

**FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH  
ADVENT DEVOTIONAL**

**“ALL SHALL BE WELL”**



**ADVENT 2024**



**WEEK 1**

# ADVENT DAY 1

## SUNDAY, DECEMBER 1

### Who was Julian of Norwich?

—Jane McBride

Our Advent theme, “All shall be well,” is based on the writings of Julian of Norwich. Details about her life are scarce. We don’t know whether Julian was her real name or not. She was born in 1343 and died sometime after 1416. Her hometown of Norwich was a bustling trade center, second in prominence only to London. Being at this busy crossroads also placed Norwich at the center of the black death pandemic. During Julian’s childhood, about half of the city’s inhabitants likely died from the disease.

Given Julian’s passionate writing about the motherhood of God, scholars speculate that Julian was a mother herself and that, perhaps, her family perished in an outbreak of sickness. At age 30, Julian fell seriously ill. On the brink of death, she received last rites, and it was then that a series of 16 visions of the crucified Jesus came to her.

Five days later, having fully recovered, she wrote down a brief version of her experience.

Decades afterward, she composed a fuller account in the book we have today, *Revelations of Divine Love*, which articulates her interpretation of the visions and her unique theology. Her book was, as far as we know, the first to be authored by a woman in the English language.

At some point after she received her visions, Julian was chosen to become an anchoress in the church at Norwich. She was literally walled into the side of the church, confined there in a small room and garden for the rest of her life. The cell of an anchoress typically had three windows—one that opened into the sanctuary of the church; one for receiving food and tending bodily needs; and a third for connection to the outside world. Despite how horrible this existence might sound to us, being an anchoress in those times was a great honor.

An important ritual would have accompanied Julian’s being sealed into her cell, including elements of the funeral mass, acknowledging that this transition was a death of sorts. An anchoress was considered a spiritual authority, and (through her window to the outside world) she provided advice and comfort to many. ([https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Julian\\_of\\_Norwich](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Julian_of_Norwich))

“In my foolish way” she explains, “I had often wondered why the foreseeing wisdom of God could not have prevented the beginning of sin, for then, thought I, all would have been well.” “But Jesus, who in this vision informed me of all I needed, answered, ‘Sin was necessary—but all shall be well; all shall be very well and all manner of thing shall be well.’” (Chapter 27)

## ADVENT DAY 2

### MONDAY, DECEMBER 2

#### Advent Poem

by Clyde Steckel

Advent is coming. Hooray!

*What's that? Adding a vent to the heating system?*

No, silly. Advent is a season, the four Sundays before Christmas.

*Oh, like how many shopping days are left?*

No, it's preparing for the one who is coming.

*You mean like Santa, or Aunt Judy and Uncle Keith, who come for Christmas dinner?*

No, the word "Advent" means "coming toward us." Emmanuel, God with us.

*I have a school friend named Emmanuel, though we call him Mannie.*

"God with us" means God is present wherever people are kind and fair.

*That's kinda scary. Isn't God supposed to be up in heaven running everything?*

That, too. But when you are kind to your little sister, God is present.

*Aw, mom!*

## ADVENT DAY 3

### TUESDAY, DECEMBER 3

I first learned of Julian of Norwich when I took a college class on the poet T.S. Eliot. Eliot's poetry is jam-packed with references to classical literature and philosophy—Homer and Virgil, Shakespeare and Dante, mystics old and new—so that understanding Eliot necessarily meant learning about centuries worth of literature and theology. My worn copy of *The Complete Poems and Plays* is filled with marginalia reminding me of what Eliot was referring to in any given line: “from Dante, Brunetto Latini” or “Ferdinand – Tempest” or “Aeneid.”

And in a few places my penciled notes say simply “Julian of Norwich.” Our Advent theme makes an appearance in one of my favorite passages from Eliot's *Four Quartets*. It comes at the very end of the final poem in the *Quartets*. My notes say simply “Julian – blessing.”

—Jean Anderson

Excerpted from “Little Gidding” from *Four Quartets*

—T.S. Eliot

We shall not cease from exploration  
And the end of all our exploring  
Will be to arrive where we started  
And know the place for the first time.  
Through the unknown, remembered gate  
When the last of earth left to discover  
Is that which was the beginning;  
At the source of the longest river  
The voice of the hidden waterfall  
And the children in the apple-tree  
Not known, because not looked for  
But heard, half-heard. In the stillness  
Between two waves of the sea.  
Quick, now, here, now, always—  
A condition of complete simplicity  
(Costing not less than everything)  
And all shall be well and  
All manner of thing shall be well  
When the tongues of flame are in-folded  
Into the crowned knot of fire  
And the fire and the rose are one.

