

## Advent Planner

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### Metairie Church

- Week One: Hope

- We are entering a season in the life of the church known as Advent, when we remember the coming of our savior, Jesus Christ, to earth, and we anticipate with joy his coming again to earth to reign. It's a time when we put ourselves in the place of the people of God who waited, for generations, like watchmen for the morning, for the revealing of the son of God. It's a time for us to remember, as we wait—sometimes anxiously—for his return, that we will not wait forever. This, too, will end. We, at Metairie Church, are celebrating this season by, each week leading up to Christmas, reading part of the story of Christmas and asking everyone to participate in a responsive prayer around four common themes of advent: hope, peace, joy, and love. We would encourage you to invite your friends and families to join us during this time.
- We light this candle as an outward representation of our inward hope, our living hope—remembering his coming to earth, and knowing that, when He comes again, we'll live with our God in a restored earth. [*Light the Candle.*] This is the word of the Lord from Jeremiah 31:31-34:  
  
- [*Read Jeremiah 31:31-34*]
- At this time, we would ask you to join us in a responsive prayer—It will be up on the screens. I know this might be new to some people. I'm going to start off, and then you say the parts that are in bold as a means of praying together with me. It's adapted from a old Puritan prayer, and by using this old prayer, we hope to remind everyone of the rich inheritance of faith we have from our brothers and sisters who have come before us in the world, and of the hope we have of being reunited with them when Jesus returns.

Son of God and Son of Man,

You were born in the flesh, you suffered, rose, and ascended for my sake;

Your's wasn't a leaving, but a promise to return;

Your Word, your promises and sacraments, show your death until you come again;

And I'm not afraid of that day, because you died to redeem me,

**your Spirit fills me,**

**your love makes me alive,**

Sunday, December 2, 2018

**your Word directs me.**

I've trusted you, and you've never betrayed me;

I've waited for you, and you've never left me waiting;

**So I know you will come back for me, raise my body from the dust,  
and make me whole again,**

by a miracle of infinite power and love,  
greater than your work of setting the ocean's boundaries;  
greater than your work of setting the tides;  
or setting the stars on their course;  
or even giving life to every living thing on earth.

This corruptible life will put on incorruptibility,  
this mortal, immortality,  
this natural body, a spiritual body,  
this dishonored body, a glorious body,  
this weak body, a body of power.

**Even now, as I long and hope for these things, I rejoice in them already,  
because God cannot fail.**

Beyond the grave is resurrection, judgement, forgiveness, and glory;

Every event and moment of my life will be fully known,

Every sin, every secret,

All will be judged.

And after judgement, peace and rest, life and service,

employment and enjoyment for your elect.

**God, keep this hope alive in me, ever waiting for you,**

**Amen.<sup>1</sup>**

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<sup>1</sup> Prayer adapted from "The Second Coming" in *The Valley of Vision*