



1ST SUNDAY OF ADVENT | NOVEMBER 29, 2020

REFLECTIONS

“The celebration of Advent is possible only to those who are troubled in soul, who know themselves to be poor and imperfect, and who look forward to something greater to come. For these, it is enough to wait in humble fear until the Holy One himself comes down to us, God in the child in the manger. God comes.”

DIETRICH BONHOEFFER | *ADVENT SERMON 1928*

“The 21st century is going to be the Bad Memory Century. You will go to dinner parties and the middle-aged high achievers will talk more about how bad their memories are than about real estate. Already, the information acceleration syndrome means that more data is coursing through everybody’s brains, but less of it actually sticks. It’s become like a badge of a frenetic, stressful life — to have forgotten what you did last Saturday night, and through all of junior high.”

DAVID BROOKS

CALL TO WORSHIP

Leader Let us praise our Lord Jesus Christ.
Together Alleluia! Jesus has come!
Leader At Christmas Jesus came as a baby.
Together Alleluia! Jesus has come!
Leader He came to be like us because he loves us.
Together Alleluia! Jesus has come!
Leader He came to save us from our sin.
Together Alleluia! Jesus is coming again to wipe away every tear!
Leader Prepare the way of the Lord.
Together Come, Lord Jesus, come!

SONG OF PRAISE

PREPARE THE WAY, O ZION / *FRANS MIKAEL FRANZEN*

1. Prepare the way, O Zion, your Christ is drawing near! Let every hill and valley a level way appear. Greet One who comes in glory foretold in sacred story. Oh blest is Christ that came in God’s most holy name!	2. He brings God’s rule, O Zion; He comes from heaven above! His rule is peace and freedom and justice, truth, and love. Lift high your praise resounding for grace and joy abounding! Oh, blest is Christ that came in God’s most holy name!	3. Fling wide your gates, O Zion, your Savior’s rule embrace! His tidings of salvation proclaim in every place. All lands will bow before Him, their voices will adore Him. Oh blest is Christ that came in God’s most holy name!
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PRAYER OF ADORATION

Together God of power and new life, we praise you for your steadfast love and sure promises. Who is like you in heaven or on earth? In this season of Advent, you call us once again to celebrate the coming of your Son and to prepare for his coming again. Remove those things that hinder love of you, so that when he comes, he may find us waiting in awe and wonder. Glory be to you, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

SONGS OF PRAISE

COME THOU LONG EXPECTED JESUS / *CHARLES WESLEY*

1. Come, Thou long expected Jesus born to set Thy people free; from our fears and sins release us, let us find our rest in Thee. Israel’s strength and consolation, hope of all the earth Thou art; dear desire of every nation, joy of every longing heart.	2. Born Thy people to deliver, born a child and yet a King, Born to reign in us forever, now Thy gracious kingdom bring. By Thine own eternal spirit, rule in all our hearts alone; by Thine all sufficient merit, raise us to Thy glorious throne.
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BE THOU MY VISION / TRAINS. MARY E. BYRNE

1. Be Thou my Vision, O Lord of my heart;
naught be all else to me, save that Thou art;
Thou my best thought, by day or by night;
waking or sleeping, Thy presence my Light.
2. Be Thou my Wisdom, and Thou my true Word;
I ever with Thee and Thou with me, Lord;
Thou my great Father, I Thy true Son;
Thou in me dwelling, and I with Thee one.

3. Riches I heed not, nor man's empty praise;
Thou mine inheritance, now and always:
Thou and Thou only, first in my heart;
High King of Heaven, my treasure Thou art.
4. High King of Heaven, my victory won;
may I reach Heaven's joys, O bright Heaven's sun!
Heart of my own heart, whatever befall,
Still be my Vision, O Ruler of all.

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT CANDLE

Reader

We light this candle as a sign of the coming light of Christ. We prepare for his coming by remembering these words from the prophet Isaiah: "The nations shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more." (Is. 2:4)
The first candle is lit.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Together

Lord Christ,
You are the King of Love and our Good Shepherd.
We confess our willingness to be loved
but also our reluctance to love.
We confess our readiness to accept your forgiving love
but also our refusal to forgive.
We confess our eagerness to grasp your redeeming love
but also our resistance to follow you without question.
Forgive us our failure to respond
to your love and claim on our lives.
Come to us anew, and by your grace,
assist us to receive you with joy, as the shepherds;
with gratitude, as Simeon; with obedience, as Mary;
with love, as you have loved us.
Even so: come, Lord Jesus. **Amen.**

SONG OF RESPONSE & ASSURANCE

LET ALL MORTAL FLESH BE SILENT / FROM THE LITURGY OF ST. JAMES BY G. MOULTRIE

1. Let all mortal flesh keep silence,
and with fear and trembling stand;
ponder nothing earthly minded,
for with blessing in His hand,
Christ our God to earth descendeth,
our full homage to demand.
2. King of kings, yet born of Mary,
as of old on earth He stood,
Lord of Lords, in human vesture,
in the body and the blood;
He will give to all the faithful
His own self for heavenly food.

3. Rank on rank the host of heaven
spreads its vanguard on the way,
as the Light of light descendeth
from the realms of endless day,
that the powers of hell may vanish
as the darkness clears away.
4. At His feet the six-winged seraph,
cherubim with sleepless eye,
veil their faces to His presence;
as with ceaseless voice they cry:
Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia,
Lord Most High!

WORDS OF COMFORT & PEACE

Leader

Hear with fresh ears the good news of Advent: God comes to us with forgiveness of sin and new life. Let us receive it now by faith and commit our lives to Christ's way of hope and peace. Let us commit our lives to the one who comes among us to set us free to love and serve.

All

Thanks be to God!

Leader

May the peace of the Lord be always with you.

