

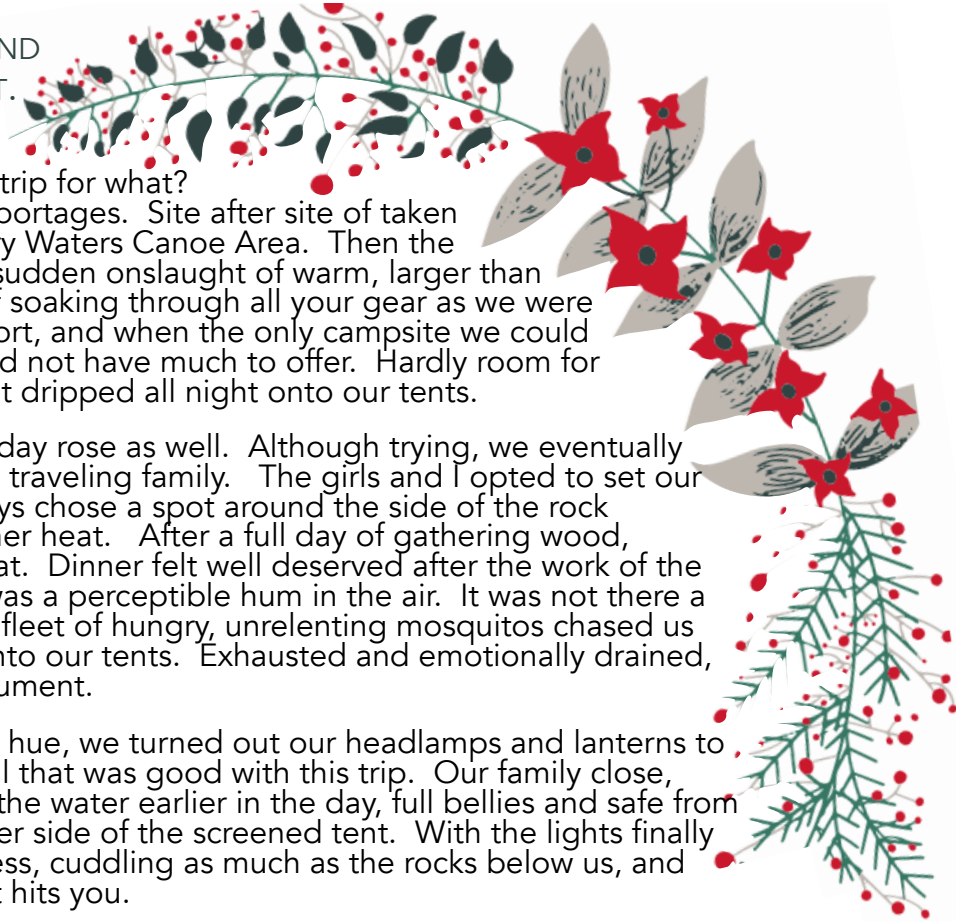
# ADVENT DEVOTIONAL

HOPE IN A TIME  
OF COVID

## A LIGHT IN THE DARKNESS

JOHN 1:5

THE LIGHT SHINES IN THE DARKNESS, AND  
THE DARKNESS DID NOT OVERCOME IT.



It had been a very long 36 hours.

Four kids, three canoes, and 4 hour road-trip for what?

Loading and unloading canoes over two portages. Site after site of taken campsites that dot islands in the Boundary Waters Canoe Area. Then the rain came. Not in sprinkles, but rather a sudden onslaught of warm, larger than life drops. Just the kind that has a way of soaking through all your gear as we were about to set up camp. Tempers were short, and when the only campsite we could find in the rainstorm showed its face, it did not have much to offer. Hardly room for two tents, wet firewood and a canopy that dripped all night onto our tents.

As the sun rose, our hopes for a brighter day rose as well. Although trying, we eventually found a site that was perfect for our large traveling family. The girls and I opted to set our tent up on a site high on the rock, the boys chose a spot around the side of the rock outcropping more protected in the summer heat. After a full day of gathering wood, fishing, and swimming, we settled in to eat. Dinner felt well deserved after the work of the day, but as we finished up dishes, there was a perceptible hum in the air. It was not there a moment ago. And just like that, an army fleet of hungry, unrelenting mosquitos chased us away from the setting sun and campfire into our tents. Exhausted and emotionally drained, we relented pretty easily and without argument.

As the sun set into a fiery orange and red hue, we turned out our headlamps and lanterns to play cards or read books. It was finally all that was good with this trip. Our family close, sharing duties, giggling about the slip in the water earlier in the day, full bellies and safe from the mosquitos that taunted us on the other side of the screened tent. With the lights finally dimmed, we talked and laid in the darkness, cuddling as much as the rocks below us, and summer heat would allow us. And then it hits you.

It was dark.

Not the kind of dark of your bedroom with nightlights. A darkness that is blacker then you can imagine unless you have experienced it before. At first you feel blinded by the absolute absence of light, fear sits somewhere in the back of your mind. Eventually, our eyes began to adjust, and we start to see a shadow, then another, and then can make out the entire outline of the trees that you tied the hammock to. You see, our tent has nothing but a screen for the dome. It is permeable to the light of the stars, but not the mosquitos.

Laying in our tent, atop the highest rocky point of our site, encompassed by this open screened domed tent was God's entire constellation of stars. A light. God's Light. Shining though the darkness.

The darkness of those previous 36 hours, the portages, rain, tempers, mosquitos, falls into the water, could not overcome the light of the stars shining into our tent.

God's light. Shining in the darkness.



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DEAR LORD,  
THANK YOU FOR BEING OUR  
LIGHT IN THE DARKNESS OF OUR  
LIVES. HELP US TO TURN OFF  
THE NOISE AND DISTRACTIONS  
OF OUR LIVES AND LET YOUR  
LIGHT SHINE THROUGH.  
AMEN.