



ADVENT 2021

ADORATION: O COME LET US ADORE HIM

INTRODUCTION



Advent helps us prepare for the coming, or “advent” of the Christ child at Christmas. It is a time in the Christian calendar, that begins four Sundays prior to Christmas and ends on Christmas Eve. Advent, a season of waiting, expecting, and hoping.

The 16th District Women in Ministry have selected “Adoration: O Come Let Us Adore Him,” as our theme. For the next four weeks, leading up to Christmas and ending on Christmas Sunday, we pray that you will allow the daily devotionals to guide and direct your praise and worship. All scriptures are from the New Revised Standard Version (NRSV).

Thank you to all our meditation contributors. May your advent season be enhanced by your contributing to the daily meditations of others.

Yours in Christ

Rev. Lucinda V. Burgess
President, 16th District AMEWIM

NOVEMBER 28, 2021

FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT

THE PROMISE FULFILLED

*14 The days are surely coming, says the Lord,
when I will fulfill the promise of Israel and house of Judah.*

Jeremiah 33:14-16

When I was a child, I loved to sing and learn new songs and choruses, especially during vacation Bible school. These songs have stayed with me over the years. As I unravel their importance to my childhood and the theology behind each verse and each chorus, they bring a sense of comfort and security especially knowing that ‘Every promise in the book is mine.’

Every promise in the book is mine.
Every chapter, every verse, and every line.
All are blessings of His love divine.
Every promise in the book is mine.

Today is the first Sunday of Advent. A season in the Christian Church calendar which represents that the divine promises of our Heavenly Father have been fulfilled in His Son, Jesus Christ.

During this first Sunday of Advent let us remember that ‘every promise in the book is ours.’ God already promised the Messiah in the times of the old covenant. The Apostles profess that Christ fulfills God’s promises. And we have been called to profess the fulfillment of the promises of Jesus. Let us also remember that Advent is also a season which we intensively occupy ourselves with our future. After all we are a people of the future. *For surely I know the plans I have for you, says the Lord, plans for your welfare and not for harm, to give you a future with hope.* (Jeremiah 29:11)

PRAYER: Almighty God, we thank You for the fulfillment of Your promises of the old covenant that have been revealed and fulfilled through Your Son, Jesus the Christ. Help us to recognize your promises during this Advent season. AMEN.

Rev. Lucinda V. Burgess

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 29, 2021

NO ONE

Therefore you are great, O Lord God; for there is no one like you, and there is no God besides you, according to all that we have heard with our ears.

2 Samuel 7:22

David knew that intimate relationship with God. Each relationship with God is personal. Your relationship is not like my relationship. Each one has its own uniqueness. God is multifaceted and relates to each of us personally. It is in that 'knowing' that we are transformed.

My, my, there is none like God. While I learned of God as a child from my parents, I grew to know that multifaceted love of God for myself. What my parents knew in their relationship with God— what I know are similar but oh so different. Unlike any other, God is there with me, for me, guiding me, protecting me. Always presenting a better way for me.

God meets me in that space where I can bask in the presence. Yes, I let can go of it all just to meet God there. God fills me when I am depleted, and I can handle whatever life presents. God's love is more than I deserve and even more than I can imagine. I am God's Beloved. My story is wrapped up in God's story.

Nothing, no one wraps me in such a cocoon of love. I am nurtured and nourished while being protected there. I rest in my wait on you Lord. And I can soar above my own smallness ready to be replenished. I know that I know that I know. There is no one like you. Even when I fail, I am loved back into that space.

That is the space that is available for everyone when they dare to enter in. A space that no one else provides.

PRAYER: Thank you, Lord for my past, my now, and my future. Thank you for the more you show me, for picking me up when I fall. For sitting with me in the quiet of your presence. Thank you for more.

Rev. Dr. Emily A. Pardue

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 30, 2021

ADONAI THE ETERNAL ONE

Lord, You have been our dwelling place in all generations. Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever you had formed the earth and the world, from everlasting to everlasting you are God.

PSALMS 90:1-2

It is awesome and encouraging to think that the Lord, Adonai as is translated here from the Hebrew, full of authority, might and power is our refuge and dwelling place. Adonai represents God's lordship, mastery, and expresses His authority and power. When you are under the influence of Adonai there is peace, provision, and prosperity. He becomes your refuge, you become untouchable, even in the midst of warfare, grief, or triumph. You become confident because you know the Master of the Universe, Adonai becomes your place of safety and you become bold and fierce. (Deuteronomy 3:24)

No doubt the writer of this Psalm was experiencing great difficulties in his life and Ministry at this period in time Numbers 20; His sister Miriam who perhaps was his 'Shero' died, he lost his entrance into the 'Promise land' and to top it off His brother and associate Aaron died yes, he was distraught but he turned to Adonai the One constant in his life. The One who has been with his family from generation to generations, the dependable God; as he looked across the vast open desert and viewed the mountains, he realized that Adonai has always been there before the foundations of the world, before these immovable mountains were formed there was Adonai.

PRAYER: We thank you today Everlasting Father for revealing yourself to us as Adonai, the Lord, the Master, the Faithful God. We Hallow your name; we acknowledge your dominion over our lives. So, we bow down in humble obedience before you O' Eternal God.

