

# **Social Media Devotions**



## **Advent Year A**

**By: Ariel Williams; Rachel Slough, & Meredith McGrath**

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# **INTRODUCTION:**

## **HOW DID THIS COME ABOUT?**

In the fall of 2012 Ariel Williams was reviewing devotional material samples for the upcoming Advent season. Nothing really fit the needs of her ministry context, so she thought “What the heck... I’ll write my own and see how that goes.” (Anyone who knows her knows that “heck” was really a completely different 4-letter-word.) One of the samples was based on the concept of texting, however it didn’t ACTUALLY include anything for youth to text. It was just hypothetical-in-your-head-pretend-texting.

Seeing how actual texting (and still is) the best way for her to contact her youth, she decided to play with the idea of creating a daily textable scripture devotion. It also occurred to her that if you can text it, you can tweet it, so the challenge became choosing a verse from the daily lectionary text for that day in 140 characters or less. Once the devotion for Advent Year C was complete she posted in several Facebook Groups that she had created this resource and would be happy to share with anyone interested. The response was OVERWHELMINGLY positive!

One of the respondents was Rachel Slough. Ariel and Rachel quickly formed a long distance friendship, eventually meeting in person at the 2013 ELCA Youth Ministry Network Extravaganza. Given the incredibly positive response to the 2012 devotional they were eager to take this project, in the wise words of Buzz Lightyear, “to infinity and beyond!” Rachel asked her friend Meredith McGrath to join and a collaboration was born.

## **WHY SOCIAL MEDIA MINISTRY?**

In May of 2013, 554,750,000 used twitter (<http://www.statisticbrain.com/twitter-statistics/>), and 1 in 4 teenagers use it on a daily basis, a number that is projected to increase (<http://www.pewinternet.org/Reports/2013/Teens-Social-Media-And-Privacy/Main-Report/Part-1.aspx>). Twitter can be used from phones via text messages (thereby not limiting to smartphones) and linked with Facebook or other social media platforms. It offers concise summaries and a chance to connect with other people and topics of interest. In addition more and more social media platforms are released each day. Youth are using Facebook, Twitter, Vine, Snapchat, Instagram, the list goes on and on! In short, social media is another increasingly important venue to preach the Gospel.

Statistical support aside, Ariel, Rachel, and Meredith wanted a way to briefly connect with their youth, encouraging them to know that being a Christian goes beyond Sunday mornings. WE wanted a way to help them prepare for Advent in a way that’s meaningful to them. We also recognized that these devotions can be helpful for a wider audience.

## **HOW DO I USE THIS?**

All three authors work in very different ministry settings, and we trust that each of you also have ministry needs that are unique to your own context. Our hope is that this resource is one that you can personalize. Here are ways that we have used this scripture resource and other possibilities that we hope to implement in the coming months and years. We welcome your suggestions too and hope you will contact us as you play with these ideas. As we continue this project we will share your words and add to the collective wisdom, celebrating that we are a community in Christ and a source of knowledge and strength together.

Some ideas to start your thinking:

- Send out daily text messages or tweets with the passage of the day **OR** follow Ariel on Twitter (@sassyariel80) and retweet the devo of the day. Post them on Facebook, send them out in your congregational newsletter, in the weekly bulletin, in any communication venues that work in your context.
- The images included can be tweeted, pinned to Pinterest, posted to Facebook, and shared via Instagram.
- Share the YouTube links via Facebook or Twitter.
- Invite congregation members to tweet responses and thoughts to the scripture.
- Provide Post-it notepads to youth the week before you begin sending the texts. Encourage them to write the hashtag on the post-it and then place it on a wall or surface in their room the entire Advent Season. Each day as they add to their Scriptural Hashtag Wall, they will be visually reminded of the importance of the Advent Season.
- Integrate tweeting into worship. For example, during midweek Lenten services 2012, Rachel's congregation had designated times when tweeted responses and questions were requested. They were then posted on a screen for pastors to address. Those without devices could write responses and one of several designated "tweeters" would post them.
- If you use worship notes in confirmation, include an opportunity for the confirmand to summarize the sermon or a verse into 140 characters and have them tweet it. Rachel has tried this with her confirmation students (6th-8th grade students) and found them quite responsive and enthusiastic