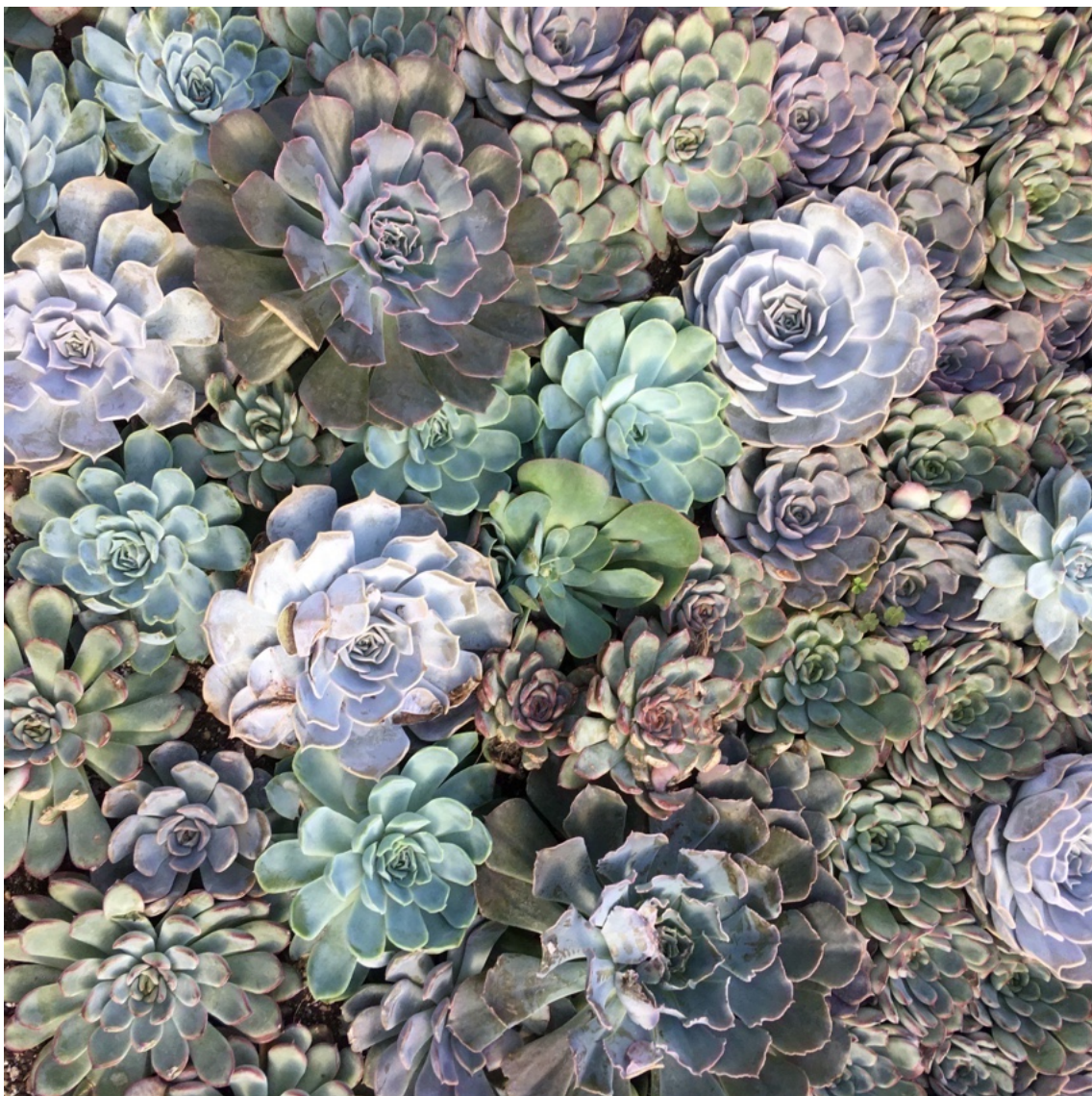
**ADVENT DAY 4**  
**WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 4**

I was drawn to this patch of Hens and Chicks succulents, scientifically known as *Sempervivum* ("forever alive").

These resilient plants are drought-tolerant and thrive in various growing conditions, making them easy to grow and tend. The repetitive rosette pattern and subtle gradations of green are pleasing to look at and a feeling of calmness comes over me, such that I feel "all is well" in nature.

—Ann Sather

Photo by Ann Sather, taken at Longwood Gardens in Kennett Square, PA.



## ADVENT DAY 5

### THURSDAY, DECEMBER 5

#### Is Julian of Norwich correct?

—Bill Lindberg

This year's Advent theme provided by Julian of Norwich is "All Shall Be Well." As I write this Advent submission in the aftermath of the 2024 Presidential election, I have grave doubts about this assertion (in the short term at least). Throughout my life, I have fundamentally been an optimist and as part of my credo believed in a gracious, loving God, not a vengeful, angry God.

A friend sent me the image to the right, and I fervently believe that during this time of Advent 2024, our democracy and our world will be tested in ways that we are previously unaccustomed to experiencing. I believe our Constitutional order and the Rule of Law will be under assault from callous forces spurred on by a narcissist with authoritarian tendencies. Emily Dickinson describes Hope as "the thing with feathers / that perches in the soul / and sings the tune without the words / and never stops - at all -..." I am fearful that in the short term, at least, our country, and many in the world, will experience intense pain and suffering, especially for the most vulnerable among us.

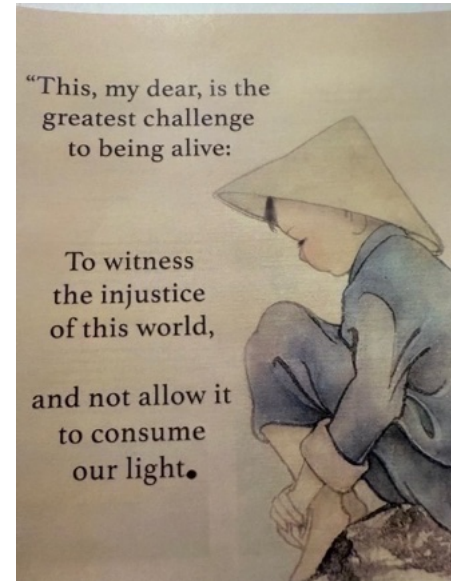
Today, I was up before the sunrise and on the horizon I saw a flaming reddish hue. There's a well-known sailor's adage that says "Red sky at morning, sailors take warning, red sky at night, sailor's delight." What I saw this morning was a brilliant red! Omens are imperfect and I hope that my premonition is inaccurate.