Rev Laurier Vaughn

Adoration: O Come Let Us Adore Him

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 1, 2021

*No one after lighting a lamp puts it in a cellar,
but on the lampstand so that those who enter may see the light.*

Luke 11:33

We have been called by God to be vessels of the Gospel. As vessels we pour out the Word we receive from our Creator. Our Lord has given us a light of truth, of love, of wholeness to share with those around us, whether from the pulpit, the office, the community, or our homes. Because we have received this light from God, we are to share it so that all may see. We are not to hide our light in the cellars of life – keeping our thoughts to ourselves, being quiet when we need to speak up. Instead, we are to offer hope to those who have lost their way. We must embrace our calling – live it with boldness as well as sensitivity – aiming to, by example, encourage others to receive Christ as their Lord and Savior. The saying “I would rather see a sermon than hear one” speaks to us, as Women in Ministry, to act as witnesses to our faith. Our behavior is to be a light of the world. As we celebrate the Advent season, let us acknowledge Jesus as the light of the world. We have been blessed to know His light, to be showered in it. It is for us to shine the light in every situation.

PRAYER: Most gracious and eternal God. We honor and praise You. We are grateful for Your love and guidance in this walk of ministry. Please grant us the ability to share Your light with others. Let us not hide our light, Your light. Help us to receive it, and as it shines on others, grant them Your blessing of love, peace, and joy. AMEN.

Rev. Deborah Finley-Jackson

Adoration: O Come Let Us Adore Him

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 2, 2021

By the tender mercy of our God, the dawn from on high will break upon us, to give light to those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace.

Luke 1:78-79

As the rising sun breaks through the darkness each morning, bringing us light, so too does Jesus bring us out of the darkness into His Light. Jesus is the light of the world. Each day we are given the gift of light. In our humanness we sometimes choose to walk in darkness. But God's love for us is so vast that he has mercy on us, even when we are in the middle of our sin. We live in the darkness of the world when we do not know the love of Christ. How much more difficult is our life without the light of Christ. God is merciful to give us the gift of his life, his light so that we may know the peace of God.

PRAYER: Merciful Father, thank you for the gift of light. Help us all to remember that only your light brings peace. As we bring those who do not know you before your throne of mercy, we pray that those who sit in darkness may experience the dawning of a new day and receive you as Lord and Savior. AMEN.

Rev. Dr. D. Braxtonbrown-Smith

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 3, 2021

A LIFE THAT EXUDES A SWEET FRAGRANCE OF PRAISE

²⁰It is my eager expectation and hope that I will not be put to shame in any way, but that by my speaking with all boldness, Christ will be exalted now as always in my body, whether by life or by death.

Philippians 1:18b-26

Our scriptural reference in Philippians 1:18b-26 presents the Apostle Paul rejoicing in the midst of confinement; rejoicing when others are preaching out of selfish motives; and rejoicing in his desire to follow the Lord's leading and give Him his all! To accomplish this feat, Paul recognized the need for prayer support and the enabling power of the Holy Spirit.

Paul's eyes were fixed on Jesus; his mind was filled with the reality of being crucified with Christ, and his heart held an unwavering commitment to spread the glorious gospel of the One who called him to be a co-laborer in His divine ministry.

If he lived, he would preach about Christ; if he died for the cause of the gospel, his life would still bear witness of Christ!

Paul was an exemplary model of one whose life exuded the sweet fragrance of praise and unwavering devotion to the One we celebrate during this Advent Season!

Oh, that we would emulate the life of Paul, and make our primary goal the exaltation and adoration of our Lord.

Oh, come, ye blood bought heirs of salvation; let us fix our gaze on the One who called us to represent Him to the world, and be unfazed by the challenges of this world.

PRAYER: We come to adore You, we kneel and worship You, our King of Kings and Lord of Lords! May our lives exude a sweet fragrance of praise. In Jesus name. AMEN.

Rev. Florence C. Petersen

Adoration: O Come Let Us Adore Him

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 4, 2021

Luke 1:68-75

Zechariah was filled with the Holy Spirit and he prophesied about the covenants God made with David, Abraham, and the other prophets of old. Being filled with the Holy Spirit, his ears were opened and his tongue was loosed for the first time since his wife conceived. *Zechariah belonged to the priestly order of Abijah. His wife was a descendant of Aaron, and her name was Elizabeth. Both were righteous before God, living blamelessly according to all the commandments and regulations of the Lord.*

They were praying for a child, before their old age. God answered in His time. Like Gideon, Zechariah asked for a sign to confirm that it was indeed God who came to him with such amazing news. A bit of doubt may have presented itself because he thought of his limitations. God knows when to make the move in our lives.

As children of God, we pray, and we are encouraged to bombard heaven for what we desire. In this world, because of all the noise, sometimes we do not hear when God says to wait, and we press on in a hurry for what it is we desire, forgetting that Almighty God knows all and He knows best. Sometimes He has to silence us for our own safety and for our own growth. Sometimes He blinds us so that we may use our spiritual eyes to appreciate what we have, while we wait for what we desire. Sometimes He cripples us so that we would walk by faith, trusting only Him to experience His glory, majesty, grace, and mercy.

Zechariah reminds us to serve God without fear, all our days, he will save us from our enemies and save us from our sins, as he promised.

