

Gloria Dei Lutheran Church

Preparing in Christ's Presence:

An Advent Midweek Series

Week 1- Do Less

Wednesday, December 3, 2025



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Participating in Today's Service:

Pastor: Pastor Lynn M. Fonfara

Music Director: Len Cremisio

Focus Question: What can you let go of or erase from your to-do list in order to be more present with Christ this Advent?

Gather in silence

Gathering Hymn: Joyous Light ELW 561

Invocation

In the name of the ☩ triune God in whose presence we wait,
the Holy Parent, fulfilling the promise,
the Holy Child, waiting to be born,
the Holy Spirit, illumining the way. **Amen.**

Opening Dialogue

In the hustle and bustle, in the kitchens and malls,
it is hard to feel still.

Our to-do lists are long; **it is hard to be present.**

We are called to stillness; **we long to be still.**

What can you let go of, that you might rest?

What can we not do, that we might be present with Christ?

Song: Come and Fill Our Hearts ELW 528

(Sing several times)

Readings:

Psalm 46 ELW

God is our refuge and strength,
a very present help in trouble.

Therefore we will not fear, though the earth be moved,
and though the mountains shake in the depths of the sea;
though its waters rage and foam,
and though the mountains tremble with its tumult.

There is a river whose streams make glad the city of God,
the holy habitation of the Most High.

God is in the midst of the city; it shall not be shaken;
God shall help it at the break of day.

The nations rage, and the kingdoms shake;
God speaks, and the earth melts away.

The LORD of hosts is with us;
the God of Jacob is our stronghold.

Come now, regard the works of the LORD,
what desolations God has brought up on the earth;
behold the one who makes war to cease in all the world;
who breaks the bow, and shatters the spear,

and burns the shields with fire.

"Be still, then, and know that I am God;

I will be exalted among the nations; I will be exalted in the earth."

The LORD of hosts is with us;

the God of Jacob is our stronghold.

Luke 10:38-42

Now as they went on their way, he entered a certain village where a woman named Martha welcomed him. She had a sister named Mary, who sat at Jesus's feet and listened to what he was saying. But Martha was distracted by her many tasks, so she came to him and asked, "Lord, do you not care that my sister has left me to do all the work by myself? Tell her, then, to help me." But the Lord answered her, "Martha, Martha, you are worried and distracted by many things, but few things are needed—indeed only one. Mary has chosen the better part, which will not be taken away from her."

Today, by Mary Oliver

Today I'm flying low and I'm
not saying a word

I'm letting all the voodooes of ambition sleep.

The world goes on as it must,
the bees in the garden rumbling a little,
the fish leaping, the gnats getting eaten.
And so forth.

But I'm taking the day off.

Quiet as a feather.

I hardly move though really I'm traveling
a terrific distance.

Stillness. One of the doors
into the temple.

by Mary Oliver

(from *A Thousand Mornings: Poems*, New York: Penguin, 2012).

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3QDTfnImL8Q>

or

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=47RRd_9JsPI

Reflection/Open Space

Meditative music accompanies this time.

Group Discussion

Gather in pairs or small groups to discuss what can be let go of this season and/or where you can find times to be still. These pairs/small groups can be accountability partners for Advent, checking in with one another over the course of the season.

Activity

Write on a stone what you will do less of during Advent. Put the stones at the base of a plant, if you wish.

Silent Reflection

Use this time for silent reflection.

The ringing of a bell gathers the assembly back together for song and prayer.

Song: Let My Prayer Rise Up ELW 232

Prayer

Ever-present God, in this time when busy-ness is exalted and it seems there is so much to do, keep our focus on you. May we let go of those things that add stress or distract us so that we may sit in your splendor, even for a moment, and be present to that which gives us life. In the name of your Son, Jesus, for whom we wait expectantly. **Amen.**

That we are able to let go of things we do not need to carry and be present as we wait for Christ's return,
we pray to you, O God.

That we are freed to both give and receive during this Advent season, **we pray to you, O God.**

That we see holiness in the small things, **we pray to you, O God.**

That through the stresses of this season we may live in and live out your love and grace, **we pray to you, O God.**

We lift up our prayers to you, O Lord. **Amen.**

Blessing

God, whose presence grants you stillness,
Christ, whose peace helps you wait,
Holy Spirit, whose fire illumines your way,
✠ bless and keep you always. **Amen.**

Song: He Came Down ELW 253

Dismissal

Go in peace. Be present with Christ.

Thanks be to God.

A greeting of peace may be shared by all.

***The end of Worship –
The beginning of Christian Ministry.***

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