



ADVENTures *a weekly newsletter*

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December 20, 2020 The Fourth 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.

Fourth Sunday of Advent

Col. 1:15-17 (ESV) *He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation. For by him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things were created through him and for him. And he is before all things, and in him all things hold together.*

Good Morning! This week as we zoom in on Christmas, I want to focus on the immense revelation of who the baby born in the manger is. As you read from Colossians above, He is so much more. In Isaiah 9:6, the coming Messiah is referred to as Mighty God. Paul affirms that understanding for us.

In the past three weeks, I have taught about three gifts that the Lord wants to give us: the Gifts of Strength, Joy & Hope. Today I want to speak about the Gift of Christmas itself.

Jesus didn't start in the stable. His beginning was not in that little manger scene. He existed before creation. Even more than that, there never was a time in which He didn't exist. The Bible says that He is the creator because He is God. This God, this creator of the universe, did something that has more relevance to your daily existence than you might have ever considered. *(He)...emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men.* **Phil. 2:7 (ESV)**

So why is Christmas a big deal? God came to earth as a human being and that's what split history into A.D. and B.C. – the most significant event in history. But that's not the good news – the good news is why He came and that's the reason for Christmas.

Jesus left His eternal throne, His home in glory. He limited Himself and became a human being; He put up with all the aches and pains and suffering that we do even though He is God. Our Lord didn't stay in the crib, He went to the cross. Now why in the world would He do that? Why in the world would God come to earth in human form and die for us? I'll tell you why – because of His personal, specific love for you and me. He loves us more than we will ever understand or comprehend.

In this the love of God was made manifest among us, that God sent his only Son into the world, so that we might live through him. In this is love, not that we have loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins. – **1 John 4:9-10 (ESV)**

I know you've heard the phrase, "Jesus is the reason for the season." And that is true – Jesus is the reason for the season. Christmas is not about a Santa, it's about a Savior. It's not about jingle bells, it's about Jesus, and that's why we celebrate His birth in a manger.

But let me teach you a deeper truth than that. You are the reason for the season. If God hadn't known that you needed Him to come to earth and die for you He wouldn't have done it. If you didn't need what Jesus Christ had to offer He wouldn't have wasted the effort. You are the reason for the season – You are the reason we celebrate Christmas. It's God's Christmas gift to you. Praise God!

The Lord Jesus bless you this week!
Pastor Paul Laursen

This Week at Advent

Sunday, December 20

9:00 a.m. Holy Eucharist via ZOOM

Monday, December 21

Tuesday, December 22

7:00 p.m. Vestry Meeting (ZOOM)

Wednesday, December 23

CHURCH OFFICE IS CLOSED

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

9:00 a.m. NO Wednesday Morning Prayer Group

7:00 p.m. The Praise Community

Thursday, December 24

CHURCH OFFICE IS CLOSED

7:00 p.m. Christmas Eve Service via ZOOM

Sunday, December 27

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.

Thank you from Love INC.

Dear Advent Episcopal Church,

Thank you for participating in our coat drive. We were overwhelmed with the response during the Covid pandemic. Along with your church's donations, over 2,000 coats were collected and cleaned to meet the needs of Cuyahoga County! Coats were distributed to 9 ministries in the city to keep people warm this winter. Thank you for your partnership!

Love In the Name of Christ,

Michelle

Christmas Greetings

Dear Advent Family,

Thinking of you all as we look forward to celebrating the birth of Jesus, and remembering all the joyful times from the past at Advent. We know how difficult it will be without sharing in-person worship at this time, especially Christmas Eve, but pray there will be a blessing in the Zooming.

Our prayers are with you and we wish you all the blessings of Christmas and the expectations of a New Year without the virus.

Love, Sally & Jack Morgan

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	Sue Boyce
Lucille Benedict	Dave Luptak	Shirley Moore
Denise Geyer-Keller	Braeden	John Crothall

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 Cynthea Sabolich	
Gabe, grandson of Jan & Jerry Nagy	

Comfort

Family & friends of Manny, friend of Sue Boyce

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.

Advent's First Zoom Service Deemed a "Success"

Thanks to Dar Khoury's extensive Zoom experience from her classroom plus her webcam, and Finn Laursen's sharing of The Praise Community's audio and video kit plus his expertise in running it, Advent's first service via Zoom went wonderfully smoothly. Ray did a masterful camera manipulation. Dar has a soothing, melodious, and clear singing voice. Paul's sermon on hope was so fitting for the times we're living through. We had some unexplained lack of audio clarity early on but "Someone" must have healed it because those glitches disappeared (hopefully never to return). This gives us this Sunday and next to fine-tune details before the Christmas Eve service. There were 23 people signed on so hopefully we can add to those numbers. We'll distribute bulletins along with ADVENTures via email and USPS mail so folks can follow along during the service. We'll also provide dial-in numbers for those without smartphones and PC's – they'll be able to listen on their phone without the benefit of video. Today's service is available on Advent's website www.adventwestlake.org.

Expressing Our Appreciation for Your Financial Stewardship During the COVID-19 Era

Thanks to every member of the Advent family for continuing to make giving to Advent a priority during these unusual times. With one month left in the year, we are slightly ahead in giving with expenses less than our budget. Wonderful! That's only possible because you have made it so – you and the Lord! For some, COVID has brought extreme financial hardship. We understand that and don't want people to feel guilty if they are unable to fulfill their pledge. For others, before the end of December, we humbly ask that you mail in the remainder of your 2020 pledge and Christmas offering so we can finish the year strong. Contact JoAnn if you want an update on your 2020 giving 440-871-6685.

Advent Episcopal Church Invites You to Join Our Zoom Service on Sunday, December 20 at 9:00 AM

Richard McCormick is inviting you to a scheduled Zoom Sunday Service of Advent Episcopal Church. Join by PC or smartphone using the https: link below with video and audio features.

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://zoom.us/j/95977522522?pwd=dlk5MGg5UHY3VTBDejRxZi9Bbm5BZz09>

Meeting ID: 959 7752 2522

Passcode: 724970

If you want to dial-in from any phone, you may join via audio using any of the numbers below.

Dial by your location

+1 646 558 8656 US (New York)

+1 301 715 8592 US (Washington D.C)

+1 312 626 6799 US (Chicago)

+1 669 900 9128 US (San Jose)

+1 253 215 8782 US (Tacoma)

+1 346 248 7799 US (Houston)

Meeting ID: 959 7752 2522

Passcode: 724970