PRAYER: God, help us to be patient. AMEN.

Rev. Ruth VE Phillips

**DECEMBER 5, 2021
ADVENT**

SECOND SUNDAY OF

BE ALWAYS ON GUARD

Be alert at all times, praying that you may have the strength to escape all these things that will take place, and to stand before the Son of Man.

Luke 21:36

Coupled with watching and overcoming, the next subject that Jesus addresses in Luke 21:36 is prayer. To grasp just how important prayer is, notice the example of Daniel, one of the three most righteous men in the Bible, according to Ezekiel 14:14. Part of his story is in Daniel 6:7 & 10.

Daniel believed that prayer was so essential that he chose to risk his life to lions rather than lose contact with God for even a part of a day. We could say that he feared the Lion of Judah more than any physical lion. To him, prayer was a life and death issue. Is it to us? How many excuses would we have made to avoid those lions? What excuses do we make today to justify a lack of prayer?

Is anything more serious than a life and death issue? Because of the Bible's obviously high regard for Daniel, it is reasonable to assume that his attitude about prayer played a significant part in deserving the label of "righteous." Prayer for us becomes a spiritual life and death question, not just a physical one as Daniel faced.

Rev. Primadonna Steele

MONDAY, DECEMBER 6, 2021

TEARFUL SOWING BRINGS JOYFUL REAPING

*Those who go out weeping bearing seed for sowing, shall come with shouts of joy,
carrying their sheaves.*

Psalm 126:6

This Psalm recalls the experiences of the exiled Israelites who suffered years of hardship and hostility, being alienated from their homeland. Then they had the unbelievable news of their release from exile and restoration to their homeland, which seemed more like a dream than reality.

The amazing news spurred them into jubilation and songs of joy; so that the gentiles realised that their God had done marvellous things for them, and they agreed with this.

Their return home was somewhat comparable to the Negev desert; which, in dry season is arid and barren; but in rainy season is awash with overflowing streams. Rehabilitating themselves back home meant tearful moments of ploughing the parched land, sowing seeds to produce crops; then waiting for crops to bear fruits to provide for their nourishment and prosperity.

Christians similarly suffer persecution and tears whilst sowing seeds of the gospel of the Kingdom of God, but with perseverance and patience, the harvest of souls who receive Christ by faith will be a certainty.

We serve a God who unfailingly restores our souls, health, and fortunes.

PRAYER: Father, we praise and thank you for sending us your only begotten son Jesus, who took onto Himself the sins of mankind and died a substitutionary death, to restore us to the family of God. Help us to sow the seeds of the gospel of the Kingdom of God faithfully and relentlessly, to a lost world, to bring forth an abundant harvest of souls, for the glory of God. AMEN.

Rev Victoria Smalling

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 7

KEEP YOUR VOWS

They will worship with sacrifices and grain offerings; they will make vows to the LORD and keep them.

Isaiah 19:21c & d

The wonderful God that we serve does not require us to make idols, give our first born child, or burn animals on an altar to let Him know we love him. ***“He gave His only begotten Son,”*** which is the ultimate sacrifice. Jesus died for our sins so that we might have eternal life.

Often, we pray and try to bargain with God. “God if you get me out of this mess, I promise to.....” “I will never do that again, if you will.....” “Lord, I will be in church every Sunday, if you just.....” This bargaining does not impress God. He knows every hair on our head and every thought in our feeble mind. God does not need our deals. He does not want us to negotiate with Him. All He asks is that we love Him, just as He has loved us. He wants us to love each other and care for each other.

The key is: **“...they will make vows to the Lord and keep them.”** A vow is a solemn promise made and kept. In essence, we are giving the Lord our promise, taking a solemn oath, we are guaranteeing, or declaring to the Lord that we will worship and praise Him and only Him. Be careful what you vow. Be determined to keep your word to God. If you should fail, ask His forgiveness, repent, be earnestly sorry and atone. Seek forgiveness.

Lenora Brogdon-Wyatt, Ph.D.

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 8, 2021

SHOUT FOR JOY

*²Then our mouth was filled with laughter,
and our tongue with shouts of joy...*

Psalms 126

Every now and then, challenging times knocks at your door. The loss of a loved one, a job, a friend and even freedom. In 2020, much of the world felt the loss of freedom when the COVID pandemic hit. For many it felt as though they were in the thick of sorrow, like it would never end. For some they awoke each morning to tears, and went to bed each night with tears. It was difficult to see their way forward. Some even began to lose hope, wondering, "Is this all that God has for me? Will I ever be happy again?"

Praise God! God is turning everything around. For behind every dark cloud, there is a silver lining. Just like God continuously turned things around for Israel, through captivity, census, suffering, etc., He is turning things around for us. Amid the darkness and gloom of the pandemic, He is giving hope to a hopeless world by providing sight to the spiritually blind and hearing to the spiritually deaf. Vaccines have been successfully created. Lockdowns have been lifted. Travel restrictions have been cancelled. The physical Church has been reopened.

God wants us all to be happy. He is providing us with positive aspects amongst the dark clouds of our lives. During this advent season, let us count it all as joy. It is time for us to shout for Joy!