Back to my credo. The theologian Reinhold Niebuhr best captures my long-term aspirational sense:

"Nothing worth doing is completed in our lifetime; therefore we must be saved by hope. Nothing which is true or beautiful or good makes complete sense in any immediate context of history; therefore we must be saved by faith. Nothing we do, however virtuous, can be accomplished alone; therefore, we must be saved by love."

An ancient corollary of Niebuhr's viewpoint was noted by Philo of Alexandria who advised us as follows: "Be kind, for everyone you meet is fighting a great battle."

As we forge ahead, it will be very important to be steadfast in our resolve. As we reach out to one another to console, encourage, and inspire those in our community who are hurting, we can



be mindful of our forebears who prevailed over challenges. May the courage embodied by people such as Dietrich Bonhoeffer, Martin Luther King, or Jesus guide us in our path of discipleship. As our offertory response this Fall beckons us, "Could it be that we are called for such a time as this?" May it be so and may we have the wisdom and courage to stay grounded in Jesus's teachings of love, justice, and compassion.



# ADVENT DAY 6

## FRIDAY, DECEMBER 6

Click [here](#) to open a sound file that accompanies this song.

### Advent Prayer #2

A round for SATB choir

Adapted by Jane McBride from a prayer by 'Christian Aid'

Jeffrey Leonard Stone

ca.  $\text{♩} = 94$

Soprano  
Alto  
Tenor  
Bass

In our watch - ing and wait - ing, come Im - ma-nu - el. In our hopes and in our fears, come Im -  
ma-nu - el. In our hopes and in our fears, come Im - ma-nu - el. oo -  
In our hopes and in our fears, come Im - ma-nu - el. oo -  
come Im - ma-nu - el. oo - In our homes and in our world, come Im -  
ma-nu - el. oo -  
In our homes and in our world, come Im - ma-nu - el. In our light and in our dark-ness,  
oo - In our homes and in our world, come Im - ma-nu - el.  
ma-nu - el. In our light and in our dark-ness, come Im - ma-nu - el. oo -

2

21

S. oo - - - In our watch - ing and wait - ing come Im - ma - nu - el.

A. come Im - ma - nu - el. oo - - - In our watch - ing and wait - ing,

T. In our light and in our dark - ness, come Im - ma - nu - el. oo - - -

B. oo - - - oo - - - oo - - -

27

S. In our hopes and in our fears, - - - come Im - ma - nu - el. oo - - -

A. come Im - ma - nu - el. In our hopes and in our fears, - - - come Im - ma - nu - el.

T. In our watch - ing and wait - ting, come Im - ma - nu - el. In our hopes and in our fears, - - -

B. oo - - - In our watch - ing and wait - ing, come Im - ma - nu - el.

33

S. oo - - - oo - - - Come, oh, come, Im - ma - nu - el!

A. oo - - - oo - - - Come, oh, come, Im - ma - nu - el!

T. come Im - ma - nu - el. oo - - - Come, oh, come, Im - ma - nu - el!

B. In our hopes and in our fears, - - - come Im - ma - nu - el. Come, oh, come, Im - ma - nu - el!

## ADVENT DAY 7

### SATURDAY, DECEMBER 7

#### “All Shall Be Well”: Prediction? Conviction? Pipe Dream?

—Mary Byers

I admit that I groaned a bit when I first heard our theme at First Church for Advent. I was struggling to understand the results of the general election. Shall *all* be well? Really? Everyone? Everything? *Shall* be? *When*? I had no idea how to do the work needed to bring things into balance, to understand. How to reconcile my gaping disappointment, dismay, and dread with Julian of Norwich’s reassurance (the reassurance she reported receiving from Christ) that “all shall be well”? I need—I want—to believe this, too, but how?

As I usually do when I need information, I googled. I thought I might be able to add some details to those Pastor Jane shared in her sermon on November 17. Jane mentioned that when Julian was extremely sick, she had what she called “showings.” At the Christian History Institute’s website, I found the following:

Julian actually had prayed that she might become sick unto death so that she could “experience all that a body and soul experience in death (including attack by devils and administration of the last rites) but without actual death—so that she might learn to live more mindful of God.” She in fact became so sick that she and the others around her believed she was dying, and she was given the last rites.

When she was ill, Julian had what we might describe as a near-death experience. “At the crisis of her sickness, between four and nine one afternoon, she receives fifteen ‘showings,’ or revelations. She reports that heaven opens to her, she beholds Christ in his glory, and she sees the meaning and power of his sufferings . . .

“In her thirteenth showing, Julian receives a comforting answer to a question that has long troubled her:

In my folly, before this time I often wondered why, by the great foreseeing wisdom of God, the onset of sin was not prevented: for then, I thought, all should have been well. This impulse [of thought] was much to be avoided, but nevertheless I mourned and sorrowed because of it, without reason and discretion.

