is strong. God is near. We are not alone, and we have reason to hold on to hope. The service will be held in the sanctuary.

Family Christmas Festival

Wednesday, December 18, 6:00-8:00pm

Bring your family and friends for a unique Christmas experience full of activities specially designed for kids grades 6 and under. Experiences include: photo op with live camels, petting zoo with donkey, sheep and goats, story time with a camel, design your own art work to decorate a cookie, free hot cocoa, sensory activities and open play for toddlers and Pre-K, make a camel crown, indoor snowball fight, water the camel, art table

This is an open house style event. Camels and petting zoo will be in the parking lot. Warm up inside with cocoa and activities in the church building. We're so excited to share this memorable night with our Lansing community! You do not need to register to attend.

Christmas Sunday Service

Sunday, December 22, 11:00am

No discipleship hour this day. Join us at 11:00am for worship service.

Christmas Eve Candlelighting Service

Tuesday, December 24, 6:00pm

Join us for a simple one hour candlelighting service for Christmas Eve. Who could you invite to join you for this evening? Treats will be served at 5:30pm so come early!

** Please note children in preschool - 5th grade will join the service December 22, 29 and January 5. No discipleship classes December 22 or 29.