



ADVENTures *a weekly newsletter*

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December 13, 2020 The Third Sunday of Advent

Worship with the Diocese of Albany at <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCjVmrEwtur7R8akk7Drd9TQ>

At Advent

Worship is scheduled for Sundays at 9:00 a.m. via ZOOM.

The Gifts of Christmas: #3 Hope

We are living in a unique time. What we have been going through since last March has been a challenge to deal with redemptively. Now for the second time in-person worship has been suspended. How do we respond?

An essential component for our lives is Hope. Hope drives us forward and gives us a positive expectation for the future. Right now, that gift of Hope can be a bit challenging to unpack.

A beautiful Christmas song by Sidewalk Prophets from a 2013 album offers the following verse:

*I can hear the Christmas bells ring
As softly as a church choir sings
It's the song used to praise the ancient of days
When hope was born this night.*

When a person has hope, he is capable of incredible burdens and unbelievably challenging times, but when he has no hope, he simply can't survive. We have to have a hope for tomorrow that gives us the courage and strength to go on today. The Christmas story brings forth that reminder for us because: *hope was born this night*...His name of Jesus!

Hope is essential to our survival, but how can we hope in a world like ours? We can't put our hope in circumstances because our circumstances are so uncertain. We can't put our hope in our financial status because that can swiftly change. We can't put our hope in the things of this world because they so often fail us. We can't put our hope in people, for even those we think love us the most can let us down.

The first century Christians, living under the shadow of Roman persecution, must have voiced that same question.

The Apostle John was on the Isle of Patmos when he began to receive incredible revelation of the future on behalf of believers. In Revelation 21 the word of the Lord is "...I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end..." **Rev. 21:6 (ESV)**

The Alpha is the first letter of the Greek (alpha)bet; the Omega is the last. The word translated "beginning" doesn't simply mean the first in a series, but rather the source and origin out of which all others come. In the same way the word translated "end" doesn't mean the last in a series, but rather the goal or consummation of all things.

Our hope is not based on man's faithlessness, but on God's faithfulness. Our hope is in God, the origin, and the consummation; He is our hope. If we are putting our hope in God, we have a provision that is final and assured. We can have hope because we know who holds the future.

Then I saw a new heaven & a new earth, for the first heaven & the first earth had passed away. Rev. 21:1^a (ESV) He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, & death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away. Rev. 21:4 (ESV)

This is why John could write a message of hope to the early Christians in their world of darkness. There would be a day when there would be no more separation from loved ones; no more sorrow from broken hearts; no more sin to burden us with guilt; and no more sinister dark forces.

That is also true for us today! The Lord Jesus bless you this week!
Pastor Paul Laursen

This Week at Advent

Sunday, December 13

9:00 a.m. Holy Eucharist via ZOOM

Monday, December 14

Tuesday, December 15

Wednesday, December 16

7:00 a.m. Men's Bible Study at Advent

9:00 a.m. Wednesday Morning Prayer Group

7:00 p.m. The Praise Community

Thursday, December 17

7:00 p.m. Dar's Happy Hour Zoom Meeting

Sunday, December 20

9:00 a.m. Holy Eucharist via ZOOM



December 24 Christmas Eve Service

7:00 p.m. Candlelight Service with Holy Eucharist. Invite your family and friends. This will be a ZOOM service. Look for the special invitation next week.

Prayer Request

Health and Recovery

Lillian Kwasny	Ed Kwasny	Joan Joye
Mary Lou Dixon	Marilyn Decker	Stacey Smith
Bob Allen	Karen Zolar	Rose Walker
Barb Frank	Lois Zolar	Arthur Beel
Michael Uhrich	Sharon Rice	George Belinsky
Bill & Judy Arkley	Steve Boyce	Shirley Moore
Lucille Benedict	Dave Luptak	
Denise Geyer-Keller		

Friends of Advent

Toni Kulma, wife of Pastor Kulma	Fr. Richard Lutz
Ken and Jim	Betty Clark
Eliza Jennings residents	
Liz Schilling, friend of JoAnn Beck	
Stella, friend of Bev Cummings	
Tina, friend of Bev Cummings	
Residents of Pinzone Tower	
Will Hayes, friend of Cynthia Sabolich	
Gabe, grandson of Jan & Jerry Nagy	

Safety Protection

David Arkley, Detective for Cleveland Police
Son of Bill & Judy Arkley
Rachel Moffitt, ER Nurse daughter of Bill & Judy Arkley

Please contact the church office if you would like your name added or removed from our list.

Trinity School for Ministry, 2020 Advent Devotional, Dec. 4, 2020, by Brandon Daily

“Today’s Gospel from Luke 10:25-42 recounts the familiar parable of the Good Samaritan in which Jesus describes a man, beaten and in utter distress, rescued by a Samaritan while others simply pass by. The Samaritan takes this beaten man to a local inn and instructs the innkeeper to take care of him, providing initial payment and promising full payment upon his return. Because we are moderns, we often have the terrible habit of seeing ourselves as the protagonist of any story. Through this lens, we are told to strive to be like this Samaritan man and help those most in need, even if they are our enemies. While this is not an inappropriate reading, many in the early church saw this story in a different light. The Samaritan is not a role model for us. He is a figure of Jesus himself who comes and rescues the helpless man and who promises to come again. On the other hand, as Christ’s church, we are the innkeeper, the one who takes care of the unwell not with our own resources but with those of Christ. We rely on all that Christ has provided for us so that we can find those lost and broken souls in the world who are in the same position that we were in, in order to care for them. Jesus, our own Good Samaritan, has truly come. He has not only rescued us, he has also charged us with the task of caring for others, for binding the wounds of the world until he returns. Though we do not know when, he is coming again ‘in glory to judge the living and the dead, and his kingdom will have no end. *“Lord, as we do the work in the world that you have called us to do, may we always draw upon the grace you have freely given us. May we join you in binding the wounds of a broken world. May we always await your imminent return.”*”