## **CONTACT INFO**

### **Ariel Williams:**

Ariel is the Director of Youth and Family Ministries at Emanuel's Lutheran Church in Seguin, Texas. She is responsible for all First Third (of life) Ministries. Basically anything from birth through college and even parents of children are her domain. Additionally she serves on Synodical Youth Ministry Teams and will be coordinating the Community Life Team for this upcoming summer's Disciple Project. She is also the author of a series of Family Devotions for Advent and Lent. She can be reached at:

[vivajavaluia@gmail.com](mailto:vivajavaluia@gmail.com), on Facebook as Ariel Williams (or sassyariel80), or via Twitter as @sassyariel80

### **Rachel Slough:**

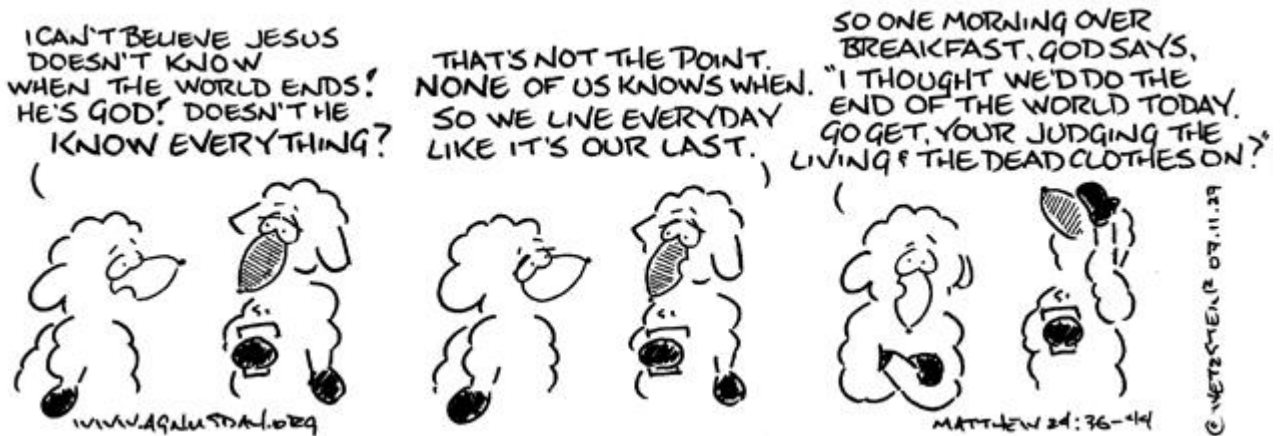
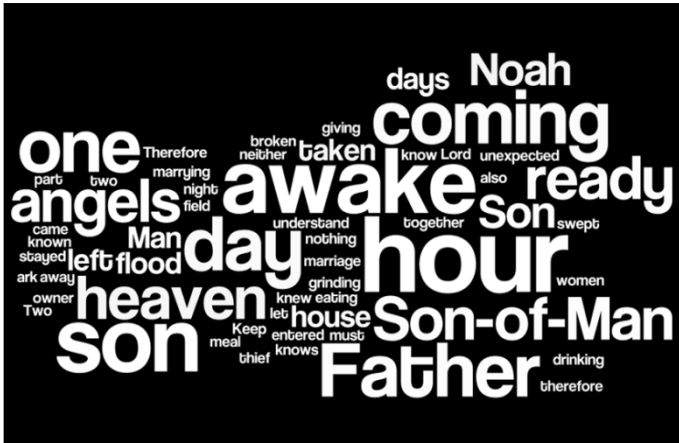
Rachel is the Youth Ministries Coordinator at Good Shepherd Lutheran Church in La Crosse, Wisconsin. Her primary roles are organizing and co-teaching the confirmation program for 6<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> grade students, mentoring and supporting adults who work with youth, and preparing high school students for their annual service trip. She can be reached at: [rsloUGH@gmail.com](mailto:rsloUGH@gmail.com), on Facebook as Rachel Slough, or via Twitter as @rmslough

### **Rev. Meredith McGrath:**

Meredith is a pastor at Elim Lutheran Church in Scandia, Minnesota. As Associate Pastor, she is a jack of all trades - preaching, teaching, visiting those who are ill or home bound, and coordinating the education program. She can be reached at: [meredith.mcgrath@elimscandia.com](mailto:meredith.mcgrath@elimscandia.com), on Facebook as Meredith McGrath (or Mermelada) or via Twitter as @McGraced.

