



the

KING

of

GLORY

is coming



2024 DEVOTIONAL *for* **ADVENT**
LEBANON PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

THE KING OF GLORY IS COMING!

*Lift up your heads, O gates!
And lift them up, O ancient doors,
that the King of glory may come in.
Who is this King of glory?
The Lord of hosts,
he is the King of glory!*
PSALM 24:9-10

Advent is a season of preparation for the Messiah's coming. During Advent, we put ourselves in the place of the faithful Jews of the first century, who waited with eager expectation for God to act decisively to forgive their sins, to end their occupation, and to restore the world. But our waiting isn't completely like theirs. The King of Glory, Jesus Messiah, has already come. We now wait in the hope of Messiah's return – Jesus' Second Coming.

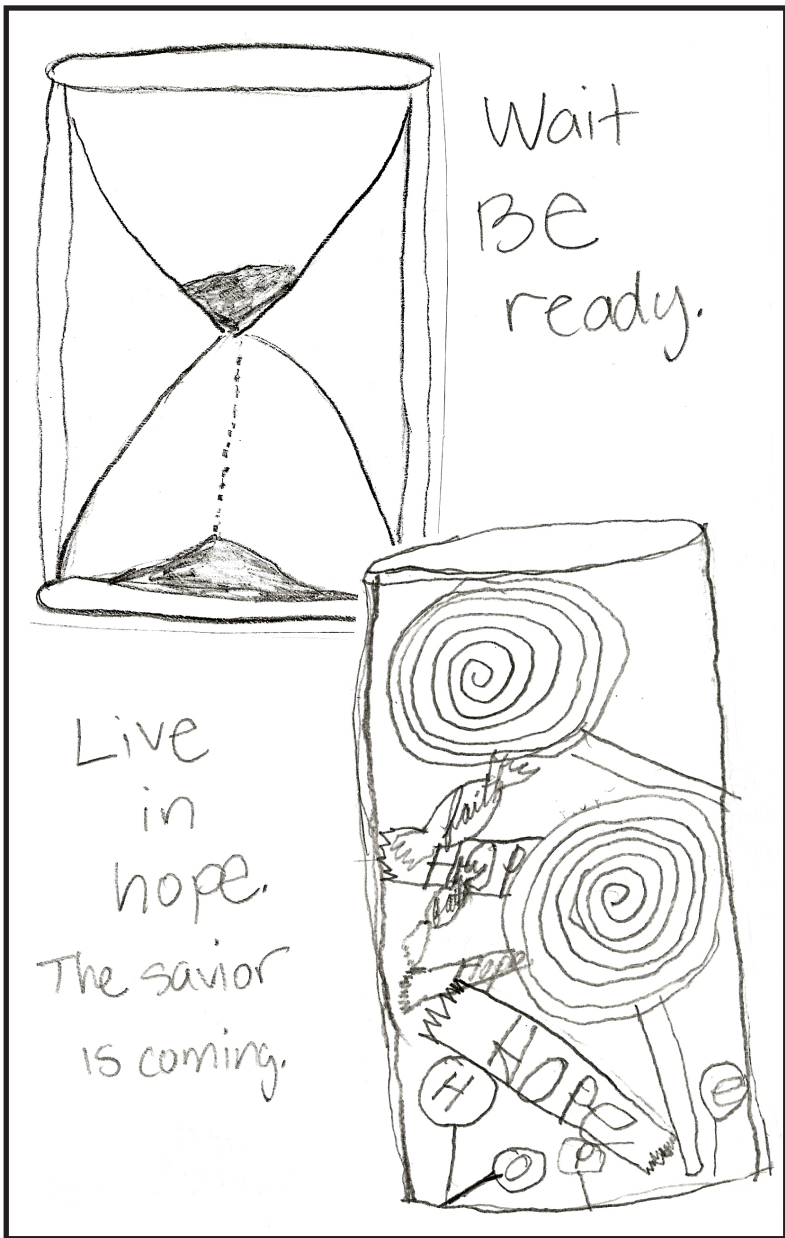
How do we prepare for the coming of Jesus, the King of Glory? This Advent we will ponder scriptures that paint a picture of how we are to prepare for His in-breaking glory.