PRAYER: Almighty God, we thank you for the experiences of the past. We thank you for holding our hands and walking with us, when we thought we had to go it alone. We thank you for bringing us out of the darkness and into Your marvelous light. In Jesus name, AMEN.

Rev. Lucinda V. Burgess

Adoration: O Come Let Us Adore Him

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 9, 2021

² Surely God is my salvation; I will trust, and will not be afraid, for the LORD GOD is my strength and my might.... ³ With joy you will draw water from the wells of salvation. ⁴ And you will say in that day: Give thanks to the LORD, call on his name ...⁵ Sing praises to the LORD, for he has done gloriously; let this be known in all the earth. ⁶ Shout aloud and sing for joy...

Isaiah 12: 2-6

Isaiah told the people that, there will be hard times but during this time God would not forget his people.

In observation God judges' people when they sin. But He also forgives and loves when we have a peaceful relationship with him. God is compassionate and merciful to his people. He wants us to trust Him and not be afraid. God expects us to rely on Him as our source for all our needs. He wants us to turn our weaknesses over to Him and rely on His strength, to turn our pain over and focus on the Joy He promises and turn our hatred over and dwell in His love.

We should adore the Lord by rejoicing in the God of our salvation and sing praises to Him the Most High.

Let us rejoice because we have peace with God! Celebrate God's forgiveness for us and demonstrate God's peace to others through our relationship with Him. Source – Inspirational study bible

PRAYER: Mighty God, Lord of the heaven and earth, may Your name be praised. Help us to see the joy You have set before us. Help us to increase our gratitude in praise to You and may You continue to guide us as we trust You to lead us on this journey of serving You in Jesus Christ name. AMEN.

Regina Prince

Adoration: O Come Let Us Adore Him

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 10, 2021

*No one after lighting a lamp puts it in a cellar,
but on the lampstand so that those who enter may see the light.*

Luke 11:33

Oh come! Let us adore Him who is light, in whom is no darkness at all.

We were taught in our Sunday School and even sang the chorus “this little light of mine, I’m gonna let it shine, everywhere I go, I’m gonna let it shine.” Jesus’ illustration of the lighted lamp illuminating the home speaks of the powerful influence of the Christian action of letting your light shine.

No one after being filled with the Light, of God should be hidden away. We are given the responsibility to Shine. Shine to show other the way to Jesus. There is a powerful influence in a Christian who allows the light of Christ to be evident in every aspect of their lives.

As we walk in the light provided to us by our Savior everything that is of darkness drives us closer to the center of the light. Therefore, give yourselves wholly to the Word of God and Prayer, let us delight ourselves in Him, and may His Peace and Presence refresh and sustain us daily.

Thru the light of His word may He enlighten us and may we be enabled to draw and show the way for others to see Jesus Christ. *In the same way, let your light shine before others, so they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven.* Matthew 15:16

PRAYER Lord, fill us with the light of your presence, may our actions bring glory to your name. Cause us to become a beacon lighting the way to Jesus for all.
AMEN.

Rev. Lisa Blake Williams

Adoration: O Come Let Us Adore Him

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 11, 2021

⁵⁷Now the time came for Elizabeth to give birth, and she bore a son. ⁵⁸Her neighbors and relatives heard that the Lord had shown his great mercy to her, and they rejoiced with her... ⁶³He asked for a writing tablet and wrote, "His name is John." And all of them were amazed. ⁶⁴Immediately his mouth was opened and his tongue freed, and he began to speak, praising God.

Luke 1:57-66

There is an atmosphere of celebration at the birth of Elizabeth's son, everyone was rejoicing because they recognized that this was a miraculous birth and it was God's doing. However, what they were not privy to is that God had already decided a name for this child and the amazing plan He had for this child to herald the Messiah. Out of obedience and faith, Elizabeth and Zechariah went against the cultural norm of naming the child after the male parentage and chose the name given by God - John which means "God is gracious." Their choice to be obedient resulted in another miraculous move of God to release Zechariah's tongue.

This Advent let us rejoice and celebrate the miracle of life and purpose in Christ. Let us rejoice that God knows our names. Despite what it may look like, celebrate that God has an amazingly plan for our lives and He will even perform miracles in working out that plan for us.

PRAYER: Gracious God, thank you for the joy of knowing that you know our names and You have good plans for our lives. Thank you for assurance that when we are obedient to Your Word, you move in miraculous ways to bring Your plans for our lives to fruition in Jesus name, AMEN.

Rev. Marguerite Hoyte

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 12, 2021

THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT

THE LORD IS NEAR

*Rejoice in the Lord always; again, I will say, Rejoice.
Let your gentleness be known to everyone. The Lord is near.*

Philippians 4:4-5

In this season of expectation and rejoicing we remind ourselves that in every season of our lives “*the Lord is near*.” Near is defined as “at or to a short distance away from.” The joy in your heart is believing and accepting that no matter the situation or circumstance, God’s presence, love, and mercy is nearby. Hope is only a short distance from you.

When I was in college, I would drive from North Carolina to Alabama. The ten-hour trip seemed the longest between Montgomery and Mobile, Alabama; actually, it was the shortest distance between cities. It seemed longer as I realized I was close to the security and comfort of family a familiar place. When I approached the “Dolly Parton bridge,” I knew I was thirty minutes from home. The bridge was my assurance that home was near; this is how we should feel when we pray and study the Word of God.

