



Follow
—the—
STAR

Christmas Prayer Journal
FCC– Titusville

FOLLOW THE STAR

Do you hate to wait? Whether it's instant oatmeal, high-speed Internet or the express lane at the grocery store, we want it now. And the weeks leading up to Christmas only accelerate the pace of life. Yet the rhythm of real relationship with the God of eternity cannot be rushed.

This year we hope you'll join us on an advent prayer journey. Like the wise men of scripture who followed the star in search of the Christ-child, we'll seek to personally encounter the King. The centuries-old practice of Advent invites us to embrace the waiting as we align our hearts to the true north of Christ's coming.

In these pages you'll find a thought and a scripture for each day. There's space to jot down whatever God brings to mind as you talk with Him. We trust that the Lord will meet us in transformative ways as we spend a few minutes each day reflecting and praying through these themes. We know Christmas is a special time for children, so at the end of each week we've added a fun advent activity to do with the kids in your life.

This year as we wait in expectation for the arrival of Christ, let our souls join the refrain of God's people throughout the centuries proclaiming, "Come, Lord Jesus. Come."

December 3, 2018

TRUST

God’s word invites us to trust Him—to place our lives at His mercy and surrender our own agenda. It can be a scary thought. But because in Christ, God became one of us, fully experiencing the hurts of humanity, we can be sure that we have a savior who is worthy of trust. Write down a circumstance where you need to more completely trust God. Invite Him into this part of your life.

Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding. – Psalm 3:5

December 4, 2018

MAGI

The Bible tells us of Magi who came from the east, following the star in search of a newborn King. We get just a glimpse of their story, but we know they acted with wisdom, foresight and perseverance to achieve their God-ordained purpose. Are there life-situations where you need supernatural wisdom? Write a prayer asking in faith for God to provide it.

If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask God, who gives generously to all without reproach, and it will be given him. – James 1:5

December 5, 2018

SLOW

Tradition holds that Mary rode to Bethlehem on a donkey. However they traveled, for Joseph and Mary the journey must've seemed to last forever. Even through uncertain circumstances, they had no choice but to practice patience and let events unfold in God's timing. How will you intentionally slow down and wait on Christ this advent season?

Joseph also went up from Galilee, from the town of Nazareth, to Judea, to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, ... to be registered with Mary, his betrothed, who was with child. – Luke 2:4-6

December 6, 2018

SERVANT

Mary was forced to find her way through a maze of dismaying circumstances. Yet in the midst of the unknown, she chose to serve the Lord through her faith and obedience. As you prepare for the coming of Christ, the ultimate servant, ask God where you can serve in obedience in the days ahead.

And Mary said, “Behold, I am the servant of the Lord; let it be to me according to your word.” – Matt. 1:38

December 7, 2018

ETERNITY

God is the creator of time and He stands unbound by it. We are trapped inside a finite number of days. Yet God, in the person of Christ, stepped inside time, making a way for us to join him in eternity. Ask God to give you a focus on things that matter for eternity this day.

He has made everything beautiful in its time. Also, he has put eternity into man's heart... – Ecclesiastes 3:11

December 8, 2018

ROOM

When Mary and Joseph reached Bethlehem, the baby's arrival was imminent. They searched the bustling town for a place suitable for the coming Messiah, but there was no room to be found. This advent season, how will you make room for Christ to come and dwell?

*She wrapped him in cloths and placed him in a manger,
because there was no guest room for them. - Isaiah 9:2a*

December 9, 2018

FOLLOW

Our society looks up to leaders. We're inundated with books, podcasts and conferences on how to lead. But we don't hear much about following. Yet Christ calls us to follow Him. Following can mean surrendering our plans and our comfort. Ask God today for ways to better live life as a follower.

*While walking by the Sea of Galilee, he saw two brothers...
And he said to them, "Follow me, and I will make you fishers
of men." Immediately they left their nets and followed him. -
Matt 4:18-20*

December 10, 2018

PRAY

If God was only lofty and Holy, we'd wonder if He could empathize with our longings and sorrows that are part of what it is to be human. If He was merely a man, we would doubt His power and authority over circumstances that overwhelm us. In Christ, He is fully God and fully human, so we have a sovereign and friend with whom we can trust our deepest prayers. Talk to Him today.

I dwell in the high and holy place, and also with him who is of a contrite and lowly spirit, to revive the spirit of the lowly, and to revive the heart of the contrite. – Isaiah 57:15

December 11, 2018

WAIT

A child awaits Christmas day with an expectant heart, anticipating joy and good things to come. When the day finally arrives, it is made sweeter by the waiting. As you wait this advent season, write down a few things you're eagerly hoping and anticipating that Christ will bring to pass. Invite the Lord to encourage your heart in the waiting.

Be strong and let your heart take courage, all you who wait for the Lord! – Psalm 31:24

December 12, 2018

LIGHT

The Bible talks a lot about light. God is light and as His people we are carriers of that God-light. There are many ways to spread His light. This week, one way could be to invite friends or family to Church on Christmas Eve to experience the light of Christ. Ask the Holy Spirit who He might lead you to invite to join you in worship this year. Then make the invitation and trust God with the outcome.