- We repent and we wait in HOPE
- We abide in PEACE
- We anticipate in JOY
- We rest in the Lord's LOVE

We join the chorus of Heaven, declaring:

Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God Almighty, who was, and is, and is to come. (Revelation 4:8)

WAITING IN HOPE



SUNDAY, DECEMBER 1

MATTHEW 3: 1-2

First Sunday of Advent

“In those days John the Baptist came, preaching in the wilderness of Judea and saying, ‘Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near.’”

MATTHEW 3: 1-2 NIV

WAITING IN HOPE

During Advent we embark on a journey marked by experiences that include waiting. **WAITING IN HOPE** is a recurring theme of this season and our own lives.

The scripture readings of Advent invite us to recall our faith history, to assume the posture of the expectant people of Israel, waiting in joyful **hope** for the coming of the Messiah. Seeing what is happening in our world today, we realize, like our ancestors in the faith, that we have a very real need of a Saviour.

Our text introduces John the Baptist, who was sent to prepare the way for Jesus, the Messiah. John preached the message of repentance, which means a change of mind, heart, and principles, and a rejection of self-righteousness. He also announced that the kingdom of heaven, was drawing near, implying that God was about to act in a decisive way through Jesus.

Advent anticipates the coming of Christ from three different perspectives: Messiah coming into history, Messiah coming into our hearts and lives, and Messiah alerting us for His second coming as the King. Advent has the past, present, and future in itself.

Advent anticipation adds open-ended **hope** to our waiting. We keep growing; therefore, the future is both unpredictable and promising. **HOPE IS ON THE WAY!**

PRAYER

Dear God, I ask You for a heart that waits in eager expectation for Your will to be done in my life. AMEN.

JOHN & FRAN MORRIS

MONDAY, DECEMBER 2

MATTHEW 24: 42, 44

“Therefore keep watch, because you do not know on what day your Lord will come.”

“So you also must be ready, because the Son of Man will come at an hour when you do not expect him.”

MATTHEW 24: 42, 44 NIV

As I prayed over these verses, He led me to Matthew 24: 3, where the disciples questioned Jesus about when he would return, the signs to watch for, and when the end would come. He told them of things to come, but NOT a set date!

Think about that. If He had set a date and time, would people go on in sin, and then the day before decide to be saved? Would Christians be as fervent in prayer, pursuit of the Gospel, and persistent in our walk with Him? He knows us too well! He wants us to seek Him, learn of Him, accept His gift of salvation! That is why we are to be ready! ARE WE READY?

PRAYER

Lord, this season, remind us to keep on worshipping You, praying, being in the Word, reaching others. So that one day, we will be ready, and stand before You. Amen.

CAROL A. HORNSBY

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 3

JUDE 20-22

“But you, beloved, building yourselves up in your most holy faith and praying in the Holy Spirit, keep yourselves in the love of God, waiting for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ that leads to eternal life. And have mercy on those who doubt;”

JUDE 20-22 ESV

A few years ago, I traveled on a Navy carrier on a humanitarian mission after a hurricane and quickly learned the military maxim of ‘hurry up and wait.’ We got up every morning at ‘zero dark thirty’ and stood around for several hours in full gear before boarding a helicopter to fly to our destination. The wait seemed endless. But come to think of it, we spend a lot of our lives waiting. Children are waiting right now for Christmas morning. We wait in store check-out lines, in medical offices, in traffic, and for the next family milestones: graduations, weddings, and births.

And just as the world waited for the first coming of the Messiah, we are now waiting for the second. How long, Lord, how long? But as we wait, we must be vigilant for ourselves and for others. It is not too late to save them.

PRAYER

Dear Lord, Keep me on the narrow road as I wait, immune from all the sin of the world. And let me be bold, Lord, in guiding others to you. Amen.

INGA KIMPLE

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 4

ISAIAH 42: 1, 4

“Here is my servant, whom I uphold, my chosen one in whom I delight; I will put my Spirit on him, and he will bring justice to the nations.”

