

WEEK FOUR
BEGINS DECEMBER 19

Luke 2:1-20

John 1:1-14

Colossians 1:15-20

1 John 4:19-5:12

Philippians 2:5-11

While wrapping up your Christmas shopping this week, surprise the cashier with a gift card. Let them know how much you appreciate their hard work.

Contact one of our local hospitals and see how you can best support those who have to work on Christmas day. Would they like a pizza delivered? Could you drop off a treat?

Think back on your year. Who made your year easier? Who was there for you? Who have you forgotten to thank? Spend some time this week writing thank-you cards to those people. When is the last time you thanked the receptionist at your child's school or the nurse at your doctor's office?



ON CHRISTMAS DAY

Take a moment in the midst of your celebrations to reread the story of Jesus' birth in Luke 2:1-21. Pray a prayer of thanksgiving to God for giving us his son. And then, celebrate! God's presence brings us hope, peace, joy, and love, and that is always cause for celebration. Merry Christmas, Living Word.

So reach out and welcome one another to God's glory. Jesus did it; now you do it! Jesus, staying true to God's purposes, reached out in a special way to the Jewish insiders so that the old ancestral promises would come true for them. As a result, the non-Jewish outsiders have been able to experience mercy and to show appreciation to God. Just think of all the Scriptures that will come true in what we do! For instance:

*Then I'll join outsiders in a hymn-sing;
I'll sing to your name!*

*And this one:
Outsiders and insiders, rejoice together!*

*And again:
People of all nations, celebrate God!
All colors and races, give hearty praise!*

*And Isaiah's word:
There's the root of our ancestor Jesse,
breaking through the earth and growing tree tall,
Tall enough for everyone everywhere to see and take hope!*

Oh! May the God of green hope fill you up with joy, fill you up with peace, so that your believing lives, filled with the life-giving energy of the Holy Spirit, will brim over with hope!

Romans 15:7-13 (MSG)



THE MEANING OF ADVENT

For hundreds of years, Christians around the world, of all different denominations, have celebrated Advent—the season leading up to Christmas. We use this time to prepare our hearts to celebrate the birth of Christ. There are different ways of celebrating and marking this time. In this devotional, we provide 4 weeks of scripture reading, kicking off with the first Sunday of advent, November 28, and ending on Christmas day.

Each week we also provide ways for you to Reach Local and tangibly love your neighbors. Some suggestions are better suited for families or groups, while some you can tackle alone. Make it a goal to find one simple way to reach out each week. You can always find more ways to tangibly love your neighbors at LWCCyork.com/reach-local/.

WEEK ONE

BEGINS NOVEMBER 28

Genesis 1:26-31

Genesis 3:14-15, 21

Genesis 12:1-3, 15:1-6

Exodus 14:21-29

Deuteronomy 18:15-19

Who do you know that could use a Christmas surprise? Take the time to make a homemade dessert for a friend or neighbor who could use a little cheer. As you shop for ingredients and bake, take a moment to pray for the person who will receive your treat.

During this time of year, many people might be grieving as they experience the first Christmas without a loved one. Do you know someone who could use a phone call or a visit? Make time for them this week.

Do you know new parents who are sleep deprived? Volunteer to watch the kids for a couple you know to give them the gift of rest.

WEEK TWO

BEGINS DECEMBER 5

2 Samuel 7:11-17

Isaiah 11:1-4

Isaiah 7:10-14

Isaiah 9:6-7

Isaiah 42:1-4

What is your favorite restaurant? Write a thank-you note to the manager letting them know how much you love their food.

Grabbing takeout this week? Cover the cost of the car behind you or another order waiting to be picked up or buy lunch for the next person in line at a drive-thru.

Do you have an elderly neighbor that could use a hand? Rake their leaves or sweep their porch. Ask if they need any help running errands.



WEEK THREE

BEGINS DECEMBER 12

Luke 1:26-38

Luke 1:39-45

Luke 1:46-56

Matthew 1:18-21

Matthew 1:22-25

Have you received Christmas cards this year? Take a moment to pause and pray a blessing for each person that sent you a card.

Are you ordering lots of packages at this time of year? Set up a “Thank You” station on your porch. Leave some prepackaged snacks and drinks for the mail carriers and package delivery people who are working so hard.

Do a “chalk attack” in your neighborhood. Leave notes of encouragement and holiday wishes on the sidewalks around your house.