Advent reminds us that when the world was crashing, the king was killing, and the people were doubting: “*the Lord was near*.” In just a short time God gave the world the gift of hope and joy. In a short period, God fixed what was broken and healed the hurt in the land.

PRAYER: God, please stay near me. Help me not to worry and find joy as I anticipate Your love and celebrate your blessing and deliverance.

Rev. Florance M. McElroy

Adoration: O Come Let Us Adore Him

MONDAY, DECEMBER 13, 2021

7 Remember your leaders, those who spoke the word of God to you; consider the outcome of their way of life, and imitate their faith. 8 Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever. 9 Do not be carried away by all kinds of strange teachings; for it is well for the heart to be strengthened by grace, not by regulations about food, which have not benefited those who observe them.

Hebrews 13:7-9

Verse 7 reminds me of my grandmother who taught me to pray. She always said to me, 'trust in God for whatever you want but you have to live in the manner that the bible teaches to receive from Him. Back then I didn't really understand what she meant but as I grew into womanhood I began to understand what my grandmother was saying to me. Now I'm older than she was when she was teaching me things. but I remember all that she said and I try to do some things with my grandchildren that she did with me.

People change, circumstances, situations change. Right now we are in the midst of a pandemic and we all deal with it in different ways. According to scripture, God is our constant shelter. He is able to do for us what we cannot do for ourselves - hallelujah! I thank Him for who He is and how He orchestrates things, Let us hold on to our faith and believe in the triune God. There is none like Him. He is the only one who never changes and His mercy endures forever.

PRAYER: Almighty and everlasting God - thank You for Your grace that saves us and for Your divine guidance that enables us to live according to Your Word. We pray in Jesus' Name. AMEN.

Rev. Dr. Lucille Holder

Adoration: O Come Let Us Adore Him

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 14, 2021

Acts 28: 23-28

This was the end of Paul's fourth Ministry Journey which began in Acts 27.

The Kingdom of God was the main subject of the Apostle Paul's preaching, not a material Kingdom, but a Divine Realm where Almighty God rules in the lives of His people. Paul's focus was to preach and spread the Gospel of God and Jesus Christ and followers enjoy God's Blessings and eternal life in the New Heaven and New Earth (Revelations 21:1-4). This should be the goal of every believer.

Paul mentioned the Holy Spirit in Acts 28:25, which is an indication that he preached the Trinity.

The gathering here was a sign that Paul's aim was that these believers would continue to spread the message to fulfill the Lord Jesus Great Commission to "Go Preach MY Gospel" we can be confident that this Gospel will continue to be preached until our Lord's return.

The four Gospels tell us of Jesus' human life, His was born, He died, He resurrected and He now reigns as King of Kings and Lord of Lords *and will return to reign for ever and ever.* (Revelation 11:15)

PRAYER: O God our Heavenly Father You are our refuge, help us to always remember in times of doubt and fear that you are our guiding God who promised never to leave or forsake us and are always in complete control. Help us to remember that because of this truth we have no reason to fear the future. I ask all these in the powerful name of JESUS CHRIST my REDEEMER. AMEN.

Rev. Eureka Solomon

Adoration: O Come Let Us Adore Him

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 15, 2021

Luke 7: 31 – 35

Jesus after having a “walk about” in Judea became dissatisfied with what He saw. Here He was healing the sick, raising the dead and teaching His disciples. In other words, “His Kingdom had come and His Will was being done” for all to see. Yet in the midst of this there were those who were not aware of the season or time as was spoken of in Ecclesiastes 3:4.

Luke 7: 31 - Here it is Jesus likens the people to children (speaking to immaturity of those who led) They were in a space and time when greatness was being accomplished; the Son of God was here on earth and they were missing it. Jesus asked in Mark 2: 19 “How can the guest of the bridegroom fast while he was with them?” As saints of God when we recognize the workings of Almighty God, whether it be through the Holy spirit, or Jesus or another submitted soul, we ought to with a heart of thanksgiving celebrate.

The issue was that because they did not see Jesus for who He is; they couldn't accept what He was doing to help those who were hurting and needed help.

Vs. 33 & 34 God loves variety – the lily and the roses, the Sycamore and the fur, the tigers, and the tapir- there is true beauty not only in us coming together, but coming together with our variety of culture and personality.

Can we look beyond our finite minds and see the Glory of Almighty God revealed in our brothers and sisters, children, youth, whoever is that submitted soul. When God completed the task of the initial creation, He saw that it was “GOOD.” In each of us there is greatness downloaded in us by a Great and mighty and awesome God. We were created in His Image and Likeness. (Eph. 2:10) We are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.

Vs. 35 In James 1:5 we are advised to ask for wisdom if we lack. And we should ask so that we may be able to identify Seasons and times. So that we will not miss the season of rejoicing, or the time of reaping, but we will be walking with our Lord Jesus giving thanks for everything, because we will understand the Season and time.

Rev. Wendy Edwards

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 16, 2021

OH COME LET US ADORE HIM!

Jeremiah 31:31

Focus - He is our husband. Recently, I was looking at the photograph of a husband and wife. They were facing each other and it seems as though he was speaking and she was listening. It is said that "a picture is worth a thousand words." This lady seemed to be hanging onto every word that was spoken; even more so her eyes were saying "here is where I want to be - with you." Her eyes were adoring her husband.