# FIRST WEEK IN ADVENT:

INSTAGRAM / FACEBOOK / TWITTER / PINTEREST:



YOUTUBE VIDEO – *The Advent Conspiracy.*

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mzOZMBOEZZo&feature=youtu.be>



## **TEXT / TWITTER:**

### **Sunday:**

I was glad when they said to me, "Let us go to the house of the Lord!" **#Psalm122v1**

### **Monday:**

[Jesus] died to sin, once for all; but the life he lives, he lives to God...[you too are] dead to sin and alive...in Christ Jesus. **#Rom6v10bto11**

### **Tuesday:**

I have set my bow in the clouds, and it shall be a sign of the covenant between me and the earth. **#Genesis9v13**

### **Wednesday:**

Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away. **#Matthew24v35**

### **Thursday:**

The branch of the LORD will be glorious. The Lord will create a holy canopy that gives shade, refuge and shelter from storm & rain **#Is4v2to6**

The disciples & several women met in the Upper Room to pray devotedly. Peter said "Friends, the scripture had to be fulfilled.

**#Acts1v12to17**

### **Friday:**

When you turn to the right or when you turn to the left, your ears shall hear a word behind you. "This is the way; walk in it." **#Is30v21**

### **Saturday:**

The grass withers, the flower fades; but the word of our God will stand forever. **#Isaiah40v8**

Comfort my people says God; every valley will be lifted; He will feed his flock like a shepherd & gather the lambs in his arms **#Is40v1to11**

"You will weep no more. He will answer your cry. You will hear a word saying this is the way; walk in it." **#Is30v19to26**

God led Israelites from slavery, gave land inheritance, gave kings, gave Jesus. John not worthy to untie his sandals. **#Acts16v16to25**

**INSTAGRAM / FACEBOOK / TWITTER / PINTEREST:**



<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YeYKgDcKck&feature=youtu.be>

## TEXT / TWITTER:

### **Sunday:**

New growth comes from the stump of Jesse; the wolf will live with the lamb; none will hurt; a little child shall lead them. **#Is11v1to10**

Blessed be the Lord who does wondrous things. Blessed be his name forever; May his glory fill the whole earth. Amen & Amen. **#Psalm72v18to19**

Live in harmony, love 1 another; Christ is 4 all; the root of Jesse comes. **#Romans15v4to13**

John says Repent! He fulfills Isaiah's prophecy; John baptizes with water; Jesus w/ Holy Spirit & fire. **#Matt3v1to12**

### **Monday:**

The Lord will make Earth desolate b/c people have broken the covenant; there is an outcry. Woe! Treacherous deal treacherously. **#Is24v1to16**

Live 2 please God more & more. God gives us the Holy Spirit. God calls us 2 holiness **#1Thes4v1to12**

### **Tuesday:**

Do not fear 4 I will help u says the Lord. Rejoice! I will answer cries of the people. I will not forsake them. C & know God. **#Is41v14to20**

Boast 4 what Christ does through us. Proclaim good news 2 those who do not understand. **#Romans15v14to21**

### **Wednesday:**

"Do not fear, Abram. Your descendants will number more than the stars." God will give land from Egypt 2 Euphrates. **#Gen15v1to18**

Make the tree good or make the tree bad 4 the tree is known by its fruit. Speak good & not evil so u will not be condemned. **#Matt12v33to37**

### **Thursday:**

The day of the Lord will come like a thief, & the heavens will pass away with a loud noise. **#2Peter3v10a**

### **Friday:**

While you are waiting for these things, strive to be found by him at peace, & regard the patience of our Lord as salvation. **#2Peter3v14to15**

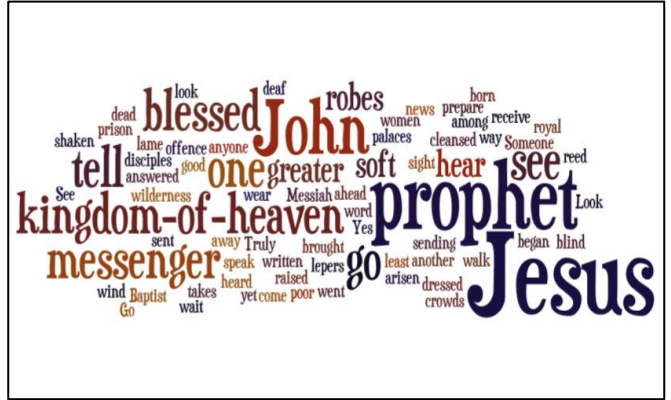
### **Saturday:**

I baptize you with water; but one who is more powerful than I is coming; He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. **#Luke3v16**