“He will not falter or be discouraged till he establishes justice on earth. In his teaching the islands will put their hope.”

ISAIAH 42: 1, 4 NIV

How many have read a book over 3000 years old that is still relevant today? Parts of this book apply to events occurring in our world today. That’s astounding.

Doing my research I found Isaiah was a Major Prophet. This means his writings were in greater length but contained the fate of Israel, the coming of the Messiah, and God’s judgment and restoration. The prophets spoke the words of God.

This passage gives us a strategy. He will enable us to bring law to the land and restore hope.

Advent is a time for us to reflect and prepare for the second coming. How will Jesus see what we have done?

Our world has a plethora of worries. Honestly, I excel at this task. In a group study I remember someone saying pray about it, give it to God and let it go. Easier said than done.

Regardless, my mission for Advent this year is to pray, give it to God and try to be silent. Not so much with people quieting my thoughts and listening for God’s message, instruction and His will for me and our troubled world. Find your mission and adhere to the blessings you discover.

PRAYER

My Faithful Heavenly Father, Thank you for loving me and even when we may not deserve it. Forgive me for speaking my worries to You and then taking them back. You are the One who can make the change. I’m going to try to be a person worthy of your many Blessings and Mercy. Amen.

CYNDI LAVIGNE

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 5

1 PETER 1: 3-6

“Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In his great mercy he has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, and into an inheritance that can never perish, spoil or fade. This inheritance is kept in heaven for you, who through faith are shielded by God’s power until the coming of the salvation that is ready to be revealed in the last time. In all this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while you may have had to suffer grief in all kinds of trials.”

1 PETER 1: 3-6 NIV

Gratitude and Joy are our response when we stop to realize what God has given us. The only thing we can give God in return is ourselves in praise and love. While we were defiled and steeped in sin He sent His son to redeem us and cover our iniquity with His righteousness. We enter the season when even unbelievers celebrate what they do not recognize, the birth of our Savior. For us it is a time to focus and rejoice that we have an inheritance kept in heaven. No one earns an inheritance, and no one can repay the one who gives it. As we experience grief and trials, we are comforted by the realization that our Father loves us and has plans for our eternal joy and praise in His presence. Joyfully praise Him.

PRAYER

Lord, make us ever aware of your love shown by your sacrifice. Accept our praise and reflection of that love as we joyfully celebrate our inheritance and adoption as your children. Comfort those who are enduring trials. In the name of Jesus, Amen.

JOE MCKENZIE

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 6

ISAIAH 40:31

*“But those who wait on the Lord shall renew their strength;
They shall mount up with wings like eagles, They shall
run and not be weary, They shall walk and not faint.”*

ISAIAH 40:31 NKJV

At times we may feel so worn out and stressed that we feel like we spend all our time running from crisis to crisis and constantly giving our time and energy to others. Our Lord wants to renew our strength and enable us to enjoy the abundant life He intends for us. The key is to wait upon Him to do so.

Biblically, waiting on the Lord is never passive; it is always active. Waiting requires us to cease our own pursuits and give God our complete attention. We may have to give up some of the activities we have allowed to inundate our lives. We may need to take time to sit quietly before the Lord. If we ask Him, God will show us the resources He has provided to help with work He has called us to that we have been attempting to do on our own. If God has called us to a task He has equipped us, step out in faith. God may address feelings of guilt that have motivated us to do things that He has not ask us to do.

Jesus carried more responsibility than we ever will. More people needed Him than will ever need us. Yet He we was never overwhelmed or inadequate for the task. Now Christ offers to guide us so that we will fulfill your heavenly Father's will and gain the strength necessary for each day. With God's help it is time for abundant living to begin today and every day.

PRAYER

Heavenly Father, may we trust in your grace as we seek your will this Advent season and in the new year. Amen.

SHAREN BENNER

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 7

ROMANS 15: 12-13

“And again Isaiah says, ‘The root of Jesse will come, even he who arises to rule the Gentiles; in him will the Gentiles hope.’ May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that by the power of the Holy Spirit you may abound in hope.”