All

And also with you.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

* Continue passing the peace to one another during announcements.

** Check our website for the latest updates and ways to invest in the life of our church and city.

THE OFFERING & OFFERTORY

If you're accustomed to giving during worship on Sunday mornings, please consider giving online and setting up a recurring or one-time gift through the Subsplash platform. (Subsplash has one of the lowest transaction fees and reduces our fees the more people give online.) To give online, visit <https://gracepasadena.org/give>. Questions? Email info@gracepasadena.org.

THE 1ST LESSON — EXODUS 2:1-10

¹ Now a man from the house of Levi went and took as his wife a Levite woman. ² The woman conceived and bore a son, and when she saw that he was a fine child, she hid him three months. ³ When she could hide him no longer, she took for him a basket made of bulrushes and daubed it with bitumen and pitch. She put the child in it and placed it among the reeds by the river bank. ⁴ And his sister stood at a distance to know what would be done to him. ⁵ Now the daughter of Pharaoh came down to bathe at the river, while her young women walked beside the river. She saw the basket among the reeds and sent her servant woman, and she took it. ⁶ When she opened it, she saw the child, and behold, the baby was crying. She took pity on him and said, "This is one of the Hebrews' children." ⁷ Then his sister said to Pharaoh's daughter, "Shall I go and call you a nurse from the Hebrew women to nurse the child for you?" ⁸ And Pharaoh's daughter said to her, "Go." So the girl went and called the child's mother. ⁹ And Pharaoh's daughter said to her, "Take this child away and nurse him for me, and I will give you your wages." So the woman took the child and nursed him. ¹⁰ When the child grew older, she brought him to Pharaoh's daughter, and he became her son. She named him Moses, "Because," she said, "I drew him out of the water." [ESV]

THE SERMON — RICK LINTS

Sermon Series: Preparing the Way

Sermon Title: "Salvation is Born"

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

- Leader With the Good News of Jesus Christ resounding in our hearts, minds, and bodies, let us approach God with boldness. Take a few moments to name your thanksgivings hopes, desires, fears and anxieties. [Bring to mind your prayers and write them down or share them with others.] Let us pray for ourselves and world. Jesus, our Shepherd, come to your Church as Lord and Judge. We pray for unity and wisdom for ourselves and those you've given to lead us. Help us to live in the light of your coming and give us a longing for your kingdom. Make your Church one as you are one with the Father and Spirit. For this, O Lord, we pray:
- Together Come with your life, O Lord.**
- Leader Come to your world as King of the nations. We pray that you would empower goodness and restrain evil in all those in authority. Guide the transition of our federal government and fill the incoming administration with your truth and wisdom. Before you rulers will stand in silence. For this, O Lord, we pray:
- All Come with your power, O Lord.**
- Leader Come to the suffering as Savior and Comforter. We lift up to you our needs and longings, as well as those of our families, friends, and neighbors. Break into our lives where we struggle with sickness and distress, and set us free to bring your comfort and peace to our neighbors. As we wait for your healing, help us to receive the good you have for us in this season. For this, O Lord, we pray:
- All Come with your healing, O Lord.**
- Leader And now we are bold to pray as our Savior taught:
- Together Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name; thy kingdom come; thy will be done; on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen.**

A COMMUNION PRAYER FOR ADVENT

- Together** Satisfy us and strengthen us, O God, with your steadfast love. Fill us with the power of your Spirit to bring good news to the poor and lift blind eyes to sight, to loose the chains that bind and claim your blessing for all people. Keep us faithful in your service until Christ comes in final victory and we shall feast with all your saints in the joy of your eternal realm. Through Christ, with Christ, in Christ, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, all glory and honor are yours, almighty God, now and forever. **Amen.**

CLOSING SONGS

GLORY TO GOD IN THE HIGHEST / *REINDEER TRIBE*

Glory to God in the Highest,
And peace on earth,
And peace on earth!

Glory God in the highest,
And peace on earth,
And peace on earth!

Goodwill to men,
Oh, daughter of Zion rejoice!
Shout with joy and sing:
"Our Savior is here!"

GRACE TO YOU & PEACE / *MUSIC: FERNANDO ORTEGA*

Grace to you and peace from God our Father
Grace to you and peace from God our Father
And the Lord Jesus Christ
And the Lord Jesus Christ
And the Lord Jesus Christ

BENEDICTION & SENDING

Leader Isaiah says, "The root of Jesse shall come, the one who rises to rule the Gentiles; in him the Gentiles shall hope." As you keep watch, may the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit. — *Romans 15:12-13*

All **Come, Lord Jesus, come! Amen!**

ADVENT

Advent is here! As Philip Reinders explains, "Advent (from the Latin *adventus*, meaning 'coming' or 'arrival') is the four-week season of preparation for the coming of Jesus at Christmas. A good celebration requires proper preparation for us to fully enjoy it." There are presents to purchase, cookies to bake and people to see. These are all good things! But for many of us, these become our primary preparations for Christmas. For Christians, the focal point of our preparations is remembrance: Advent calls us to remember Christ's first coming and his coming again as he promised. This makes Advent a wonderful time to dive more deeply into spiritual disciplines or to take them up anew. To enter into Advent more fully, use the Grace Pasadena Prayer Guide. Download a copy at our website or request a hard copy! Let's press into Advent and prepare room in our hearts for the King of kings!

GIVING & BUDGET

	<u>JAN-OCT</u>	<u>OCT 2020</u>	<u>NOV¹</u>
OFFERINGS & CONTRIBUTIONS _____	\$360,652	\$27,360	\$27,790
BUDGETED GIVING _____	\$360,00	\$36,000	\$36,000
DIFFERENCE _____	+652	-8,371	-8,210

¹as of 11/20/2020; figures exclude directed gifts from outside donors