

5**PRAY THE PSALM OF THE WEEK Psalm 45:6-8a; antiphon v. 17**

Behold the Lord, the ruler, has come,*
 and the kingdom and the power and the glory are in his hand.
 Give the king your justice, O God,*
 and your righteousness to the royal son!
 May he judge your people with righteousness,*
 and your poor with justice!
 May the kings of Tarshish and of the coastlands render him tribute;*
 may the kings of Sheba and Seba bring gifts!
 May all kings fall down before him,*
 all nations serve him!

**Around the Word Devotions + January 4-10, 2026****"God Manifested in the Infancy of Jesus"****1****BLESS YOURSELF WITH THE HOLY CROSS AND SAY:**

In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

2**SAY THE APOSTLES' CREED**I believe in God, the Father Almighty,
 Maker of heaven and earth.

And in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died and was buried. He descended into hell. The third day He rose again from the dead. He ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of God, the Father Almighty. From thence He will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy Christian church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

3**PRAY THE LORD'S PRAYER**

Our Father, who art in heaven,
 hallowed be Thy name,
 Thy kingdom come,
 Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.
 Give us this day our daily bread;
 and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us;
 and lead us not into temptation,
 but deliver us from evil.
 For Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever and ever. Amen.

4**PRAY THE MORNING OR EVENING PRAYER**

Morning. I thank You, my heavenly Father, through Jesus Christ, Your dear Son, that You have kept me this night from all harm and danger; and I pray that You would keep me this day also from sin and every evil, that all my doings and life may please You. For into Your hands I commend myself, my body and soul, and all things. Let Your holy angel be with me, that the evil foe may have no power over me. Amen.

4

Evening. I thank you, my heavenly Father, through Jesus Christ, Your dear Son, that You have graciously kept me this day; and I pray that You would forgive me all my sins where I have done wrong, and graciously keep me this night. For into Your hands, I commend myself, my body and soul, and all things. Let Your holy angel be with me, that the evil foe may have no power over me. Amen.

6**SAY TOGETHER THE VERSE OF THE WEEK Matthew 2:10-11**

When they saw the star, they rejoiced with exceedingly great joy. And when they had come into the house, they saw the young Child with Mary His mother, and fell down and worshiped Him.

7**READ THE SCRIPTURE AND DEVOTION (OTHER SIDE OF THE PAGE)****8****PRAY THE PRAYER OF THE WEEK**

O God, by the leading of a star You made known Your only-begotten Son to the Gentiles. Lead us, who know You by faith, to enjoy in heaven the fullness of Your divine presence; through the same Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

9**PRAYER FOR OURSELVES AND OTHERS****10****SING OR SAY THE HYMN OF THE WEEK****O Morning Star, How Fair and Bright**

1) O Morning Star, how fair and bright!
 You shine with God's own truth and light,
 Aglow with grace and mercy!
 Of Jacob's race, King David's son,
 Our Lord and master, You have won
 Our hearts to serve You only!
 Lowly, holy!
 Great and glorious, All victorious
 Rich in blessing!
 Rule and might o'er all possessing.

2) Come, heav'nly Bridegroom, Light divine,
 And deep within our hearts now shine:
 There light a flame undying!
 In Your one body let us be
 As living branches of a tree,
 Your life our lives supplying.
 Now, though daily
 Earth's deep sadness
 May perplex us and distress us,
 Yet with heav'nly joy You bless us.

LSB 395

Around the Word Devotions + the week of January 4-10, 2026

THEME OF THE WEEK: God Manifested in the Infancy of Jesus

Led by a special star, wise men came from the East in search of the Christ-Child, the newborn king of the Jews. With a bearing from the Word of God, they found the baby Jesus and they worshipped Him. Have you ever wondered why? What made this Child worthy of worship? Contrary to the depictions of our Christmas cards, the Christ-Child had no halo, aura, or special glow. "He had no form or majesty that we should look at Him, and no beauty that we should desire Him" (Isaiah 53:2). With eyes opened by God's Spirit, we recognize this Child as the Son of God, our Savior, and we join the shepherds and wise men in worshipping Him.

SUN

SCRIPTURE: Matthew 2:1-12 "Where is He?"

The Christ Child, born king of the Jews, makes Himself known to the world. His birth was first announced to lowly shepherds in Bethlehem's hills by the angelic heralds. This heavenly proclamation was spread by all who heard. The arrival of this new King was also announced to the greater world by means of a special star, for by it, a group of outsiders, wise men, were led to the very source of wisdom, first to the Word of God and then by way of the Word to the Word made flesh. In the presence of the Christ Child, these men bowed down and worshipped the author of wisdom. *Father, by the power of Your Spirit, working through Your Word, we pray that You might graciously continue to draw all people to Your Son, the source of salvation. Amen.*

MON

SCRIPTURE: Psalm 96 "Let the Heavens Rejoice"

The almighty God, the Lord, "comes to judge the earth." This is the God who "made the heavens." "Splendor and majesty are before Him." When you hear these words with a troubled conscience, how do you receive them? In terror? In dread? Do you think about how much your sins offend His holiness and how you can't lift your eyes toward His presence? But the psalmist David speaks of God's judgment with joy. Why? He knows and trusts in the promise of His Seed Who will come to bear the severity of divine judgement in his place. He knows and trusts in the coming Christ Who, as true God and man, will make the impossible possible. God will judge the sinners righteous for Christ's sake! *Grant us this joy from faith always, heavenly Father. Amen.*

TUE

SCRIPTURE: Isaiah 60:1-6: Who Left the Light On?