### **THIRD WEEK IN ADVENT:**

**INSTAGRAM / FACEBOOK / TWITTER / PINTEREST:**



ARE YOU THE  
ONE TO COME, OR  
ARE WE TO WAIT  
FOR  
ANOTHER?

## YOUTUBE VIDEO ~ ONE:

[http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=B6SSjAny7\\_M&feature=youtu.be](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=B6SSjAny7_M&feature=youtu.be)

## TEXT / TWITTER:

### Sunday:

'See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way before you.'

**#Matt11v10**

### Monday:

Yet more than ever believers were added to the Lord, great numbers of both men & women.

**#Acts5v14**

The meek shall obtain fresh joy in the Lord & the neediest people shall exult in the Holy One of Israel. **#Isaiah29v19**

### Tuesday:

But you, beloved, build yourselves up on your most holy faith; pray in the Holy Spirit;

**#JudeV20**

Keep yourselves in the love of God. Look forward to the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ that leads to eternal life. **#JudeV21**

### Wednesday:

Just as you have been a curse among the nations O House of Judah & House of Israel, so I will save you & you shall be a blessing. **#Zech8v13**

### Thursday:

He whom God has sent speaks the words of God, for he gives the Spirit without measure.

**#John3v34**

### Friday:

Therefore you are great, O Lord God, for there is no one like you, & there is no God besides you. **#2Sam7v22**

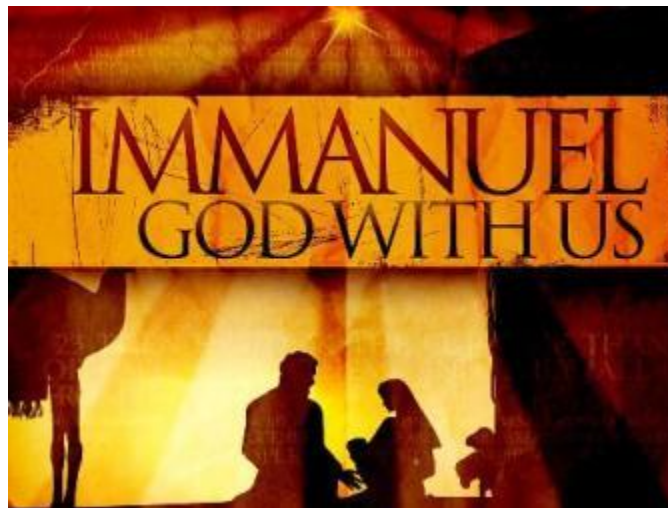
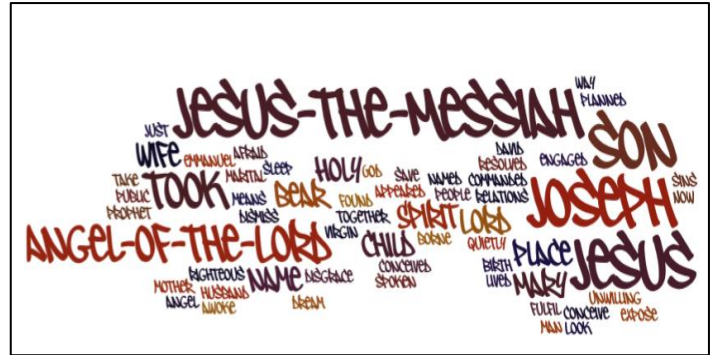
So you are no longer a slave but a child & if a child, then also an heir through God.