“You are the light of the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden.” - Matthew 5:14

December 13, 2018

STAR

Was it a comet, an alignment of planets or something entirely supernatural? The Bible doesn't give us the astronomical details, but we know that God chose a light in the night sky to herald the birth of His Son. The book of 1st John tells us God Himself is light. What areas of darkness in your life need to be illuminated by His light today?

For it is the God who said, "Let light shine out of darkness," who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ.

– 2 Cor. 4:6

December 14, 2018

WORSHIP

When the wise men set eyes on Christ, they immediately fell into a posture of worship. Their long-awaited moment of worship came at a personal price. They carried lavish gifts, traveled far from home and risked defying an earthly ruler. Their story reminds us that prioritizing worship often involves sacrifice. As you anticipate the birth of Christ, how will you make worship a priority even if it carries a cost?

They saw the child with Mary his mother, and they fell down and worshiped him. Then, opening their treasures, they offered him gifts, gold and frankincense and myrrh.

– Matt. 2:11

December 15, 2018

WITH

What's in a name? One of the names given to Christ in the scriptures is Immanuel, which comes from a Hebrew phrase meaning, "God with us." This name conveys the miracle that in Christ, the creator of the universe chose to come close, to dwell with you and me. Write a prayer inviting God to be present with you in the joys and suffering you will face today.

*"And they will call him Immanuel, which means
'God with us'." – Matthew 1:23b*

December 16, 2018

ARRIVAL

Through Advent we look back Christ's coming as a Bethlehem babe. Yet at the same time, we look forward to His second coming. Let us wait eagerly, expectantly for a glimpse of His coming glory, like a child trying for a peek at her presents before Christmas morning. Reflect on Christ's return today. Thank Him in anticipation for what is to come.

So Christ, having been offered once to bear the sins of many, will appear a second time, not to deal with sin but to save those who are eagerly waiting for him. – Hebrews 9:28

December 17, 2018

LOVE

In the stable where Christ was born, it's likely that there was blood dripping to the ground. At the cross where he gave his life, blood was there too. The life and death of Jesus are marked by sacrificial love. We're called to emulate His example. Ask God if there are new ways He might call you to love in ways that are uncomfortable or sacrificial in the days ahead.

Greater love has no one than this, that someone lay down his life for his friends. – John 15:13

December 18, 2018

THANKS

How do you express gratitude when you receive a Christmas gift? Sometimes heartfelt words are best, other times perhaps a hug or a Thank You card are called for. Christ is the free love-gift from God to us. As we prepare to celebrate this precious gift, what are some ways, through your thoughts, words and actions, that you can begin to express thankfulness for this ultimate gift?

For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord. – Romans 6:23

December 19, 2018

WORLD

Christ drew his first breath Bethlehem more than two millennia ago. Although his life on earth was rooted in a specific time and place, his grace and love cover all of humanity throughout all time. We're called to reflect his care for people all over the world. Ask God to give you a heart for people across the globe and ways to actively demonstrate His heart for them.

For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him. – John 3:17

December 20, 2018

PEACE

We live in a world where conflict seems constant and peace seems far away. Yet God's word intertwines the idea peace on earth with the announcement of Christ's birth. What reassurance does this bring to your heart? As a disciple of Christ, how might this influence your actions and attitudes?

"Glory to God in the highest heaven and on earth peace to those on whom His favor rests." – Luke 2:14

December 21, 2018

FEAR

Angels changed the shepherds' world that night with the headline: The King of Love is coming! The angels' opened their speech by telling the shepherds not to fear and the book of 1st John declares that God's perfect love casts out fear. What fears is the Lord calling you to cast aside this advent season? Write a prayer inviting God to take them from you.

... They were filled with great fear. And the angel said to them, "Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people." – Luke 2:9-10

December 23, 2018

REFUGE

Christ was born in a barn and buried in a borrowed tomb. Mary gave birth in Bethlehem because an occupying empire forced her to make the journey. Later, their family fled to Egypt as refugees. Today there are people in our city and around the world who are oppressed, poor and marginalized. Pray for them and ask God how He would have you intervene in their plight.

An angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and said, "Rise, take the child and his mother, and flee to Egypt, and remain there until I tell you, for Herod is about to search for the child, to destroy him." – Matt. 2:13

December 24, 2018

MANGER

Christ could have come to earth as a conquering warrior or an emperor with riches and fame. Yet He chose the path of a peasant, helpless and humble. In our culture, too often we find ourselves thirsting for prestige and drowning in comparison. Ask the Father to show you how you can emulate Christ’s humility this Christmas.

And this will be a sign for you: you will find a baby wrapped in swaddling cloths and lying in a manger. – Luke 2:12

Follow the Star with us on
Christmas Eve

Worship services at 4 & 5:30 pm.

Find out more at www.fcctitusville.org

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Pastor Don McCaleb

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