ROMANS 15: 12-13 ESV

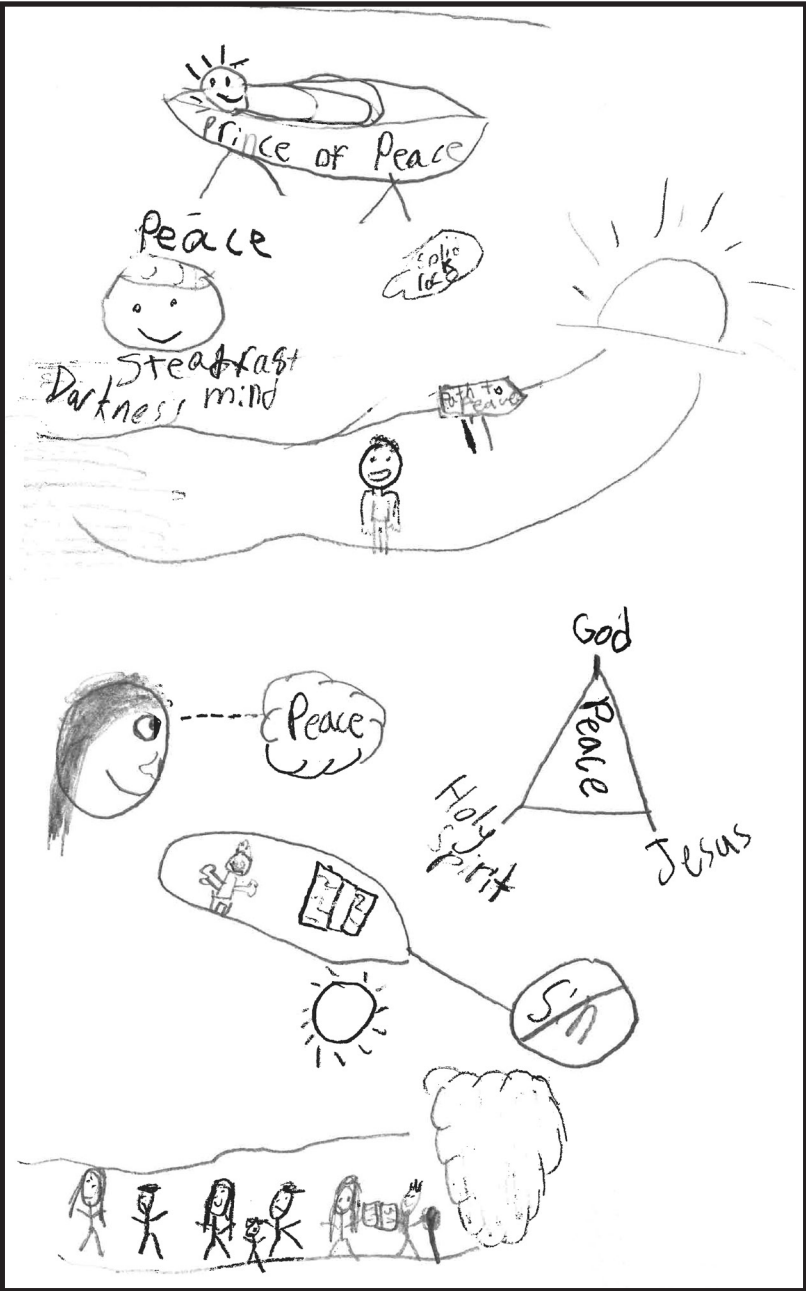
When you are hoping in something it can be hard to wait and have patience. When Dick and his first wife Fran found out they could not have children they decided to adopt. They had hope of a family of their own. God granted this wish with two beautiful daughters that they adopted. Then after Fran passed away Dick met me. I was in my early 40's and never married. I thought the hope of having a family of my own was passed for me. Then God blessed me with this wonderful family to call my own. We are a blended family but where love is there are no step children. We are now blessed with four beautiful grandchildren. God answered our prayers and gave us the joy of a family of our own.

