**Advent Devotional December 5, 2026**

**Scripture**

**Psalm 90**

*A Prayer of Moses, the man of God.*

*1 Lord, you have been our dwelling place*
*in all generations.*
*2 Before the mountains were brought forth*
*or ever you had formed the earth and the world,*
*from everlasting to everlasting you are God.*

*3 You turn us back to dust*
*and say, "Turn back, you mortals."*
*4 For a thousand years in your sight*
*are like yesterday when it is past*
*or like a watch in the night.*

*5 You sweep them away; they are like a dream,*
*like grass that is renewed in the morning;*
*6 in the morning it flourishes and is renewed;*
*in the evening it fades and withers.*

*7 For we are consumed by your anger;*
*by your wrath we are overwhelmed.*
*8 You have set our iniquities before you,*
*our secret sins in the light of your countenance.*

*9 For all our days pass away under your wrath;*
*our years come to an end like a sigh.*
*10 The days of our life are seventy years*
*or perhaps eighty, if we are strong;*
*even then their span is only toil and trouble;*
*they are soon gone, and we fly away.*

*11 Who considers the power of your anger?*
*Your wrath is as great as the fear that is due you.*
*12 So teach us to count our days*
*that we may gain a wise heart.*

*13 Turn, O Lord! How long?*
*Have compassion on your servants!*
*14 Satisfy us in the morning with your steadfast love,*
*so that we may rejoice and be glad all our days.*
*15 Make us glad as many days as you have afflicted us*
*and as many years as we have seen evil.*
*16 Let your work be manifest to your servants*
*and your glorious power to their children.*
*17 Let the favor of the Lord our God be upon us*

*and prosper for us the work of our hands—*
*O prosper the work of our hands!*

**Devotion**

**The Rev. Annie Parker ’13**

There is so much pressure to *do* during the holidays. There are the necessities—the presents to purchase and wrap, the house to clean up before guests arrive, the meals to cook before the celebrations, and the everyday, normal tasks that don’t pause during the season. There are also those things we feel that we ought to do, like the traditions we keep, even when we feel like we are going through the motions—the marvelous homemade decorations we see on social media that make our own decorating seem too small and the constant barrage of events and things to do or buy coming at us through our TVs and our phones.

In the book *Skipping Christmas,* one couple decides to forgo the stress altogether—instead of decorating and buying presents and cooking a grand feast, they will put all of that money towards a cruise, and they will forgo celebrating the holiday season in the meantime. Of course, their story ends humorously as their daughter surprises them at the last minute with a Christmas visit, and they must scurry to make Christmas happen with the help of their community and friends. The stress and overbooking of ourselves has almost become its own part of the season, ready to be pulled out with the stockings and that tangled ball of Christmas lights. We complain about it, we try our best to plan for it, and as the holidays rush by in the blink of an eye, we may wonder if the stress and hubbub is worth it.

Our Psalm today pulls us out of the *doing* of the season and invites us to rest in God’s presence. We are called to count our days and enjoy them, not to fill them with to-do lists and tasks. We can spend quiet time in the word every day to be filled with God’s peace. We can put down our to-do list and the stress of the season to see God’s goodness and mercy all around us. Maybe our Christmas season needs to be less about what we are doing and more about what God has done and continues to do in our world today. Let us connect with God this holy season and remember his goodness and love every day!

**Prayer**

Father God, You created each one of us with a purpose and calling to serve You. Help us to see that calling and to set aside anything that takes us away from following You. In the busyness of this season, quiet our hearts and minds so that we may hear You and see You at work in the world. Lead us today and always. Amen.