**#Galations4v7**

### Saturday:

Your name will be magnified forever saying "the Lord of hosts is God over Israel & the House of David will be established. **#2Sam7v26**

**INSTAGRAM / FACEBOOK / TWITTER / PINTEREST:**



<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=G-A15UHf7jw&feature=youtu.be>

## **TEXT / TWITTER:**

**Sunday:** Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

**#Romans1v7b**

**Monday:** I will bless [Sarah], and moreover I will give you a son by her. I will bless her, and she shall give rise to nations. **#Gen17v16b**

**Tuesday:** For freedom Christ has set us free. Stand firm, therefore, and do not submit again to a yoke of slavery. **#Galatians5v1**

**Wednesday:**

Abraham to David, 14 generations...David to the deportation to Babylon, 14 gens...deportation to Babylon to the Messiah, 14 gens. **#Matt1v17b**

My heart exults in the Lord; my strength is exalted in my God. My mouth derides my enemies, because I rejoice in my victory. **#1Sam2v1b**

**Thursday:**

The Lord, the God of the spirits of the prophets, has sent his angel to show his servants what must soon take place. **#Rev22v6b**

**Friday:**

King David went in & sat before the Lord, & said, "Who am I, O Lord God, & what is my house, that you have brought me thus far? **#2Sam7v18**

**Saturday:**

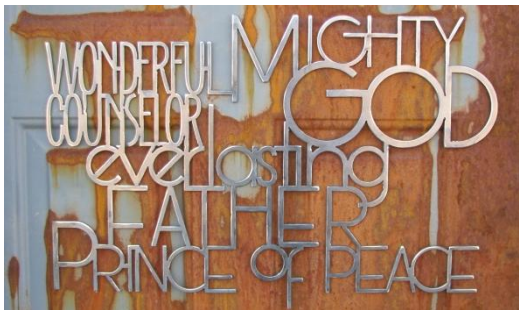
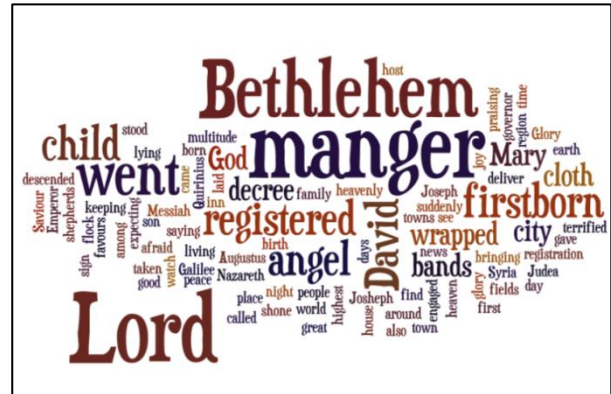
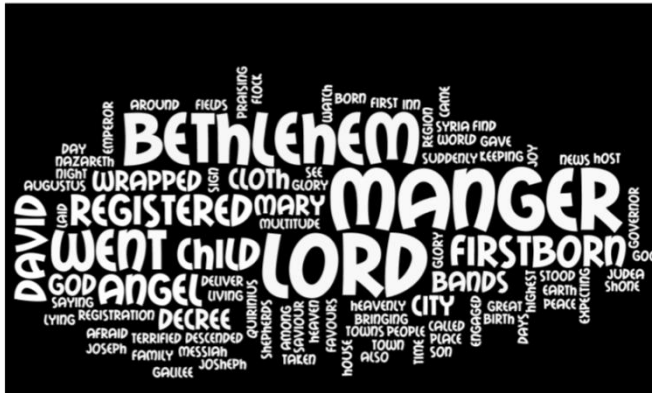
"Give the king your justice, O God. May righteousness flourish and peace abound until the moon is no more." **#Psalm72v1to7**

U have given the king his heart's desire. The king trusts in the Lord. Be exalted O Lord. We will sing & praise your power. **#Psalm21**



## CHRISTMAS PROPER I:

**INSTAGRAM / FACEBOOK / TWITTER / PINTEREST:**



## YOUTUBE VIDEO – And, the Word Became Flesh....:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JBdAq4zLEV4>

**YOUTUBE VIDEO – *The Christmas Story-Luke 2:1-20.***

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6x0Jnc12VQo&list=RD02QCKpwaRxIww>

**TEXT / TWITTER:**

The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who lived in a land of deep darkness, on them light has shined. **#Isaiah9v2b**