PRAYER

Dear Father, may we all abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit as we celebrate our Savior's birth. In Jesus Name, Amen.

DICK & DONNA KAUFMAN

ABIDING IN PEACE



SUNDAY, DECEMBER 8

ISAIAH 26: 3-4

Second Sunday of Advent

"You keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on you, because he trusts in you. Trust in the Lord forever, for the Lord God is an everlasting rock."

ISAIAH 26: 3-4 ESV

ABIDING IN PEACE

What comes to mind when you hear "perfect peace?" Is it the absence of war? Is it the absence of trouble of any kind?

Jesus says, "Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. Not as the world gives do I give to you." (John 14:27) And Paul tells us that when we pray about all things to God "the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus." (Phil 4:7)

What is this special peace, which is "perfect?"

Jesus also says, "I have said these things to you, that in me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation. But take heart; I have overcome the world." (John 16:33)

This peace – in Jesus – is apparently totally different than what the world around us thinks of as peace. Could it be possible to have peace in the midst of troubles? Peace when we are in the depths of sorrow? Peace in the face of uncertainties? That would indeed be perfect peace!

He will keep in perfect peace the one who trusts in Him.

PRAYER

Father, thank you that in you we can have perfect peace, no matter what is going on around us. Help us to trust you fully and live in your perfect peace. Amen.

KAREN KILPATRICK

MONDAY, DECEMBER 9

LUKE 1: 76-79

“Through the tender mercy of our God, whereby the dayspring from on high hath visited us, To give light to them that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace.”

LUKE 1: 78-79 KJV

The Song of Zechariah is rich with Old Testament allusions, underscoring the oath made to Abraham and the fulfillment of Hebrew prophecies that a messiah would come to bring light, deliverance, and redemption to his people.

We are at a pivotal moment, standing between two accounts that will forever reshape the lives of all people. John the Baptist came as a prophetic messenger to guide his children to the great Light, Jesus Christ.

John the Baptist lived differently than everyone else because his mission was made clear from the moment of his birth: to prepare the way for the Lord. John's life should inspire us to live our lives with purpose, to obey and follow the calling that we have been given by committing our lives to Jesus Christ.

Zechariah's song says something else that is profound to the reader. God is sending his prophet, John, to show the way of salvation to all people through the Light, the Dayspring, Jesus Christ, who shines down upon each one of us. This great Light breaks through upon us by God's tender mercy and not by military might and will guide our feet out of darkness and into the paths of peace.

Zechariah's prophetic words in pronouncing the soon coming King, the great Horn of Salvation from the line of David, should stir anticipation in our hearts at this Holy Season. Christ's imminent arrival fills us with hope and expectation, reminding us of the transformative power of his Presence in our lives.

PRAYER

Heavenly Father, I pray this season brings a refreshing renewal of your spirit upon us to share the Gospel with others. In the Spirit of John the Baptist, please help us be more like him, bringing others out of the darkness into the light. Amen.

JAMES MARTIN

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 10

PSALM 29: 10-11

“The Lord sits enthroned over the flood; the Lord sits enthroned as king forever. May the Lord give strength to his people! May the Lord bless his people with peace!”

PSALM 29: 10-11 ESV

These verses take me back 52 years to Hurricane Agnes in June of 1972. I had just completed my junior year of high school when Agnes dumped enough rain to fill our ranch house with 6 ½ feet of water. We lost all our physical possessions. There were many horrors that are now faded memories and what remains of the flood memories are good. I remember our small community coming together. I remember neighbor helping neighbor. Giving our spiritual gifts, for they were all we had left. The gifts were all we needed. I remember lives pulled out of the mire and restored to glory, both in heaven and here on earth. Yes, God reigned over the floods of hurricane Agnes and God brought strength and peace to those who rooted their faith in Him. May the peace of the Lord come to you this season, in the form of a babe, lying in a manger.

PRAYER

Let us pray. Lord of the wind and rain. Mysterious are your ways. We stand in awe as we watch your wonderful works and anxiously await the return of your son, the Prince of Peace. Amen.

