



## What's Advent Anyways?

*or How Do You Really Get Ready to Celebrate Christmas, if you do?*

by Jackie Lois

If I walk around my neighborhood in early evening, you can peer into the windows with open blinds and see what's going on inside. My pumpkins are still composting with the help of the squirrels on my front stoop and there are already signs of Christmas decorations and lights going up elsewhere.

If Jesus is the reason for the season, it may limit the possibilities of how one may celebrate a very special birth, an event a moment in time when thereafter everything changes. Depending on what my mind is lingering on, I do vacillate between my attempts at recreating pleasant memories, not creating more debt and somehow clinging to what spiritual benefits come from gatherings, enjoying family, food. The holidays especially are hard on some people. Dashed plans, expectations for perfection and general fatigue if you are not quite measuring up. As a closeted



introvert, I really do like seeing folks both family and friends old and new; but travel, and health challenges, and the constant mutations on viral relatives can make you anxious to leave the comfort of your own home and bed much less invite folks in. I do spontaneous magical serendipity just fine; but I am surrounded by earth signs and rigidity that value planning. If someone you may want to be with is not here for whatever reason. Christmas may be permanently derailed, or you may feel guilty for celebrating and feeling JOY without them and in spite of all the calamities going on in the world.

I don't exactly live with Scrooge, but any attempts I make at discussing potential plans, guests, menu items or tree placement, color themes etc. is definitely off limits for family harmony. I will table the benefits of a live tree, handmade decorations or whether we can even have a tree.

I do love the festivities that come with the discipline of preparing in advance. Getting Christmas cards out on time, tree trimming, shopping, wrapping gifts, making cookies, or treats whatever it is your passion; do try to get a bit squeezed in and don't let anyone spoil it for you.

This is the season for grace and favor, the anticipation of all good things and the return of the ancient wisdom of moving from the longest night and all the good things that can only happen in the dark to each day with the solstice promising more and more and more LIGHT.

I am so very grateful for the people in my life my darling family of choice and love and giggles that make sparkle happen with lots of hard work behind the scenes with extraordinary out-front magic. Advent is the season where we anticipate the blessing of all good things. We are made ready to receive what is already promised and meant for us. It is a chance to learn for the first time or perhaps to remember that what we really want for Christmas is always right here, right now! What a good reason to celebrate home!

[Psalm 124; Genesis 9:1-17; Hebrews 11:32-40](#)

Advent Hymn Reflection

[“Hark the glad sound; the Savior comes”](#)

Music by Sylvanus B. Pond, sung by Oasis Chorale

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