



ADVENT DEVOTIONS
Light IN THE DARKNESS

When we arrive at Advent each year, we begin the church year anew. Like with the calendar new year, it is a chance for a fresh start, a chance to begin again. The year 2020 has been one like we have never experienced and many of us are ready for a fresh start. Though as we begin the Advent season, the pandemic will not be over, racism and injustice will still be present in the world, and the chaos and uncertainty will not be finished. And just like all these months, God is already with us even as we anticipate God's arrival once again at Christmas.

Because things have been so difficult and disconnected this year, the Forest Hill staff worked hard to plan an Advent and Christmas season with many ways in which we could be connected. One of those ways is by inviting members of the church to contribute Advent devotions on the theme **LIGHT IN THE DARKNESS**. We had a wonderful response, and here in this booklet is the collection - one devotion for each day in Advent, written almost exclusively by our Forest Hill community. Each devotion is very unique, and our contributors have used their gifts to write stories, theological reflections, poems, prayers and meditations. It is a wonderful collection!

I pray that these devotions and the Holy Spirit will shed **LIGHT IN THE DARKNESS** for you this Advent as we await the birth of the Christ-child once again this year.

~ Pastor Suzanne

November 29 – First Sunday of Advent

Genesis 1:3-5 (CEB)

God said, “Let there be light.” And so light appeared. ⁴God saw how good the light was. God separated the light from the darkness. ⁵God named the light Day and the darkness Night. There was evening and there was morning: the first day.

Before there was light, there was God. God was before anything we know or understand. As we begin our Advent journey, let us pause to think about the vastness of God.

Oftentimes, we limit God. In our desire for understanding, we limit the reign of God to what we are able to comprehend, and yet God is so much more than our minds can imagine.

During Advent, we are called to remember God’s full story of humankind: from the beginning of time to the coming of Christ to the forward completion of the fully redeemed creation. We stand squarely in this story. It is not over, but we live with full confidence knowing that God will redeem creation and bring about full healing in eternity.

Advent is about what has been and what is to come. Advent is a waiting in full expectation. Advent is about centering our hearts on the wonderful grace that we received when Christ came into our world. Advent is not about fully understanding or being able to explain what God is doing; it is about living in the hope, peace, love, and joy of the mystery of God.

God has and continues to love us more than we can imagine from the dawning of the light that first broke through the darkness of creation. Thanks be to God, our Creator and our Redeemer.

~ Rev. Mandy Jones