

# 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.



December is dark. This year December 21, 2020, the Winter Solstice, in Central Minnesota, the sun will rise at 7:57 a.m. and set at 4:33 p.m.

December 21 will have only 8 hours 36 minutes of daylight. In comparison, June 21, 2020, the Summer Solstice, had 15 hours and 48 minutes of daylight, almost twice as much. In addition to this intense physical darkness we associate with the Advent season, December 2020 is also proving to be a season of emotional and spiritual darkness. The pandemic has already restricted our church activities and now promises to limit, or even cancel, our traditional holiday celebrations. Gathering with those people who mean the most to us is becoming a precious and rare commodity.

Advent has always been a season of waiting for the birth of Jesus and the excellent celebration of Christmas Day. Waiting is hard, and in this time of uncertainty, has become a way of life. We wait for church to reopen, for Covid numbers to decline, for news about a vaccine. We wait to hear about a loved one's Covid test result, we wait in quarantine. We wait in darkness.

However, light is powerful. In complete darkness, scientists have estimated that the flame from a single candle can be perceived by the naked eye from the distance of 2 miles (and some estimates claim up to 30 miles). John writes "The light shines in the darkness, and yet the darkness did not (cannot and will not) overcome it." (John 1:5) The promise of Advent is that, although we are surrounded by darkness, the darkness will not win. Although the song "Christ, Be Our Light", composed by Bernadette Farrell, is not technically an Advent hymn, its message is especially appropriate for this season.

Longing for light, we wait in darkness...  
Longing for peace, our world is troubled.  
Longing for hope, many despair.  
Christ, be our light! Shine in our hearts.  
Shine through the darkness...

In winter's darkest night, we welcome the light of the Christ child!



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GOD OF LIGHT,  
WE LONG FOR LIGHT, FOR PEACE, FOR  
HOPE. HELP US TO CONTINUALLY SEE  
THE LIGHT OF CHRIST SHINING IN OUR  
HEARTS AND IN THE DARKNESS.  
AMEN.