



spirituality of the

PSALMS

ADVENT & CHRISTMAS SERIES

— spirituality of the psalms —

Advent Season

A season of waiting, expectation, hope, joy and longing for the return of our Lord Jesus.

Christmas Season

A season of joyous celebration of our salvation in the Word Incarnate.

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The Aims of this Series

To recover and use these Psalms to speak the truth about our lives and the ways that God engages with the world.

To understand that the longing for hope comes out of brokenness recognised and the possibility of newness comes out of grief embraced.

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Orientation

A state or a season of joy and delight and a belief that God is reliable and life-giving and the world is well-ordered. Everything is just how it should be.

Disorientation

A state or a season of disorder, confusion, pain, alienation and anguish that pulls apart one's confidence in God's presence and reliability.

New Orientation

One finds him or herself surprised by the new gift of grace from God and the new possibilities that come with it. The "pit" is not the end of life. It is a state or season of delight, amazement, wonder, awe, gratitude and thanksgiving.

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Movements of a service

GATHERING God's people

Engaging with the **WORD**

Celebrating the **GOSPEL**

SENDING God's people

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Spirituality of the Psalms: Disorientation: Psalm 88

Read Psalm 88. What are the key themes in this passage?

What songs, bible passages and interactive elements can you think of that could help your congregation engage on these themes?

How can you help your congregation express what it means to be a christian community, especially in light of these themes?

What focus would you like your congregation to have as they leave the service and enter into the world?

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Spirituality of the Psalms: Disorientation: Psalm 88

Key Themes:

Personal situations of distress

Crying out - lifting up our prayers

Loneliness

Unresolved issues and tensions

Desperation - does God hear me?

Unanswered questions

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Spirituality of the Psalms: Disorientation: Psalm 88

GATHERING God's people in....

Reflection - Images of people crying out from the news

Advent reading: Luke 2:4-7 Joseph and Mary experiencing displacement and homelessness.

Songs:

- When Silence Falls - selecting verse 1 and the chorus only
- For I know my redeemer lives...

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Engaging with God's **WORD**...

Bible reading: breaking it up into 5 different readers and having them read from different parts of the room, highlighting the isolation of the psalmist.

Bible reading: You could have one reader paraphrase the themes and emotion of the psalms. Whilst projecting the passage.

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Spirituality of the Psalms: Disorientation: Psalm 88

Celebrating the **GOSPEL**...

Giving the congregation time to note down unanswered prayers that they might be facing.

Collecting prayers from different member of your congregation and, with their consent, projecting parts of their prayers during a time of reflection.

Using the same images that you used at the beginning of the service (people crying out), and pasting some of the themes or verses from the psalms of orientation over them.

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Spirituality of the Psalms: Disorientation: Psalm 88

SENDING God's people out...

Challenging your congregation to actively look out for those who are struggling, and journeying with them through these difficult times.

Challenging your congregation to be brave and share their difficult prayers with other brothers and sister in the coming week.

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what a service could look like...

11:30

welcome: start with time of reflection on the cry of the displaced christians around the world. Reading Luke 2:4-7, to remind the congregation that Joseph and Mary experienced the same thing.

11:40

Songs:

As we come today.

In the bleak mid-winter [offertory]

When the silence falls (missing out the second verse)

12:00

Bible reading: (Ps 88) with 6 readers around the hall. Followed by sermon

12:35

Reflection and response: time to note down unanswered prayers

12:50

Notices and final encouragement

13:00

Benediction and close