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Journeying Together Towards Advent

**By The Reverend Shawn Rutledge
Immanuel's Seminarian 2021**

Candidate for Holy Orders, Diocese of Arizona
Master of Divinity, VTS Class of 2022

I love the liturgical year, and not just now because I'm an adult or a seminarian. I've always loved it. I remember my first real understanding of the liturgical year came from reading the words of the devout Episcopalian author Madeleine L'Engle as a child.

In one of her books, she describes time as a spiral, like a corkscrew, and as you go further and further along it, you see the same familiar sights along the way that you've seen before; but you're not the same person you were as when you saw them last time. You've grown, you've changed, you're always moving forward.

Another great Anglican author, C. S. Lewis described it this way, "This is the land I have been looking for all my life, though I never knew it till now. . . Come further up, come further in!" He was speaking metaphorically about

the journey all of us take towards Christ and coming closer to God through understanding.

We're approaching the season of Advent now, and I confess that this is the season I love the best. A season of penitence and a season of hope. A season of waiting in watchful expectation. A season where we remember Christ's birth and look forward to Christ's return. I love it so much . . . that I don't want to rush it.

I'm glad that it's still almost two weeks away. I'm not quite ready for it yet. I still need a little time to shake my head free of the cobwebs of wishes for how the year past could have gone. I still need a little time yet to see to the tasks at hand that I have yet to finish: work projects, school projects, and family to-do lists. As I go about my work the next few weeks, though, as I sing the autumn songs, clear the fallen leaves, and clean the house for the holiday season, I will be looking ahead to Advent.

In my innermost self I yearn to be there already, but I know that it will be even better if I wait, and let it come with the proper turning of the liturgical calendar. It will be better if I don't rush it. It will be better if I'm prepared.

Even still . . . I think I'll borrow just a bit of the hope from Advent season, and let it light me up and guide me forward. That's the wish I have for all of you as well as we journey towards Advent and the hope of Christ's presence that it brings, that a spark of that hope will warm your heart and prepare you for what's to come as together we go further up, and further in!