

Presbyterian Church of Lawrenceville

Guidelines for contributions to the **2025 Advent Devotional Series**

In Him Was Life

John 1:1-5

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being **in him was life**, and the life was the light of all people. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overtake it.

Thank you so much for agreeing to be one of our Advent Devotion writers for 2025! Based on past years, members of the congregation particularly enjoy reading devotions prepared by people they know. Please know that your effort will help brighten the Advent season for others. And help is available if needed!

This year's series will contain twenty-three devotions, each relating to a selection from the Bible that relates to the theme, *In Him Was Life*. The devotions will be distributed through daily emails and a printed booklet, starting November 30, when Advent begins.

Selecting a Biblical (or other) Reference

- We've prepared the attached list of Bible references and hymns that you might consider as you think about your devotion. But please feel free to select one that is not on that list, or a verse or two of a favorite poem, or an experience from your own life that, for you, relates to the theme.
- **As soon as possible**, and **before you start writing**, please share your preferred selection with Sarah Finbow at sfinbow@pclawrenceville.org. **Once Sarah confirms the selection you'll be addressing, it's time to start writing.**

Writing Your Devotion

- Your goal should be a devotion organized simply like this:
 - A title of your choosing, that captures or points toward the point of your selection as succinctly as possible.
 - A few paragraphs totaling no more than 250 words beyond any Bible selection or hymn you are referring to, conveying a simple message consistent with your selection in your own words.
 - Your devotion should end with a very brief and simple prayer.
- If you need assistance, contact Sarah Finbow (sfinbow@pclawrenceville.org) or Brennan Gagnon (brennan.gagnon@ptsem.edu), or Tom Wilfrid (tomwilfrid@gmail.com). Sarah will handle final editing and may add graphics to some of our devotions.

Submitting Your Devotion

- **No later than October 31**, email your submission (as an attached Word document) to Sarah Finbow (sfinbow@pclawrenceville.org) or drop it off at the church office.

THANK YOU for sharing your talents to enrich our congregation's celebration of Advent.

Suggested Bible references: **In him was life**

Genesis 2:7 Then the LORD God formed man from the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living being.

Genesis 15:5 He brought him outside and said, “Look toward heaven and count the stars, if you are able to count them.” Then he said to him, “So shall your descendants be.”

Exodus 20:2 “I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery ...”

Leviticus 19:10 You shall not strip your vineyard bare or gather the fallen grapes of your vineyard; you shall leave them for the poor and the alien: I am the LORD your God.

Deuteronomy 30:19 I call heaven and earth to witness against you today that I have set before you life and death, blessings and curses. Choose life so that you and your descendants may live ...

1 Samuel 26:9 But David said to Abishai, “Do not destroy him, for who can raise his hand against the LORD’s anointed and be guiltless?”

Psalms 16:11 You will make known to me the path of life. In your presence is the fullness of joy. In your right hand there are pleasures forever.

Psalms 51:10 Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me.

Psalms 104:14 You cause the grass to grow for the cattle and plants for people to cultivate, to bring forth food from the earth ...

Psalms 139:23-24 Search me and know my heart, test me and know any anxious thoughts. See if there is any offensive way in me and lead me in the way everlasting.

Isaiah 43:2 When you pass through the waters, I will be with you, and through the rivers, they shall not overwhelm you; when you walk through fire you shall not be burned, and the flame shall not consume you.

Ezekiel 36:26 A new heart I will give you, and a new spirit I will put within you, and I will remove from your body the heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh.

Joel 2:28 Then afterward I will pour out my spirit on all flesh; your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, and your young men shall see visions.

Malachi 2:5 My covenant with him was a covenant of life and well-being, which I gave him; this called for reverence, and he revered me and stood in awe of my name.

Matthew 5:22 “But I say to you that if you are angry with a brother or sister, you will be liable to judgment, and if you insult a brother or sister, you will be liable to the council, and if you say, ‘You fool,’ you will be liable to the hell of fire.”

Matthew 9:18 While he was saying these things to them, suddenly a leader came in and knelt before him, saying, “My daughter has just died, but come and lay your hand on her, and she will live.”

Mark 10:17 As he was setting out on a journey, a man ran up and knelt before him and asked him, “Good Teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?”

Luke 5:24 “But so that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins”—he said to the one who was paralyzed—“I say to you, stand up and take your stretcher and go to your home.”

John 3:16 For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life.

John 6:35 Jesus said to them, “I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never be hungry, and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty.

John 10:10 “I came that they may have life and have it abundantly.”

John 15:5 “I am the vine; you are the branches. Those who abide in me and I in them bear much fruit, because apart from me you can do nothing.”

Acts 8:33 In his humiliation justice was denied him. Who can describe his generation? For his life is taken away from the earth.

Romans 6:4 Therefore we were buried with him by baptism into death, so that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, so we also might walk in newness of life.

Ephesians 3:17-19 [I pray ...] that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith, as you are being rooted and grounded in love ... that you may have the power to comprehend, with all the saints, what is the breadth and length and height and depth and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, so that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.

Ephesians 5:18-19 Be filled with the Spirit, as you sing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs to one another, singing and making melody to the Lord in your hearts,

1 Thessalonians 2:8 So deeply do we care for you that we are determined to share with you not only the gospel of God but also our own selves, because you have become very dear to us.

Suggested Hymns: In Him Was Life

Note: Hymn #s refer to Glory to God, the “red hymnal” used at PCOL.

Goodness is Stronger than Evil (#750)

Great Is Thy Faithfulness (#39)

Hark! The Herald Angels Sing (#119)

How Great Thou Art (#625)

I Danced in the Morning #157)

Let All Things Now Living (#37)

Love Divine, All Loves Excelling (#366)

Mary, Did You Know? (English, 1991)

Mothering God, You Gave Me Birth #7)

O God, Who Gives Us Life (#53)

O Holy Night (Capeau, 1847)

Take my Life and Let it Be (#697)

To God Be the Glory, Great Things He has Done (#634)