But Jesus, who in this vision informed me of all that is needed by me, answered with these words and said: ‘It was necessary that there should be sin; but all shall be well, and **all shall be well, and all manner of thing shall be well.**’

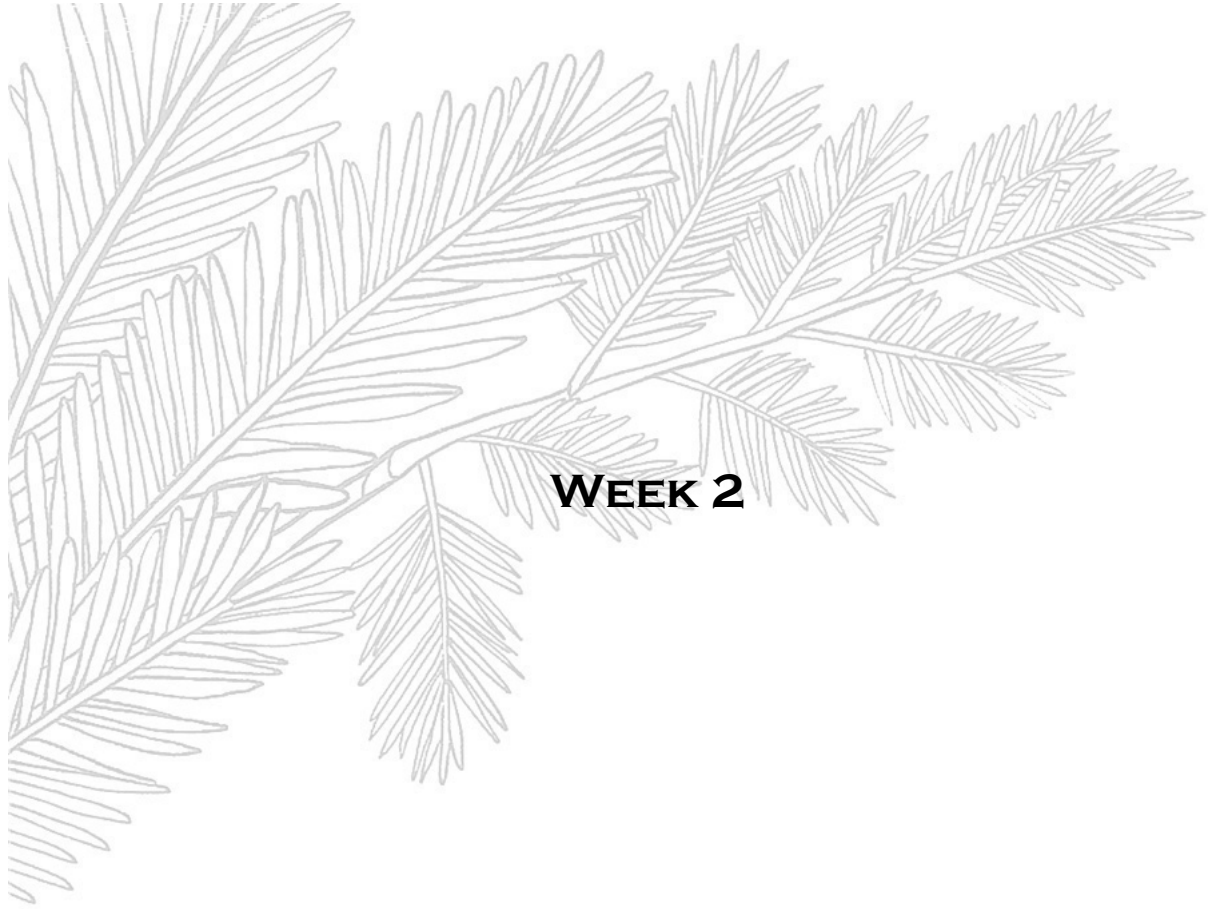
These words were said most tenderly, showing no manner of blame to me nor to any who shall be saved.

“In this she recognizes the compassion she had prayed for. She is impressed with her need to be joyful in all circumstances, however adverse, and for no particular reason, except this: that all

things will ultimately be put right by Christ.”

<https://christianhistoryinstitute.org/incontext/article/julian>)

I’ve adopted a few familiar mantras to carry me beyond the aftermath of the election and into Advent: First, faith, hope, and caritas. I pray to absorb and be sustained by these interlocking gifts. Also, I’m trying to be kinder, in all ways—in thought, word, and deed (no surprise: the first is consistently the hardest). And, as Julian did, I pray for compassion, and, after reading the CHI’s short article, I pray that I might be joyful (and believe, with Julian) that “all things will ultimately be put right by Christ.”



**WEEK 2**

## DAY 8

### SUNDAY, DECEMBER 8

“And ... [Jesus] showed me a little thing, the quantity of a hazel nut, lying in the palm of my hand, as it seemed. And it was as round as any ball. I looked upon it with the eye of my understanding, and thought, 'What may this be?' And it was answered generally thus, 'It is all that is made.' I marveled how it might last, for I thought it might suddenly have fallen to nothing for littleness. And I was answered in my understanding: It lasts and ever shall, for God loves it. And so have all things their beginning by the love of God. In this little thing I saw three properties. The first is that God made it. The second that God loves it. And the third, that God keeps it.”  
(From *Revelations of Divine Love*, chapter 5)

From “Julian of Norwich’s Teabag” by Martin Wroe

‘It is all that is made.’ That’s Julian, in Norwich  
Tripping on a hazelnut in her 14th-century grip  
My trip is this teabag, giving up its love  
This perforated planet, in my steaming mug  
Onward flight in the dark of compost bin,  
With potato peel, onion and banana skin  
From Sri Lanka or Kenya, this leafy supernova  
Here in my kitchen, this miraculous stopover  
The quiet humus of mineralisation  
Organic breakdown, mostly just waiting  
How earth flavours and fires this life every day  
I get it, Julian, this teabag, how it’s all that is made

*Shared by Jane McBride*

# ADVENT DAY 9

## MONDAY, DECEMBER 9

### **All Things Shall be Well**

by Kathy Haskins

November 11, 2024

It is time to put away T-shirts  
And bring out the warm sweaters  
Time to switch from salads  
To stews and soups  
Time to replace ice tea  
With hot tea and scrumptious cocoa  
Time for rain showers  
To fall as precious snow flakes  
Perfectly unique and individual.