In verses 31-32 God is saying that He will renew the covenant which He had with our fore fathers with us. This covenant is not only revised but he treasures it so much that he hides it in our hearts. The previous covenant was written and stored in the Ark. Here it was taken around to battles, kept in the temple, kept at homes even in the enemy's camp. With the most important representation of God's presence among men, God decides to hide this covenant in our hearts. In our hearts is where love generates. So, with the presence of God right there in our hearts, it creates a loving desire to want to please Him, to obey Him, to respect Him, to serve Him and this is the epitome of adoration. *The song writer says in the presence of God there is fullness of joy and at His right hand there are pleasures forever more (Psalm 16:11).

Verse 34 refers to the intimacy which our loving Lord wants to have with us. He gave so much of himself for us; caring, teaching, leading, loving, comforting us that those whose eyes He has opened by the help of the Holy Spirit became satisfied and desired only Him.

One Lord, One God, One body!

Rev. Heather Edwards

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 17, 2021

SING A NEW SONG

*Sing to the LORD a new song, his praise from the end of the earth!
Let the sea roar and all that fills it, the coastlands and their inhabitants.*

Isaiah 42:10

God is looking for us to “Sing a New Song” unto the Lord as he is doing a “New Thing” in our lives.

God has fought our battles and made us victorious. He is our Warrior God. God brings judgment to those who try to touch his anointed. God will not allow anything to harm his anointed. God is our Judge.

God has performed marvelous things and works. He is greatly to be praised with a “New Song.” That “New Song” should be joyous; filled with worship and praise; and be a sweet savor offering to HIM.

This song should be filled with strength and beauty that resounds from land to sea to sky.

Our God is Lord of Lords and King of Kings.

Let the people sing a new song because the Lord will return to claim his own.

PRAY: We humbly bow in submission before you Lord. We rise to sing you praise, honor and glory. All praise, honor and glory belong to YOU. Let the people resound in song - Our God is Lord of Lords and King of Kings. In Jesus name, we pray.

Rev. Charlotte J. Ritchie

Adoration: O Come Let Us Adore Him

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 18, 2021

Before she was in labor she gave birth; before her pain came upon her she delivered a son. Who has heard of such a thing? Who has seen such things? Shall a land be born in one day? Shall a nation be delivered in one moment? Yet as soon as Zion was in labor she delivered her children. Shall I open the womb and not deliver? says the Lord; shall I, the one who delivers, shut the womb? says your God.

Isaiah 66:7-11

"Rejoice with Jerusalem, and be glad for her, all you who love her; rejoice with her in joy, all you who mourn over her— that you may nurse and be satisfied from her consoling breast; that you may drink deeply with delight from her glorious bosom."

As the Prophet Isaiah relays to the people of Israel what thus says the Lord, an image of birth is used. God is conveying through the imagery of birth that God will continue to work on the completion of the restoration of Zion. The restoration is as certain as the birth of a baby and once the pain is over, the joy of a beautiful new life begins.

During this particular Season of Advent, some of us may still feel the pain of the pandemic. The impact may be residual symptoms known as "long COVID-19," it may be emotional challenges of experiencing an enormous loss of life, it may be the horror of blatant racism, or it may be someone you love has passed away. Such pain can be devastating but during this Advent season we are reminded by Isaiah that God will restore God's people.

The joy of new life and a new existence is as immediate as a mother's last push during labor. New opportunities to serve according to the purpose for which God has created you! God loves you and will move you closer to God's purpose for your life. As you experience this freshness of the newness of life, we are reminded of a new life that began over 2,000 years ago.

The birth of a Son to a Virgin named Mary! With the birth of this Son, God's only begotten Son, we have the opportunity to be birthed into a new relationship with God. This new relationship leads to eternal life once our existence on earth is completed. Because of this miraculous birth of a Savior, we can look forward to this Advent season because we know without a doubt that we too can sing, "Joy to the World, the Lord has Come." Amen! Amen! Amen!

Rev. Dr. Marion Morton Crayton

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 19, 2021

FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT

THE PROMISE

In those days Mary set out and went with haste to a Judean town in the hill country, where she entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth. When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the child leaped in her womb. And Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit and exclaimed with a loud cry, "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb. And why has this happened to me, that the mother of my Lord comes to me? For as soon as I heard the sound of your greeting, the child in my womb leaped for joy. And blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfillment of what was spoken to her by the Lord.

Luke 1:39-45

Mary visited Elizabeth, and Elizabeth recognized who Mary was because of whom she carried. Elizabeth pronounced this blessing over Mary's life. Blessed is she who has believed that the Lord fulfills his promises. Ministry is reciprocal, and is at all time a birthing process. We carry, we birth what we carried, and it starts all over again. And in this carrying, this birthing, we grow also as what is birthed transforms us. As we grow through the birthing process, we can be assured that we will carry to completion. What we do as protectors, carriers, demonstrators of ministry have more weight than we can understand. We don't know how far reaching the outcome. We don't know the full effect. It is always larger than ourselves and we don't do it alone.

