

Prayer Points for December 2024

Week Beginning 1 December - Advent Sunday

Almighty God,
give us grace to cast away the works of darkness
and to put on the armour of light,
now in the time of this mortal life,
in which your Son Jesus Christ came to us in great humility;
that on the last day,
when he shall come again in his glorious majesty
to judge the living and the dead,
we may rise to the life immortal;
through him who is alive and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.

The Collect for Advent Sunday

A Prayer for World Aids Day

God of Promise, today we are mindful of our sisters and brothers suffering with HIV and AIDS. We ask your healing presence on millions of people living with the disease today; particularly the children who are infected or who have been orphaned by the disease. Make of us a safe haven for those who are abandoned, discriminated against and rejected on account of their illness. Inspire us to speak out for a just distribution of health care and medical aid in this country and for generosity in sharing our resources with those struggling under the weight of this epidemic overseas.

Week beginning 8 December – 2nd Sunday of Advent

At Advent

we should try the key to our heart's door.
It may have gathered rust.
If so, this is the time to oil it,
in order that the heart's door may open more easily
when the Lord Jesus wants to enter at Christmas time!
Lord, oil the hinges of our heart's doors
that they may swing
gently and easily to welcome your coming'.

(Prayer of a New Guinea Christian taken from *The Lion Prayer Collection*)

We pray for Rev Edson Duque on his induction as to Aberdeen: Hillside on Thursday 12th December. We give thanks for all the ministers who have responded to God's call on their lives and have been ordained or inducted in our presbytery in 2024. Give them joy in their first Christmas in their new charges.

We pray for all congregations recently united or working towards union, who will be adapting to new arrangements for worship over the Christmas season. May all services be clearly advertised, thoroughly prepared, and warmly welcoming.

Week Beginning 15 December – 3rd Sunday of Advent

Advent is a time of preparation, a time of expectation, a time of waiting...

Advent is also a time of discomfort – the Christ child is not the happy, rosy-cheeked baby, the manger is not the cosy retreat depicted on our Christmas cards.

Emmanuel, God with us, is the shock of God's presence in this world, calling us to wake up, to focus on what is important, to do justice and to love kindness.

Stephen Cottrell, p xi, Foreword to *Sleepers Awake*, by Nicholas Holtam

We give thanks to you, God, for the school chaplaincy opportunities that exist across the schools of our presbytery – for individuals and teams. We ask your blessing on the ministry of Rev Michael Coenraad Englebrecht as he takes up the call at St. Andrew's-Llhanbryde this week. We pray that special Christmas services this week will be an opportunity for the message of your love shown in Jesus.

The longest night – 21 December

We pray for those for whom Christmas is difficult, or next to impossible because of bereavement or other loss in their lives, especially in the dark nights, and the longest of dark nights.

Keep watch, dear Lord, with those who work, or watch, or weep this night, and give your angels charge over those who sleep. Tend the sick, Lord Christ; give rest to the weary, bless the dying, soothe the suffering, pity the afflicted, shield the joyous; all for your love's sake.

Week beginning 22 December – 4th Sunday of Advent

Advent! A holy season in which we connect again with our "inconsolable longing," as C.S. Lewis called it — our yearning for the One who is to come and is also, mysteriously, the One who has come already — come as a child, come as a fellow-sufferer, come as Saviour, and yet whose coming, already achieved, we hold at bay from ourselves, so that we have to learn afresh each year, even each day, how to let Him come to us again.

Malcolm Guite

Loving God, we pray for all those who will be travelling at this time, and for those who will convey them. Give them safety, expectation and excitement on the journey, and at their journey's end may they not only meet their loved ones, but you, the loving one, born at Bethlehem.

Christmas Day

The very Son of God, older than the ages, the invisible, the incomprehensible, the incorporeal, the beginning of beginning, the light of light, the fountain of life and immortality, the image of the archetype, the immovable seal, the perfect likeness, the definition and word of the Father: he it is who comes to his own image and takes our nature for the good of our nature, and unites himself to an intelligent soul for the good of my soul, to purify like by like.

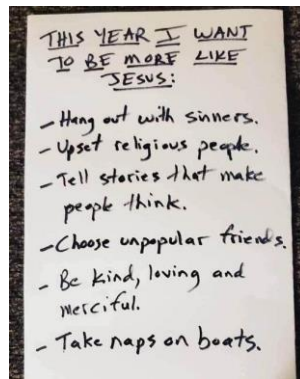
Gregory of Nazianzus

We pray, dear God, for all those who gather with family and friends around the Christmas table, that they may have the security to tell their stories, and the attentiveness to listen to those of others. We pray for those who will be on their own. We pray for those who receive the hospitality of charities; and for those who give up family time to serve them.

Week beginning 29 December

When the song of the angels is stilled,
When the star in the sky is gone,
When the kings and princes are home,
When the shepherds are back with their flock,
The work of Christmas begins:
To find the lost,
To heal the broken,
To feed the hungry,
To release the prisoner,
To rebuild the nations,
To bring peace among brothers,
To make music in the heart.

Howard Thurman



We pray, dear God, that we may make room for you every day, and not just on Christmas day: that we may hurry to see you; join in the angels' song; offer you our gifts; and ponder these things in our heart – every day.