

## Advent 2017: Restore

*Curated by SPU Campus Ministries*

**Sunday, December 3, marks the beginning of the 2017 Advent season.** Over the following four weeks Christians take up the discipline of waiting, cultivating a posture of prayer and expectancy as we look toward Christmas and a celebration of the incarnation. The vocabulary of Advent is made up of words like longing, preparation, darkness, waiting, and promise: rich theological themes that are fundamental to our understanding of what it means to live in the now and the not yet of our faith. Perhaps even more poignantly, the language of Advent speaks both a word of lament *and* hope that might resonate amid the injustices and brokenness we witness and experience daily.

Campus Ministries invites you to the discipline of daily scripture readings and a short challenge activity for each day of Advent, written by the CM staff. Our hope and prayer is that these practices will invite a season of restoration for our bodies and souls as we prepare to receive the light of Christ.

### Some practical tips

- For each day of Advent there will be 3–4 scripture passages to read, pulled from the Revised Common Lectionary. Most of passages are short, and we would encourage you to read them slowly, letting God’s word sink in deeply to your heart and mind.
- The daily challenges are derived from each day’s reading, but often with the influence of one particular text (in bold). These are meant to help you bring the scripture into your everyday life.
- You’ll notice that the Psalms will repeat for a few days at a time. The Psalms are a book of worship, comprised of songs, prayers, and poetry written by followers of God. Particular Psalms are repeated in the Advent lectionary as a kind of refrain, meant to reinforce the themes and the language of the season. Again, we would encourage you to mull over their words, relishing the repetition.

Questions or comments? Email [um@spu.edu](mailto:um@spu.edu).

### Sunday, December 3

Isaiah 64:1-9; **Psalm 80:1-7, 17-19**; 1 Corinthians 1:3-9; Mark 13:24-37

**Response:** The prayer of “Restore us, O God” is the refrain for the 2017 SPU Campus Ministries Advent Challenge. As you go through your day, look for small reminders of restoration: acts of human kindness, a moment of rest, the beauty of the world around you. Take a photo, and post

it to social media using the hashtag #SPURestore17. Be encouraged that God promises the restoration of all things!

### **Monday, December 4**

Psalm 79, **Micah 4:1-5**, Revelation 15:1-8

**Response:** How have you engaged with our guests from Tent City 3? In what creative ways can you encourage and support them during their stay at SPU, and beyond?

### **Tuesday, December 5**

Psalm 79, **Micah 4:6-13**, Revelation 18:1-10

**Response:** God's restoration meets us at our place of pain and grief (Micah 4:10). What pains or hurts do you feel today? Write a poem, prayer, or a song to create an expression for your hurts.

### **Wednesday, December 6**

Psalm 79, **Micah 5:1-5a**, Luke 21:34-38

**Response:** Reflect on your "hometown." Where is it? If possible, try to visit it. Make a list of what you feel when you think of it. Is your "hometown" a place of support or struggle?

### **Thursday, December 7**

Psalm 85:1-2, 8-13, Hosea 6:1-6, **1 Thessalonians 1:2-10**

**Response:** When we are weary, it can be difficult to believe in God's promises, let alone embody the gospel with our actions. 1 Thess 2:3 says that *endurance* is inspired by *hope*. As an act of defiance to the darkness around you, make a list of five things that give you hope today. Through this practice of prayer, may God restore you with endurance to continue forward in faith.

### **Friday, December 8**

**Psalm 85:1-2, 8-13**, Jeremiah 1:4-10, Acts 11:19-26

**Response:** Practice *visio divina* (sacred or divine seeing) with a piece of artwork showing the characteristics of God described (steadfast love, faithfulness, righteousness, peace). For some examples of art in the Christian Tradition click [here](#). Afterwards, reflect on the experience in your journal, while on a walk, or when talking with a friend.

## **Saturday, December 9**

Psalm 85:1-2, 8-13, **Ezekiel 36:24-28**, Mark 11:27-33

**Response:** Select a foreign country, one which is very different from your home country. Write down five things about that culture and lifestyle that will be difficult and challenging for you to adapt to if you lived in that country. Then write down five things you will miss about your home country. Take a moment to imagine what the news of being restored to their own land must have meant to the people who received Ezekiel's prophecy (vs. 24). Then take a moment to thank God for the work God has done to make you a part of God's "Kingdom Country."

## **Sunday, December 10**

**Isaiah 40:1-11**, Psalm 85:1-2, 8-13, 2 Peter 3:8-15a, Mark 1:1-8

**Response:** Everywhere you go, think of yourself as one who is preparing the way of the Lord. Take note of the little places in your everyday life where you see the need for justice, love, and hope, and take action however you can today.