Many times, as we carry that precious burden of ministry we may need to get to a sister or one who already knows what it is to carry such a burden. One who knows that God does what he said he will do. One who can pray us through to be clear on hearing and resting in that promise to us. Sometimes we just need a sister who knows, a brother who knows. Sometimes we need someone that is praying with us. Each precious burden of ministry is different, but we all carry as God has deemed assured that God fulfills his promise.

There is something recognizable about walking in this ministry by those who know. Those who know, those on the same journey. And when we are clear - blessed are we that God fulfills His promise. In this season let us hear and follow God assured of His promise. Let us ponder in our heart the awesomeness of what it means to partner with, to carry what God is doing.

PRAYER: Father, thank you for trusting us to gift us with carrying the gospel of Your Son. Thank you for loving us that much.

Rev. Dr. Emily A. Pardue

Advent 2021

Adoration: O Come Let Us Adore Him

MONDAY, DECEMBER 20, 2021

¹⁵He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation; ¹⁶for in him all things in heaven and on earth were created, things visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or powers—all things have been created through him and for him. ¹⁷He himself is before all things, and in him all things hold together. ¹⁸He is the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, so that he might come to have first place in everything. ¹⁹For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, ²⁰and through him God was pleased to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, by making peace through the blood of his cross.

Luke 1:39-45

Jesus Christ is the revelation of the fullness of God made manifest. He is the eternal, preexistent creator, and the sustainer of all things; invisible in the heavens as well as visible on the earth “whether thrones or dominions or rulers or powers.” and the Head of the Church.

As we reflect on our Christ this Advent, let us rejoice that Christmas initiates this wonderful process that ends in of all creation being reconciled to our loving God.

What a privilege the church has in proclaiming this good news to a lost and divided world. Our Christ has a working plan to reconcile all things to Himself and we are part of that plan.

PRAYER: Lord Jesus, as we bow before you in adoration today, we joyfully thank you for using us to bring about your plan of reconciliation. In this season help us to reach a family member, a friend or even a stranger with this good news. Amen.

Rev. Marguerite Hoyte

Adoration: O Come Let Us Adore Him

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 21, 2021

Psalms 113

While the world is full of things that distract us and cause us to get carried away and forget the spiritual importance of our creation, the Psalmist reminds us to look at the world from an unfamiliar perspective.

As we read Psalms 113 let us ask ourselves some questions:

- Who should praise the LORD?
- What time of the day should praise be given?
- Who should praise be given to?

Psalms 113 gives us all the answers:

*¹Praise the LORD! Praise, O servant of the LORD; praise the name of the LORD.
³from the rising of the sun to its setting the name of the LORD is to be praised.*

The sun shines continuously, and its light irradiates every inch of the earth. The Psalmist is calling for God's name to be praised everywhere all the time not just during Advent or on Christmas day.

⁴The LORD is high above all nations, and His glory above the heavens. ⁵Who is like the LORD our God, who is seated on high, ⁶who looks far down on the heavens and the earth”

No one can be compared with our LORD for He is above all things and mighty in power. We were created to give praise to the LORD. Praising the LORD all the time from the rising of the sun to its setting.

Psalms 150:6 concludes: “*Let everything that breathes praise the LORD! Praise the LORD.*”

PRAYER: Loving Almighty God, creator of all things, help us through the Holy Spirit to always remember that we are created to give praise, honour, and glory to your Holy Name. You are the only one who deserves our adoration, praise, and honour. To you alone we give all our praise glory and honour in Jesus Name we pray. AMEN

Evangelist Maureen Kapembwa Oliver

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 22, 2021

PEACE ON EARTH

*“Come, let us go up to the mountain of the Lord,
to the house of the God of Jacob that he may teach us his ways
and that we may walk in his paths.”*

Michah 4:1-5

The lyricists wrote;

Let there be peace on earth and let it begin with me.
Let there be peace on earth, the peace that was meant to be.
With God as our Father, brothers (sisters) are we.
Let there be peace on earth and let it begin with me.

During this season of peace, the world feels as though it is full of turmoil, more now than it has ever been. Disaster seemed to be attacking at every corner. There are wars and rumors of wars. Climate change is causing sea levels to rise, and the lands to flood. We are experiencing unprecedented levels of droughts and floods. The world is up in arms as once country willingly blames another and other countries refuse to help find a solution to the crisis.

There is hope if we go to the proverbial mountain of the Lord. That is, if we go to God's Church and allow His people to teach us God's way so that we can walk the path that God has laid before us. It is time for us to put aside our differences and work together as one so that during this advent season, we will be able to find that 'peace on earth' that God desires for us.

PRAYER: Almighty God, please forgive us of all our selfish ways. Remind us of the peace, hope, joy, and love that You have given us. Allow us to light the Christ candle and thank You for all these gifts. In Jesus name, AMEN.

Lenora Brogdon-Wyatt Ph.D.

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 23, 2021

MARY'S SONG

My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior.

Luke 1:46b-55

Mary's song, also known as the 'Magnificat' (worship), is a beautiful song of personal praise where Mary not only magnifies the Lord, but she also proclaims God's greatness, and rejoices in God as her Saviour. *My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior.* Her praise is one that comes from deep within as she sings from the heart; the depth of her being. Mary is praising God for the major blessing that He has bestowed on her; the mother to His Son. A blessing that will be celebrated from generation to generation.

