

# ADVENT DEVOTIONAL

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## BIG BOOK OF ADVENT

The Seminary's 2020 "Big Book of Advent Devotionals—Year 1" gives you a valuable resource for personal and corporate spiritual formation during the Advent season. Each section includes multiple biblical passages from the daily lectionary, reflections based on those passages, and accompanying prayers based on each reflection.

[DOWNLOAD THE BIG BOOK OF ADVENT—YEAR 1 \(WORD Doc\)](#)

## OVERWHELMED BY JOY

In this sermon by the Rev. Rebecca S. Jones '11, she invites readers to listen to the message of Matthew 2:1-2 as though they are hearing the story for the first time. When we picture the wise men bearing gifts in our minds, the image likely is more informed by pageants and our own imaginations than the biblical account. [DOWNLOAD THE SERMON](#)

## ANTICIPATION, EAGERNESS, AND EXCITEMENT

The Rev. Scott Dennis '13 reflects on Advent and the anticipation, eagerness, and excitement this seasons brings. This meditation fits best in week four of Advent or in your Christmas Eve or Christmas Day services. [DOWNLOAD THE](#)

## CARRYING YOUR CREATOR

In this 10-minute talk from an Orthodox perspective, William F. Orr Professor of New Testament Dr. Edith M. Humphrey keys off Genesis 1-3; 22:18, and 1 Chronicles 16:8-36 to show how Mary's joyful and profound hymn (known by Protestants as The Magnificat) is understood more fully by contrasting Mary's "yes" to Eve's rebellion; seeing the Incarnation as the beginning of the new creation; and seeing the parallel between David's joyful procession with the Ark to Bethlehem and Mary's carrying our Lord into that same city for our salvation. Listen to her [podcast](#) or read the written version of Dr. Humphrey's talk, with the same title, on her [blog](#).

## LET IT BE WITH ME

Dr. Shan Overton, director of the Center for Writing and Learning Support, offers this original poem based on Luke 1:38.  
[DOWNLOAD THE POEM](#)

## HANGING OF THE GREENS

Consider these child-friendly activities to involve the kids in your church in various hanging of the greens festivities.  
[DOWNLOAD THESE IDEAS](#)

## THOUGHTS ABOUT THE SOLSTICE

The Rev. Dr. Steven Tuell, James A. Kelso Professor of Hebrew and Old Testament, writes about the winter solstice in this blog post, which appeared on The Bible Guy. We have been taught—and rightly—that God creates the universe out of nothing. It all begins with shapeless, formless water. But when God speaks God's creative word—"God *said*, 'Let there be light'"—God imposes order on that chaos. The implicit question in Genesis 1, then, is not, How did the world begin? but rather, Does the world *make sense*? God establishes order and meaning in place of disorder and meaninglessness.  
[DOWNLOAD THE BLOG](#)

*We also encourage you to use these resources, previously included in our Advent Resource Kits.*

## PICTURING ADVENT

The Miller Summer Youth Institute leadership offer this workbook, pairing passages from Luke with paintings by master artists, as a four-week study through Advent for your Sunday School program, Bible Study, private devotions, or just for fun!  
[DOWNLOAD PICTURING ADVENT](#)

## THE BRIGHTEST STAR: CHILDREN'S SERMON

The Rev. Jeremy Collins '14 shares this children's sermon for use in your Christmas Eve or Christmas Day worship service.  
[DOWNLOAD CHILDREN'S SERMON](#)

## ADVENT MUSIC FOR GUITAR

The SYI Guitar Hymnal is available for a wide range of guitar players and musical environments. The SYI Guitar Hymnal coordinates with the 1990 *Presbyterian Hymnal*. This resource presents as many as five versions of 33 different Advent/Christmas hymns and facilitates guitar accompaniment of congregational hymns in neo-traditional worship, in addition to blended or contemporary settings. [Visit this music resource to see all that's available!](#) This free resource is a service of the Seminary's [Miller Summer Youth Institute](#). Have feedback about the Guitar Hymnal? Let us know: [SYIMusic@pts.edu](mailto:SYIMusic@pts.edu).

[ACCESS ADVENT MUSIC FOR GUITAR](#)

## MUSIC SELECTIONS BY BORYS HEDE WASSAYLE QUIRE

Recorded at Pittsburgh Theological Seminary, Borys Hede Wassayle Quire provides a number of Christmas selections for your free use. Sign along, use a tune as a prelude, or play the songs in the background during a festive gathering.

Selections include:

**Ding Dong, Merrily on High** (G. R. Woodward)  
**God Rest You Merry, Gentlemen** (Trad. English)  
**Sans Day Carol** (Trad. Cornish)  
**Noel Nouvelet** (Trad. French)  
**Sussex Carol** (Trad. English)  
**Joseph lieber, Joseh mein** (Trad. German)  
**I Saw Three Ships** (Trad. English)

For even more Advent resources, visit the **Seasonal Resources - Advent** section of our website.

## ABOUT PITTSBURGH THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

Rooted in the Reformed tradition, Pittsburgh Theological Seminary is committed to the formation of students for theologically reflective ministry and to scholarship in service to the global Church of Jesus Christ.

## BECOME A HYBRID STUDENT

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## PTS NEIGHBORHOOD COLLABORATIVE RESOURCE PROGRAMS

**Center for Adaptive and Innovative Ministry**

**Continuing Education**

**Faith Forming Families Network**

**Kelso Museum of Near Eastern Archaeology**

**Miller Summer Youth Institute**

**Metro-Urban Institute**

**World Mission Initiative**

## FACULTY

In addition to their on-campus duties, our faculty are experts in their fields and are available to preach and teach. Learn more about their **topics of research and writing** and invite them to present at your congregation or gathering.

## EVENTS

The Seminary hosts a wide range of events—many of them free!—on topics of faith including church planting, mission, vocation, spiritual formation, pastoral care and counseling, archaeology, and many more. Visit our **calendar** often for a listing of upcoming events.

## VISIT PTS

Interested in the Seminary? **Come visit us!**

## STAY IN TOUCH WITH PTS

**Sign-up to receive the Seminary's newsletters:** Seminary News (monthly), Center for Adaptive and Innovative Ministry, Continuing Education, Faith Forming Families Network, Kelso Museum, Metro-Urban Institute, Miller Summer Youth Institute, and World Mission Initiative. Alums, there's also one for you!

Pittsburgh Theological Seminary  
616 North Highland Avenue  
Pittsburgh, PA 15206  
Phone: 412-362-5610



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