Why do you worship Jesus? In this text, we are reminded of the benefit that Jesus Christ brings to us. He is our Savior Who is the light of the world. He is the One Who comes to drive away the darkness of sin from us and from our world. It is strange to think that a child born in a small town like Bethlehem would be the one to do this. But in the wisdom of God, this is exactly what happened! We worship our Lord Jesus because we thrill and exult in the blessings that He lavishes upon us. Not only the things that we need in this life, but more importantly, the light of salvation that shines on us. Truly, the little Christ child brings the light of heaven to us. *Heavenly Father, I thank You for the gift of Your Son Who brings light into our darkness. Amen.*

WED

SCRIPTURE: Isaiah 49:1-7 Jesus: Servant and Redeemer

If you don't confess the divinity and humanity of Christ, the 49th chapter of Isaiah's prophesy makes little sense. The Lord's Servant, the Holy One, is a divine Redeemer Who is both despised and feared by the kings of the earth. Though He's fashioned as the decisive arrow in God's quiver, the Servant yet speaks words of degradation and despair. You know that the Lord's Servant, the Holy One of Israel, the Redeemer, and King is Jesus. As an arrow strikes its target, so God in the flesh has aimed at and struck the heart of the devil's kingdom of sin with His cross. Jesus suffered God's abandonment so you might have

God's mercy, the forgiveness of sins. *I give thanks to You, O Jesus, that Your salvation has reached the ends of the earth. Amen.*

THU

SCRIPTURE: Matthew 3:13-17 The Baptism of Jesus and You

The baptism of Jesus is good news for us. Jesus didn't need baptism; He didn't need forgiveness. He never sinned. But Jesus is there in the Jordan River for you, to "fulfill all righteousness" (Matthew 3:15). In Jesus' baptism He is set apart and put into His office of Savior, and with His baptism He begins His work of saving the world, of saving you. What is begun in the Jordan River ends outside Jerusalem on the cross, Jesus fulfilling all righteousness for you. So, when we hear the voice of God the Father coming through the clouds, we know that these words are also, graciously, for us. We are His beloved children with whom

He is well pleased. *Jesus, thank You for Your baptism and mine, and the eternal life that You won for me. Amen.*

FRI

SCRIPTURE: Romans 3:23-31 "Justified Freely by His Grace"

This is the foundation of the Christian faith and the hub at the center of the wheel of Christian teaching upon which everything turns. All have sinned. But all are justified. By works? By the Law? No. You are justified by God's grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. Christ alone is the propitiatory sacrifice to gain God's kindness. To propitiate means to regain one's favor, to win back one's smiling face. Jesus has done it with His onetime sacrifice upon the cross. God's favor is yours. Jesus paid the price with His death and spiritual anguish. What of your boasting? It's excluded by faith. For the Jews and Gen-

tiles alike, all are saved by faith apart from works. *I praise You, O Lord, for the depths of Your unsearchable love. Amen.*

SAT

SCRIPTURE: Psalm 72 Jesus Rains Down God's Love

Solomon doesn't sing about himself. He teaches his hearers to sing of Christ and His spiritual kingdom. We return to the picture of God's judgment and are surprised to see a picture of life as opposed to a picture of torment. Jesus, Who is in Himself God's judgment against His creation, falls like rain on the mown grass, like showers that water the earth. Jesus rains down God's love. Hear God's judgements. "You are mine. See how my Son has suffered in your place that you might have eternal, resurrected life. I forgive you. Sin, death, and hell can no longer touch you." Blessed be the Lord, the God of Israel Who alone does wondrous things. *Blessed be His glorious name forever; may the whole earth be filled with His glory! Amen and Amen.*

Around the Word Devotions are produced by Around the Word Journal. Visit www.whatdoesthismean.org to sign up for these free devotions. These devotions are free for individual and family use. Questions? Please email aroundtheworddevotions@gmail.com. Scripture quotations are from The Holy Bible, English Standard Version® (ESV®), copyright © 2001 by Crossway, a publishing ministry of Good News Publishers. Used by permission. All rights reserved. Thank you to sanctus.org and lutheran-hymnal.com for the Collects and Hymns. This week's authors are Pastor Quintin Cundiff, Pastor A. Brian Flamme, Pastor Matthew Rasmussen, and Pastor Bryan Wolfmueller.