And all shall be well  
As time revolves in a cycle  
Sympathetic to Life  
Putting all beings to bed  
For the Winter, a cleansing  
For sacred renewal  
Waiting with anticipation  
For the coming of the Christ  
Child of rebirth and reclamation.

And all shall be well  
For Spring is around the corner  
Spring is a promise  
If we but hold onto our  
Hope and redemption  
Our love of life, find purpose  
And seek community with the trees  
Of humanity; yes, carry on  
And all shall be well.

## ADVENT DAY 10

### TUESDAY, DECEMBER 10



At the shelter, cats swirled in figure eights around our ankles or meowed loudly from their perches. My roommate and I, newly graduated from college, had decided to adopt a cat. I approached a regal gray beauty sitting wide-eyed in a cage. I reached out to pet her, and she promptly bit my finger. In that mysterious way that matches between humans and pets are made, I knew she was the one.

The shelter volunteer told us she had been there a long time, more than a year. When we brought her home, she turned into the sweetest cat. She never again bit any fingers, although she did bite the end of a roast beef sandwich at the precise moment that I took a bite out of the other end. Cloistered in our apartment, we named her Julian of Norwich.

That we bring animals into our homes, intertwining their creature habits into the rhythms of our lives, is a strange and

mysterious gift. My current cat Savvy sleeps peacefully next to me, having nestled into our softest blanket atop a mound of velvet pillows. She will wake soon and demand her bedtime snack of 1/2 a can of prescription chicken stew.

Jesus' story is also intertwined with animals, from the moment of his birth in a stable with its animal inhabitants bearing witness. His first visitors were shepherds, whose flocks surely rested nearby. Luke 2:17 says that the shepherds spread the word about what they had seen, and I imagine their words mingled with the bleating of sheep. The mystery of Christmas reminds me that, to grow closer to the divine, we do not need to transcend the earth. Instead, we can sink low, cuddle our pets, tend to the animal needs of their bodies and our own, and fully inhabit this living world.

—Kim Cooper

Painting of Julian the Cat by [Judy Thompson](#)



**ADVENT DAY 11**  
**WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 11**

Photo by Mary Jean Korsmo



## ADVENT DAY 12

### THURSDAY, DECEMBER 12

“Hope locates itself in the premises that we don’t know what will happen and that in the spaciousness of uncertainty is room to act. When you recognize uncertainty, you recognize that you may be able to influence the outcomes—you alone or you in concert with a few dozen or several million others. Hope is an embrace of the unknown and knowable, a alternative to the certainty of both optimists and pessimists. Optimists think it will all be fine without our involvement; pessimists take the opposite position; both excuse themselves from acting. It’s the belief that what we do matters even though how and when it may matter, who and what it may impact, are not things we can know beforehand. We may not, in fact, know them afterward either, but they matter all the same, and history is full of people whose influence was most powerful after they were gone.”

—Rebecca Solnit, *Hope in the Dark: The Untold History of People Power*

*Shared by Sarah Almén*

# ADVENT DAY 13

## FRIDAY, DECEMBER 13

Click [here](#) to open the sound file that accompanies this song.

### Advent Prayer #3

#### A round for SATB choir

Adapted by Jane McBride  
from a prayer by 'Christian Aid'

Jeffrey Leonard Stone

ca.  $\text{♩} = 50$

Soprano  
Alto  
Tenor  
Bass

In our watch - ing and wait - ing, come Im - ma - - nu - el.

9  
S. In our watch - ing and wait - ing, come Im - man - - nu - el.  
A. In our watch - ing and wait - ing, come Im - man - - nu - el.  
T. come Im - man - - nu - el. In our hopes and in our fears,  
B. In our hopes and in our fears, come Im - ma - - nu - el.

17  
S. come Im - man - - nu - el. In our hopes and in our fears,  
A. In our hopes and in our fears, come Im - ma - - nu - el.  
T. come Im - ma - - nu - el. Oo - - oo - -  
B. Oo - - oo - - In our homes and in - our world,

2

25 *mf* ————— *f* ————— *mf* *div.*  
 S. come Im - ma - - nu - el. Oo - - - oo - - - *f* ————— *mf*  
 A. *mp* ————— *mf* ————— *mp* *f* ————— *ff* ————— *f*  
 oo - - - oo - - - In our homes and in our world,  
 T. *f* ————— *ff* ————— *mf* *f* ————— *ff* ————— *f*  
 In our homes and in our world, come Im - ma - - nu - el.  
 B. *mf* ————— *f* ————— *mf* *f* ————— *ff* ————— *f*  
 come Im - ma - - nu - el. In our light and in our dark - ness,

33 *f* ————— *ff* ————— *f* *ff* ————— *fff* ————— *f*  
 S. In our homes and in our world, come Im - ma - - nu - el.  
 A. *f* ————— *ff* ————— *f* *ff* ————— *fff* ————— *f*  
 come Im - ma - - nu - el. In our light and in our dark - ness,  
 T. *f* ————— *ff* ————— *f* *ff* ————— *fff* ————— *f*  
 In our light and in our dark - ness, come Im - ma - - nu el.  
 B. *f* ————— *ff* ————— *f* *div.*  
 come Im - ma - - nu - el. Oo - - - oo - - -