## **Monday, December 11**

**Psalm 27**, Isaiah 26:7-15, Acts 2:37-42

**Response:** We live in a fast-paced, instant gratification culture, where waiting is not the norm. And if we *are* waiting, we often fill the space with aimless social media or other forms of entertainment. Today as you in traffic, in line, or elsewhere, make a deliberate choice to be present in the moment. Take a deep breath. Pay attention to where God might be showing up in unexpected places. In this, know that we are a people who wait for the Lord.

## **Tuesday, December 12**

Psalm 27, Isaiah 4:2-6, **Acts 11:1-8**

**Response:** Visit a nursing home or care center. If possible, take a child with you. Call beforehand, and ask if you can spend time with the person who receives the least visitors. Consider ways to share God's love with them in an ongoing way.

## **Wednesday, December 13**

**Psalm 27**, Malachi 2:10-3:1, Luke 1:5-17

**Response:** "My heart has heard you say, 'Come and talk with me.' And my heart responds, 'Lord, I am coming.'" Today, set aside some time to take a walk or a drive to your favorite place.

As you journey, intentionally talk with God; tell God about your day, your struggles, victories and fears. Don't forget to listen and hear God talk back to you!

#### **Thursday, December 14**

Psalm 126, Habakkuk 2:1-5, **Philippians 3:7-11**

**Response:** Fast from something today. Give it up. A meal or an action or a habit or some technology. With the extra space you find in your life as a result of giving this thing up, reorient yourself toward God and others.

#### **Friday, December 15**

Psalm 126, **Habakkuk 3:2-6**, Philippians 3:12-16

**Response:** Think back to a time when you experienced God's provision, presence, or faithfulness. How did you know that it was a work of God? How did it feel to receive from God in the midst of a difficult or challenging time? Spend some time in prayer, giving thanks to God for past provision, and seeking wisdom for a present struggle you face.

#### **Saturday, December 16**

**Psalm 126**, Habakkuk 3:13-19, Matthew 21:28-32

**Response:** Find a way to rejoice today audaciously. Wildly. Unexpectedly. Invite someone to join you.

#### **Sunday, December 17**

**Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11**, Psalm 126 (or Luke 1:46b-55), 1 Thessalonians 5:16-24, John 1:6-8, 19-28

**Response:** How can you become a part of what God is doing to restore justice to this world? Research some local justice movements to learn about what they do and if there's a way you can get involved.

#### **Monday, December 18**

Psalm 125, **1 Kings 18:1-8**, Ephesians 6:10-17

**Response:** Think of a friend you haven't connected with in a while. Send them a message — a note, a text, an email, etc. — to let them know they're on your mind.

#### **Tuesday, December 19**

Psalms 125, **2 Kings 2:9-22**, Acts 3:17-4:4

**Response:** Set aside some time to read or listen to modern day prophets — people like Dr. John Perkins, Lisa Sharon Harper, Henri Nouwen, Nadia Bolz-Weber, or Dr. Soong-Chan Rah. Think about how their messages challenge how you move through the world, and choose one action step in response.

### **Wednesday, December 20**

Psalms 125, **Malachi 3:16-4:6**, Mark 9:9-13

**Response:** Write a haiku, a poem in which the first line has five syllables, the second line has seven syllables and the third line has five syllables. Using “revere the Lord” as your prompt. Invite others to write a haiku as well.

### **Thursday, December 21**

Psalms 89:1-4, 19-26, 2 Samuel 6:1-11, **Hebrews 1:1-4**

**Response:** Draw or paint a picture of something or someone that radiates God’s own glory to you. How can you radiate God’s glory to others around you today?

### **Friday, December 22**

Psalms 89:1-4, 19-26, **2 Samuel 6:12-19**, Hebrews 1:5-14

**Response:** Put on some good music and move around; dance a little bit. Do this alone or with friends. Remember that God made your body “good” to be embraced, loved, and enjoyed.

### **Saturday, December 23**

Psalms 89:1-4, 19-26, Judges 13:2-24, **John 7:40-52**

**Response:** The story of the Gospel was and is scandalizing and unexpected — everything from a virgin birth to a Savior from humble beginnings. Today, find a way to show love in an unexpected way. May this simple act remind you that the light of Christ will always break through in astonishing and unforeseen places.

### **Sunday, December 24**

2 Samuel 7:1-11, 16; **Luke 1:46b-55** (or Psalms 89:1-4, 19-26); Romans 16:25-27; Luke 1:26-38

**Response:** In your life, when have you answered God with a bold “yes”? Create an image that symbolizes this time. Share your image and the story with someone close to you.