TOM WAY

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 11

LUKE 2: 29-32

“Sovereign Lord, as you have promised, you may now dismiss your servant in peace. For my eyes have seen your salvation, which you have prepared in the sight of all nations: a light for revelation to the Gentiles, and the glory of your people Israel.”

LUKE 2: 29-32 NIV

Today's scripture has been called "Simeon's song." Simeon had been promised by the Lord that he would not die until he had seen the Messiah. Simeon was at the Temple when Mary and Joseph came to present the infant Jesus for the rite of purification. He recognized the baby as the promised Savior, took the babe in his arms, and raised his hymn of praise.

What produces Simeon's peace AND our peace? His words identify two sources of peace: (1) "According to Your word;" and (2) "For my eyes have seen Your salvation." We have not cradled Him in our arms as Simeon did, but we have seen a promise in scripture fulfilled: Christ coming to earth for the forgiveness of our sins and reconciliation with the Father. This Advent season, we anticipate the fulfillment of another promise in God's Word: Christ's return and the coming of His kingdom on earth. Unlike Simeon, should our individual lives on earth end before that promise is fulfilled, we rest in the promise of entering the glory of Heaven. Knowing that we can trust in God's promises, we are at peace.

PRAYER

Sovereign Lord, we trust in your promises. Grant us peace as we await the glory of your Son's return and eternal life in your presence. Amen.

NINA DORSCH

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 12

JOHN 14: 27

*“Peace I leave with you, my peace I give to you.
Not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your
hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid.”*

JOHN 14: 27 ESV

How many times during Christmas season have we heard the phrase “peace on earth, good will toward men?” According to the above verse true peace comes from knowing the Lord. There is no other reliable source. I know a gentleman named Elliott Osowitt. He is Jewish, but married a Christian lady. Their marriage was about to end in divorce. He checked in to a local motel. He had his pistol with him and intended to kill himself once he was in his room. When he entered the room, he immediately noticed a Gideon Bible on the nightstand. He picked it up and attempted to throw it under the bed, but it bounced back in front of him, open to the 14th chapter of John. He picked it up and his eyes locked onto John 14:27. He read that verse and then continued reading the rest of the night. In the morning he left the motel and went to see his wife’s pastor who led him to the Lord! Their marriage was soon fully restored. He went to seminary a short time afterwards, and today is the Senior Pastor of a Baptist church in North Carolina! That’s the kind of peace Jesus came to give, not some fleeting feeling of happiness that the world pursues, but the true, eternal peace that passes all understanding.

PRAYER

Dear Lord, grant that this Christmas we will embrace the true peace that only you can bring. May the world come to know true peace as well through our spreading of the gospel of Jesus Christ. Amen.

RON WARNCKE, M.D.

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 13

ISAIAH 9: 6-7

“For to us a child is born, to us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder, and his name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and of peace there will be no end, on the throne of David and over his kingdom, to establish it and to uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time forth and forevermore. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will do this.”

ISAIAH 9: 6-7 ESV

As I write this, I am playing Handel’s Messiah, “For Unto Us A Child Is Born”. And the hairs on my arms stand up. What majestic words from the prince of prophets, Isaiah, written over 700 years before his birth. A child is to come.

These words describe the true character of God:

Wonderful-awesome exceptional

Counselor-knows what’s best for all of us, great wisdom, well organized.

Mighty God-conquers all things evil,

Everlasting Father -eternal father, timeless, protector, one who watches over all.

Prince of peace-Maintains tranquility, prevents evil. A peace that will never end. He shall rule with non-ending peace.

The government shall be upon his shoulders-- Praise God and hallelujah!

For a child has been born for us; accept his gift.

PRAYER

Oh holy child of Bethlehem descend to us, we pray. Cast out our sins and enter in be born in us today! Amen.

GINNY KUNTZ

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 14

TITUS 2: 11-13

“For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation for all people, training us to renounce ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright, and godly lives in the present age, waiting for our blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ,”

TITUS 2: 11-13 ESV

In these troubled times we believers may say, “Lord come quickly!” We yearn for the day when Christ returns and gathers His church in Paradise. Oh, what a wonderful place with no sorrow, pain or death; where all things are made new far away from the anxieties of today! But we are in the here and now and Paul teaches us how we shall live and prepare for that day.