41 *ff* ————— *fff* ————— *f* *div.* *rit.* *fff*  
 S. In our light and in our dark - ness, come Im - ma - - nu - el.  
 A. *ff* ————— *fff* ————— *f* *ff*  
 come Im - ma - - nu el. Oh - - - Ah - - -  
 T. *div.* *f* ————— *ff* ————— *f* *ff*  
 oo - - - oo - - - Oh - - - Ah - - -  
 B. *f* ————— *ff* ————— *f* *ff*  
 oo - - - oo - - - Oh - - - Ah - - -

**ADVENT DAY 14**  
**SATURDAY, DECEMBER 14**

**The Place Where We Are Right**

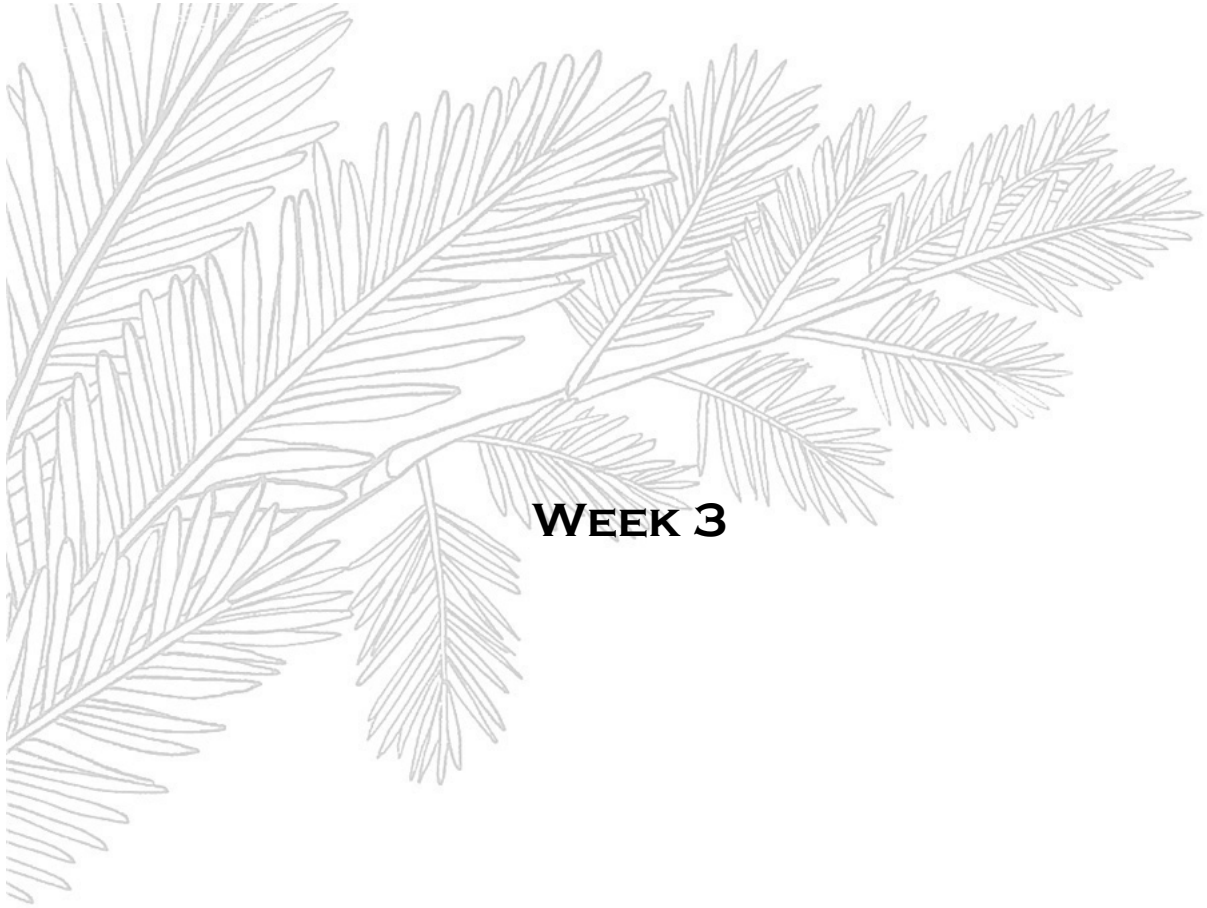
—Yehuda Amichai

From the place where we are right  
flowers will never grow  
in the spring.

The place where we are right  
is hard and trampled  
like a yard.

But doubts and loves  
dig up the world  
like a mole, a plow.  
And a whisper will be heard in the place  
where the ruined  
house once stood.

*Shared by Jean Anderson*



**WEEK 3**

**ADVENT DAY 15**  
**SUNDAY, DECEMBER 15**

**The Showings: Lady Julian of Norwich 1342-1416**

—Denise Levertov

Julian, there are vast gaps we call black holes,  
unable to picture what's both dense and vacant;  
and there's the dizzying multiplication of all  
language can name or fail to name, unutterable  
swarming of molecules. All Pascal  
imagined he could not stretch his mind to imagine  
is known to exceed his dread.

And there's the earth of our daily history,  
its memories, its present filled with the grain  
of one particular scrap of carpentered wood we happen  
to be next to, its waking light on one especial leaf,  
this word or that, a tune in this key not another,  
beat of our hearts now, good or bad,  
dying or being born, eroded, vanishing—

And you ask us to turn our gaze  
inside out, and see  
a little thing, the size of a hazelnut, and believe  
it is our world? Ask us to see it lying  
in God's pierced palm? That it encompasses  
every awareness our minds contain? All Time?  
All limitless space given form in this  
medieval enigma?