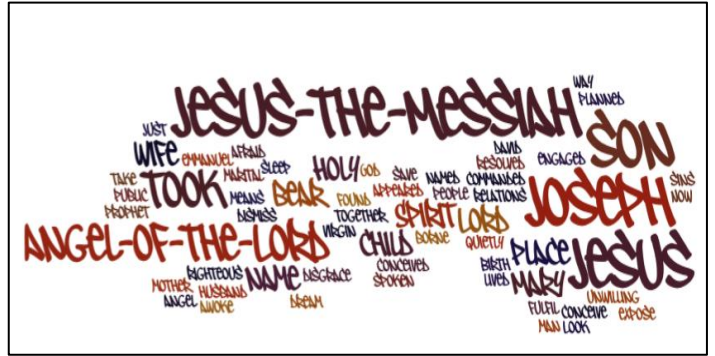
A child has been born for us, a son given;...& he is named Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. **#Isaiah9v6**

For the grace of God appeared bringing salvation to all. **#Titus2v11**

Go Read: **#Luke2v1to20**

# CHRISTMAS PROPER II:

INSTAGRAM / FACEBOOK / TWITTER / PINTEREST:



“ When the goodness and loving kindness of God our Savior appeared, he saved us, not because of any works of righteousness that we had done, but according to his mercy through the water of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit. ”  
- Titus 3:4-5

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YOUTUBE VIDEO – *The Beatbox Nativity.*

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=q6vUzVLB6B0>

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TEXT / TWITTER:

See, your salvation comes; his reward is with him, & his recompense before him.

**#Isaiah62v11b**

But when the goodness and loving-kindness of God our Saviour appeared, he saved us...

**#Titus2v4to5b**

...not because of any works of righteousness that we had done, but according to his mercy...

**#Titus3v5a**

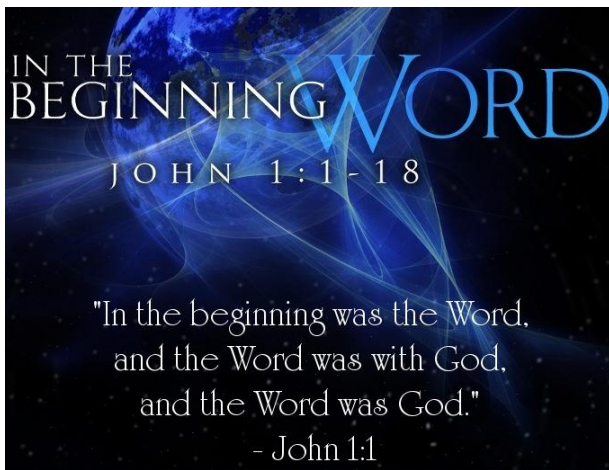
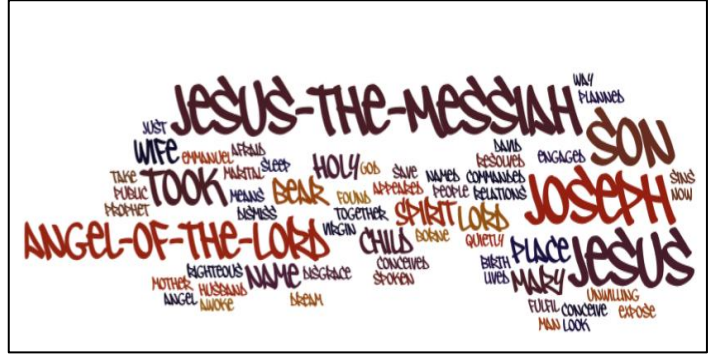
...but according to his mercy, through the water of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit.

**#Titus3v5b**

Go Read: **#Luke2v1to20**

## CHRISTMAS PROPER III:

**INSTAGRAM / FACEBOOK / TWITTER / PINTEREST:**



YOUTUBE VIDEO – *In the Beginning Was the Word.*

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EYJrBAd43x4>

## YOUTUBE VIDEO – *In the Beginning Was the Word:*

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TUCFhx1fhpw>

**TEXT / TWITTER:**

How beautiful is the messenger who announces peace, brings good news, announces salvation, who says to Zion, 'Your God reigns.' **#Isaiah52v7**

God spoke to our ancestors by the prophets, but in these last days he spoke to us by a Son, whom he appointed heir of all things. **#Heb1v1**

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God...

# #John1v1

...He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being... **#John1v2to3**

...In him was life, & the life was the light of all people. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it. **#John1v4to5**