

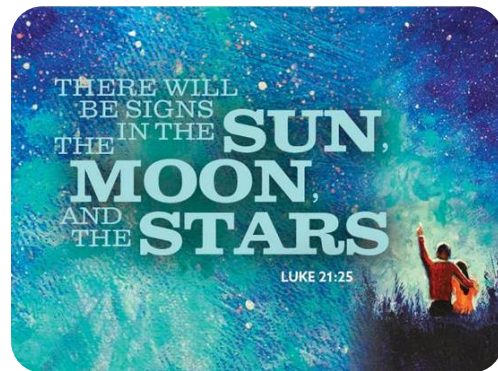
## The Readings on This Day

\*\*\*Click on the links for the Bible Verse(s)

### First Sunday in Advent

Although the historical record is sketchy, it appears that our Advent arose out of a season of fasting to prepare for baptisms at Epiphany. By the sixth century, an eschatological emphasis was present. Our Advent comprises the four Sundays before Christmas. Each year, the first Sunday deals with our readiness for divine judgment, the second Sunday the ministry of John the Baptist, the third Sunday the Baptist's call to a repentant life, and only on the fourth Sunday a narrative concerning the birth of Jesus. God comes, in the past in the history of Israel

and the incarnation of Jesus, in the present in the word and sacrament of each Sunday and in the sufferings of our time, and in the future at the end of all things. The lectionary appoints readings to fit this pattern, and its tone stands in stark contrast to our society's weeks of preparation for Christmas. Liturgical advice to keep a meaningful Advent without a December-long celebration of Christmas is meant not to be a kill-joy, but to awake our longing for the surprising ways that God comes to us. We mean to be a people who are know what time it is and are willing to wait for what will come—a people who do not sing Easter hymns during Lent nor Christmas hymns in Advent.



### [Jeremiah 33:14-16](#)

The Jeremiah passage is chosen as a condensed form of the gospel: the Lord will come to restore justice among the people. It came to be that Christians called Jesus their Lord, the divinely-sent descendant of King David.

### [The Psalm for the Day](#)

Having heard Jeremiah's promise of a safe city, we join together in [Psalm 25:1-10](#), a prayer of the believers' confidence in God's coming salvation. The psalm's emphasis on God's compassion, forgiveness, justice, and care for the lowly is an apt beginning for our year of Luke.

### [1 Thessalonians 3:9-13](#)

We pray with Paul that all our waiting for God be characterized by lives of gratitude, love, blamelessness. Such readying contrasts sharply with what our culture expects of us during the weeks of December.

### [Luke 21:25-36](#)

The reading calls us to join the Christians of the late first century, wishing for the end of all evil and sorrow and for the coming of the joyous reign of Christ. Christians believe that Christ has already come, is coming this morning in word and sacrament, and will come at the end of all things. Like a tree of life, the fig tree is already full of leaves.