Yes, this is indeed

what you ask, sharing  
the mystery you were shown: all that is made:  
a little thing, the size of a hazelnut, held safe  
in God's pierced palm.

*Shared by Jane McBride*

**ADVENT DAY 16**  
**MONDAY, DECEMBER 16**

As long as a girl is still drawn to sitting in trees, reading, or dreaming, or making up dramatic scenarios with her friends, our future holds hope.

—Kris Felbeck





# ADVENT DAY 17

## TUESDAY, DECEMBER 17

### Advent Reflection

—Don Brasted-Maki

I want to reflect on the comforting words, “All will be well again,” which are a quote from Julian of Norwich. This quote can be found in the song “Julian of Norwich” (there is a lovely version on Youtube by Bok, Trinket, and Muir). Julian was an early English Anchorite Nun and mystic to whom God spoke in a series of visions. She revealed what she learned to those who would listen and who needed comfort in the difficult times of 14th and 15th Century England.

Norwich in her time was a prosperous market town near the English Coast just north and west of London. She was born in 1343 and was a contemporary of Geoffrey Chaucer, who wrote the Canterbury Tales. Chaucer’s poem is a series of playful narratives told in a lively melodic Middle English verse of rhymed couplets which I love to read aloud. It cheers me up when I am feeling down.

But back to Julian of Norwich. The following additional quote in the song accurately captures her message:

\*Love, like the yellow daffodil, is coming through the snow.  
Love, like the yellow daffodil, is the Lord of all I know.

It is easy to dismiss this chirpy metaphor about daffodils and her hopeful message that “all will be well again” as empty optimism until you know that she received this vision when near death and watched as the Black Death ravaged her town and killed off a third of the population of Europe. This was only one of many catastrophic events she witnessed in her time. Yet she convincingly comforted an audience desperately in need of hope that “all will be well again” and that love would triumph over evil like a yellow daffodil that bursts through the snow.

If Chaucer can use such playful language and poetry to give his audience joy and Julian of Norwich can lift the hearts of those who come to hear her speak of a vision of God’s love as a yellow daffodil bursting through the snow and both can do so while the Black Death is playing out all around them, then surely we can do what little we can to join God in mending our broken world while waiting for God’s love to make all things new. We too can find hope, faith, and joy in the yellow daffodil breaking through the snow and know that “all will be well again” like Julian of Norwich did.

**ADVENT DAY 18**  
**WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 18**

**Sympathetic Magic**

—Amy Fleury

The stray dog limped through traffic,  
Tugged by the invisible leash over miles  
And years and griefs to rest her head  
In your lap, trusting you with her sleep.

Sometimes what is needed comes to hand—  
A book fallen open to a page of benediction,  
The balm of song from the car radio's dial,  
A pocket-laundered dollar to pay the toll.

In distress, you wish for an apocryphal Veronica  
And she arrives at your side, offering  
Her only tissue, dabbing at your actual eyes.  
But darkness still comes before day is yet done.

Like a dowsing rod, you lean toward  
Whatever is coming to you, the waters  
Of loving, the sump of loss. Lean in.

*Shared by Jean Anderson*

**ADVENT DAY 19**  
**THURSDAY, DECEMBER 19**

Photo by Jane McBride



# ADVENT DAY 20

## FRIDAY, DECEMBER 20

Click [here](#) to open the sound file that accompanies this song.

### O Magnum Mysterium

Gregorian chant text from the fourth or fifth responsory of nine for Matins of Christmas Day. Medieval -- pre-10th century. Text inspired by Luke 2:7 and Isaiah 1.3.

Jeffrey Leonard Stone

*mf* Soprano solo -- Mary: Freely, chant-like, poco vibrato ca.  $\text{♩} = 62$

Soprano: O Ma gnum My - ste - ri - um! O Ma - gnum My - ste - ri - um -

Alto: O Ma - gnum My - ste - ri - um! O Ma - gnum My - ste - ri - um, O

Tenor: O Ma -

Bass: O Ma -

17 *f* *mf* Soprano solo -- Mary: Freely, chant-like, poco vibrato

S. O Ma - gnum - My - ste - ri - um! Et ad - mi - ra - bi - le sa - cra - men - tum.

A. Ma - gnum My - ste - ri - um! O Ma - gnum My - ste - ri - um!

T. gnum My - ste - ri - um! O Ma - gnum My - ste - ri - um!

B. O Ma - gnum My - ste - ri - um!

31  $\text{♩} = 62$  *f* tutti *mf* *ff*

S. Et ad - mi - ra - bi - le sa - cra - men - tum, Et ad - mi - ra - bi - le sa - cra - men - tum,

A. Et ad - mi - ra - bi - le sa - cra - men - tum, Et ad - mi - ra - bi - le sa - cra - men - tum,

T. Et ad - mi - ra - bi - le sa - cra - men - tum,

B. Et ad - mi - ra - bi - le sa - cra - men - tum,

43 *mf* Soprano solo - Mary: Freely, chant-like, poco vibrato (---3---) (--2--)(2) ca.  $\text{♩} = 62$  *mp* tutti

S. Ut a-ni - ma-li-a vi - de-rent Do-mi - num na - tum, ia - cen - tem in prae - se - pi - o. Ut a - ni - ma - li -

A. Ut a - ni - ma - li - a vi -

T. Ut a - ni - ma - li - a vi - de - rent Do - num,

B. Ut a - ni - ma - li - a vi - de - rent Do - mi - num,

61 *mf* *f* *mf* *mp*

S. a vi - de - rent Do - mi - num na - tum, ia - cen - tem in prae - se - pi - o.

A. de - rent do - mi - num na - tum, ia - cen - tem in prae - se - pi - o.

T. ia - cen - tem in prae - se - pi - o.

B. ia - cen - tem in prae - se - pi - o.

77 *mf* Soprano solo - Elizabeth: Freely, chant-like (---3---) (--2--)(2) (---3---) (--3---)(--2--)(2) (---3---)(--3---)(2)(2)

S. Be - a - ta Vir - go, cu - jus vi - sce - ra me - ru - e - runt por - ta - re Do - mi - ne Ie - sum Chri - stum. Al - le - lu - ia!

