



# ADVENTures *a weekly newsletter*

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**December 27, 2020 The First Sunday after Christmas Day**

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.

## **First Sunday after Christmas Day**

This Sunday after our pandemic influenced Christmas, I want to reflect on what we just finished celebrating, even though our family and church time was quite different this year.

*Micah 5:2-3<sup>a</sup> (NASB) But as for you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, Too little to be among the clans of Judah, From you One will go forth for Me to be ruler in Israel. His goings forth are from long ago, From the days of eternity.<sup>3</sup> Therefore He will give them up until the time When she who is in labor has borne a child.*

## **Luke 2:8-15**

Heaven couldn't remain silent when Jesus was born. This was the fulfillment of God's promise that went all the way back to Genesis. Millions upon millions of angels were singing and filling the sky. They were praising God! But there is a strange part to this story. Only the shepherds were aware of the heavenly celebration. There must have been others, in addition to the shepherds on that so special night. Yet we only read of the shepherds who saw the open heavens on that particular night.

God was looking for those who were awaiting His Son because they were able to understand the message, that the invisible was becoming visible. It's rather remarkable that so many angels weren't seen or heard anywhere else as far as we know. Only these few people heard it because deep down in their hearts, they were prepared to receive the Messiah. They were waiting & watching for the fulfillment of the long ago prophecies.

This was similar to the Apostle Paul, on the way to Damascus. He had a purpose, which was to persecute Christians. He believed they were deceived. But then on that one day, he was suddenly surrounded by light and fell to the ground. Paul later said that there were other men with him who saw the light, but didn't hear the voice of God. They noticed something but didn't experience what Paul did.

This is how it was at the first Christmas. The shepherds were waiting & longing for the coming of the Messiah, they were able to see the opened Heaven and hear the good news of great joy. They both saw and heard.

**2 Cor. 4:18 (NCV)** *We set our eyes not on what we see but on what we cannot see. What we see will last only a short time, but what we cannot see will last forever.*

On that night that has transformed our lives, God used two very tired people, Mary & Joseph. They had traveled about 100 miles from Nazareth to Bethlehem, located about 3,000 feet above sea level. That was quite a climb on foot at the end of a pregnancy. Because they were poor people, it is safe to assume that Mary did not have an animal to ride upon. How could they go on? God had come into Mary and Joseph's lives. They had been visited by angels! They certainly didn't understand all that would happen, but they said "yes" to the Lord.

On that first Christmas, Jesus became visible to those who were waiting for Him. The Lord becomes visible in our life sometimes through challenging times like the pandemic. Are you looking for Him in your life? If you are, like the shepherds, He will again bring good news of great joy!

The Lord Jesus bless you this week!  
Pastor Paul Laursen

## This Week at Advent

**Sunday, December 27**

**9:00 a.m. Holy Eucharist via ZOOM**

**Monday, December 28**

**Tuesday, December 29**

**Wednesday, December 30**

**CHURCH OFFICE IS CLOSED**

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

**9:00 a.m.** Wednesday Morning Prayer Group

**7:00 p.m.** No The Praise Community

**Thursday, December 31**

**CHURCH OFFICE IS CLOSED**

**Sunday, January 3, 2021**

**9:00 a.m. Holy Eucharist via ZOOM**

### Zoom Invitation

This is a recurring invitation for worship services at 9:00 a.m. each Sunday morning. You can use the same link, Meeting ID, and Passcode Sunday after Sunday. This way, the link won't change week by week. You can launch the link either from this transmittal or a separate email I'll send, which should overcome the difficulties some have experienced recently.

Peace be with you!

### Join Zoom Meeting

<https://zoom.us/j/93790207331?pwd=NWFXZVhmVGdEY1Z5dzRCSjNVQzIzQT09>

Meeting ID: 937 9020 7331

Passcode: 988930

One tap mobile

+13126266799,,93790207331#,,,,\*988930# US (Chicago)

+16465588656,,93790207331#,,,,\*988930# US (New York)

### Dial by your location

+1 312 626 6799 US (Chicago)

+1 646 558 8656 US (New York)

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

+1 346 248 7799 US (Houston)

+1 669 900 9128 US (San Jose)

+1 253 215 8782 US (Tacoma)

Meeting ID: 937 9020 7331

Passcode: 988930

Find your local number: <https://zoom.us/u/adIAXI5aCt>

## 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 Cynthia Sabolich	
Gabe, grandson of Jan & Jerry Nagy	
Megan Keller	
Gordon Williams (fiancé of Megan Geyer-Keller)	

### *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.*

## 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.