Mary also sings about the God who saves not just souls, but embodies people. The God she celebrates is not content merely to point people toward heaven; God's redemptive work begins here on earth. God fills the hungry not only with hope, but with food. Rather than being satisfied with comforting the lowly, Mary's Lord lifts them up, granting them dignity and honor, a seat at the table and a voice in the conversation. At the same time, God shows strength by disrupting the world's power structures, dethroning rulers, and humbling the mighty.

PRAYER: Father we thank You for Your love. A love that makes creation whole. I love that does not care about the color of our skin or our economic status. A love that is for all generations.

Rev. Lucinda V. Burgess

Adoration: O Come Let Us Adore Him

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 24, 2021

Luke 2:8-15 records the shepherds' angelic visitation on the night that our Lord and Savior was born. The glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angels reassured them that their news of the baby's birth was good and a joy for all people. The heavenly host sang "Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace among those whom he favors!" After their worship, the shepherds left the fields to find the newborn king.

If we are blessed, every now and then our church services usher in the Holy Spirit to touch us in ways similar to the ways the shepherds were touched on that night. The Spirit is evident, and God's presence permeates the atmosphere. The experience is so powerful, we don't want it to end, we don't want to come down from the "mountain" of praise on which we find ourselves. Being in God's presence leaves us feeling safe and loved. It is then that we truly commune with our Lord.

Praise and worship are a most important aspect of our faith. The shepherds got that. They were in awe of the angelic visit. And then they left the field and went to find the divine baby for themselves. This Advent season, let us find Jesus too.

PRAYER: Dear Lord, after their worship, the shepherds left to find You. After our worship, help us to leave service and find You as we follow Your second great commandment to "love our neighbors as ourselves." Let us make a special effort to reach out in our communities and find our neighbors and love them and minister to them, and care for them. Then we will know that like the shepherds, we too will find You, our Lord and Savior. AMEN

Rev. Deborah Finley-Jackson

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 25, 2021

CHRISTMAS DAY

O COME LET US ADORE HIM

*⁴ Make a joyful noise to the Lord, all the earth;
break forth into joyous song and sing praises.*

Psalm 98

Today, is a glorious day. It is a time when we in the Christian Church, pause to give praise and thanks to God for the fulfillment of His promise of a Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ. On this day, as we celebrate His birth 2000+ years ago, we too can be like the angels who said, "*Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace among those whom He favors.*" (Luke 2:14)

Today, people will be opening presents and giving thanks to the person who gifted them the item(s). Just as we give thanks for the physical items, I encourage each Christian to take it one step further as we rejoice and give thanks for the 'marvelous things' that God blesses us with each and every day as we *break forth into joyous song and sing praises.* (Psalm 98:4)

Let us rejoice for God has given us the greatest gift ever, His Son Jesus to shine light on this Dark World. We rejoice because in spite of the darkness, and all the evil, we have a Saviour. We rejoice because for over 18 months we hid in the shadows of COVID-19, countries closing their borders, and the inability to see relatives and friends, we have a Saviour that continues to be the light that guides our paths. Today, let us rejoice as we sing:

**O come all ye faithful, joyful and triumphant,
O come ye, O come ye, to Bethlehem;
Come and behold Him, born the King of Angels,
O come let us adore Him, O come let us adore Him
O come let us adore Him, CHRIST, the LORD!**

PRAYER: Father we come before You this day with praise and thanksgiving in our hearts. Thank You for sending us Your Son, Jesus the Christ, to be a lamp unto our feet and a light unto our path. AMEN

Rev. Lucinda V. Burgess

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 26, 2021
SUNDAY

CHRISTMAS

THE DAY AFTER HIS BIRTH

I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, my whole being shall exult in my God; for he has clothed me with the garments of salvation, he has covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decks himself with a garland, and as a bride adorns herself with jewels. (Isaiah 61:10)

You shall be a crown of beauty in the hand of the Lord, and a royal diadem in the hand of your God. (Isaiah 62:3)

The day after Christmas is normally a very disappointing day. You didn't get the gift you wanted and you are very unhappy. You received that special gift and it's not what they advertised or what you expected. The gifts have all been opened, the mound of crumpled wrapping paper stands in the kitchen as a testament of the joy of yesterday. You know that the meal today is leftovers, so there is no culinary excitement for the day. More disappointment.

Q: What is the problem? A: You have fallen into the abyss of a worldly Christmas.

Even Christians temporarily forget that Jesus is the REASON for the season. Even Godly ones let the world get the best of them. Look at the gifts the God promises us:

Garments of Salvation
Robe of righteousness
Garland
Jewels

And if that isn't enough, the hands of the God we serve adds a "crown of beauty," and "a royal diadem" to the presents that we are receiving on this day after the Saviors birth. Oh, how we need to adore him. How we need to bow down and thank him for every blessing bestowed upon us. We are beauty and we are royal. What more do we need?

PRAYER: Heavenly Father, thank you for my physical life and the promise of eternal life. You gave me the ultimate gift when you gave me your only begotten son. Help me to remember who I am and more importantly: whose I am. AMEN

Lenora Brogdon-Wyatt, Ph.D.

CONTRIBUTORS

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Adoration: O Come Let Us Adore Him

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