A.

T.

B.

ca.  $\text{♩} = 62$   
tutti

96 *mf* *f* *mp* *mf* *mp* *mf* *mp*

S. Be - a - ta Vir - go, cu - jus vi - sce - ra me - ru - e - runt por - ta - re Do - mi - num

A. Be - a - ta Vir - go, cu - jus vi - sce - ra me - ru - e - runt por -

T. Be - a - ta Vir - go, cu - jus vi - sce - ra me - ru - e - runt

B. Be - a - ta Vir - go, cu - jus vi - sce - ra me - ru - e - runt

111 *ff* *mp* *mf* *f* *mf* *f* *mf* *f* *mf* *f*

S. le - sum Chri - - - - - stum. Al - le - lu - ia, Al - le - lu - ia, Al - le - lu - ia, Al - le - lu - ia, Al - le - lu - ia, Al - le - lu -

A. ta - re Do - mi - num le - sum Chri - - - - - stum. Al - le - lu - ia, Al - le - lu - ia, Al - le - lu - ia, Al - le - lu - ia, Al - le - lu - ia, Al - le - lu -

T. por - ta - re Do - mi - num le - sum Chri - - - - - stum. Al - le - lu - ia, Al - le - lu - ia, Al - le - lu - ia, Al - le - lu - ia, Al - le - lu - ia, Al - le - lu -

B. por - ta - re Do - mi - num le - sum Chri - - - - - stum. Al - le - lu - ia, Al - le - lu - ia, Al - le - lu - ia, Al - le - lu - ia, Al - le - lu - ia, Al - le - lu -

127 *mf* *ff* *subito p* *mp* *pp*

S. ia, Al - le - lu - ia, Al - le - lu - ia, Al - le - lu - ia! O ma - gnum my - ste - - - - - ri - um!

A. ia, Al - le - lu - ia, Al - le - lu - ia, Al - le - lu - ia! O ma - gnum my - ste - - - - - ri - um!

T. ia, Al - le - lu - ia, Al - le - lu - ia, Al - le - lu - ia! O ma - gnum my - ste - - - - - ri - um!

B. ia, Al - le - lu - ia, Al - le - lu - ia, Al - le - lu - ia! O ma - gnum my - ste - - - - - ri - um!

**ADVENT DAY 21**  
**SATURDAY, DECEMBER 21**

Photo by Andrew Sjostrom





**WEEK 4**



## **ADVENT DAY 22**

### **SUNDAY, DECEMBER 22**

From the time these things were first revealed I had often wanted to know what was our Lord's meaning. It was more than fifteen years after that I was answered in my spirit's understanding. 'You would know our Lord's meaning in this thing? Know it well.'

Love was [God's] meaning. Who showed it to you? Love. What did [God] show you? Love. Why did [God] show it? For love.' "In this love," she continues, "all [God's] works have been done, and in this love [God] has made everything serve us; and in this love our life is everlasting. (*Revelations of Divine Love*, chapter 86)

*Shared by Jane McBride*

**ADVENT DAY 23**  
**MONDAY, DECEMBER 23**

**Hope Is Not a Bird, Emily, It's a Sewer Rat**

—Caitlin Seida

Hope is not the thing with feathers  
That comes home to roost  
When you need it most.

Hope is an ugly thing  
With teeth and claws and  
Patchy fur that's seen some shit.

It's what thrives in the discards  
And survives in the ugliest parts of our world,  
Able to find a way to go on  
When nothing else can even find a way in.

It's the gritty, nasty little carrier of such  
diseases as  
optimism, persistence,  
Perseverance and joy,  
Transmissible as it drags its tail across  
your path  
and  
bites you in the ass.

Hope is not some delicate, beautiful bird,  
Emily.  
It's a lowly little sewer rat  
That snorts pesticides like they were  
Lines of coke and still  
Shows up on time to work the next day  
Looking no worse for wear.

*Shared by Sarah Almén*

**ADVENT DAY 24**  
**TUESDAY, DECEMBER 24**

**Blackbirds**

—Julie Cadwallader-Staub

I am 52 years old, and have spent  
truly the better part  
of my life out-of-doors  
but yesterday I heard a new sound above my head  
a rustling, ruffling quietness in the spring air

and when I turned my face upward  
I saw a flock of blackbirds  
rounding a curve I didn't know was there  
and the sound was simply all those wings  
just feathers against air, against gravity  
and such a beautiful winning  
the whole flock taking a long, wide turn  
as if of one body and one mind.

How do they do that?

Oh, if we lived only in human society  
with its cruelty and fear  
its apathy and exhaustion  
what a puny existence that would be

but instead we live and move and have our being  
here, in this curving and soaring world  
so that when, every now and then, mercy and tenderness triumph in our lives  
and when, even more rarely, we manage to unite and move together  
toward a common good,

we can think to ourselves:

ah yes, this is how it's meant to be.

*Shared by Jean Anderson*