

“Come, you who will receive good things from my Father. Inherit the kingdom that was prepared for you before the world began.” Matthew 35:34

As we look around our communities, we see the evident brokenness that surrounds us. We can't help but ask, "Where is God in all of this?" as we long for healing and wholeness. The season of Advent reminds us that in the darkness, in the waiting, God is with us. Christ was born into the darkness and we are invited to see his light even as we long for flourishing communities and people who are full of love and life. We invite you to read, reflect, pray and serve with us, as we wait together for what God will bring forth even in this present darkness.

WEEK 1 HOPE

"Hope is not wishing the darkness away. Hope is not pretending the darkness does not exist."
Chris Nye

Read: Romans 8:25

Reflect & Pray: What affects my community the most and who are the most affected by it? Name it and pray for discernment and wisdom.

Serve:

- Scavenger Hunt - EnJOY Elmhurst Exploration Walk: Come & See How God is at Work. Contact us for more information.
- Host a conversation for those you are in community with. Share what you see in your community and invite others to pray with you.

WEEK 2 PEACE

"Empathy isn't just a word. It means making people who are invisible to others visible and then doing something about why they were unnoticed in the first place."
Dr. Terence Lester

Read: Matthew 25:35-36

Reflect & Pray: Empathy and compassion are key characteristics in cultivating supportive community that leads to Shalom. This means listening to each other, asking how we can show up for one another and finding ways to celebrate our diversity. What are the differences between peacekeeping and peacemaking? Who have I overlooked in my community? When was the last time I felt seen and heard?

Serve:

- [Learn more about cultivating empathy and compassion towards our unhoused neighbors.](#) To lead a book club about pressing issues in our community, contact info@newlifecdc.nyc
- Join us on December 9th for the Christmas party at the Family Shelter. Contact us for more information!

WEEK 3 JOY

"Where can joy be found? The church, the hospital room, the barber shop and beauty shops—'things are going to be better.'
Willie James Jennings

Read: Matthew 2:1-12

Reflect & Pray: Where do you see God on the move in this story? What are some joyful moments that stood out to you? Pray for those on the move, that God supply all their needs and Joy in the journey.

Serve:

- Write a letter of encouragement for someone who has been experiencing disorientation in this season, reminding that things are going to be better.
- Join us for hot chocolate, music and help us wrap gifts for families who receive groceries from our Food Pantry on December 14 from 5-7pm. Contact us for more details.

WEEK 4 LOVE

"There is always something left to love. And if you ain't learned that, you ain't learn nothing."
Lorraine Hansberry

Read: John 13:34

Reflect & Pray: Love challenges us to revisit the places in which we may have provided a poor analysis. The Gospel of John gives us a counter-cultural framework to view people and circumstances through the lens of love. Love seeks to restore us back into community with each other. Let's reflect and pray about our relationships, where can we love more?

Serve:

- Love in action at New Life CDC! You can pack meals, deliver groceries, hang out with the youth, provide language translation and get tech savvy. These are just a few examples of how you can come alongside us to support & serve families in Elmhurst & Corona.

Click [HERE](#) to to complete our Volunteer Interest Form and learn more about opportunities and ways to get involved.

[Click here for more ideas on how to celebrate advent!](#)



ADVENT DEVOTIONAL

 **NEW LIFE CDC**
relief | restoration | reinvestment