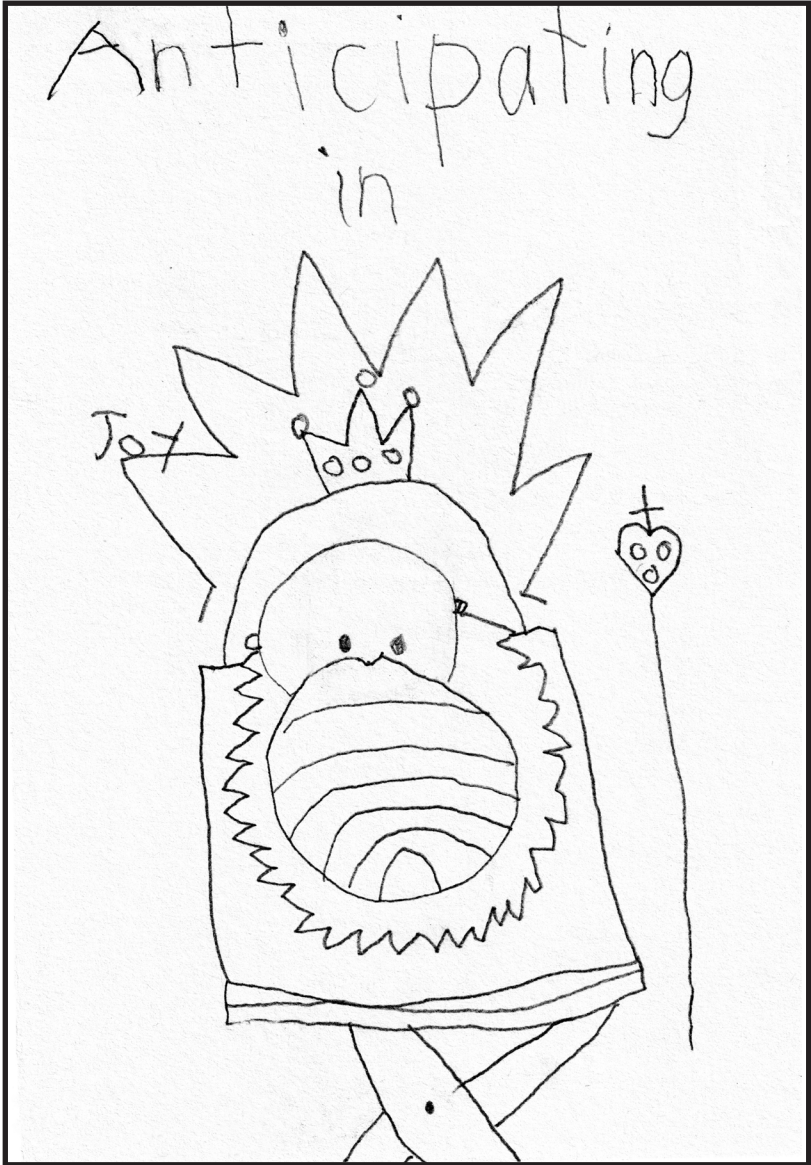
Because of God’s grace, the gift of salvation is available to all people. Those of us who have accepted this gift are to be upright, self-controlled, living godly lives so as to make salvation attractive to the non-believer. That’s a tall order for me. Too often I behave in the opposite manner. That’s why I’m so grateful for God’s Word and all the saints who recorded it for me. Paul reminds me that while I await that glorious day, I must bring as many people with me as possible.

PRAYER

Lord, thank you for your Word that cleanses our hearts and minds and convicts our attitudes and behaviors. Help us live in a way that shows your grace to the world while wait for the blessed hope of your glorious appearing. Amen.

CATHY RIGGIN

ANTICIPATING IN JOY



K, 1ST & 2ND GRADE SUNDAY SCHOOL CLASS

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 15

PSALM 100: 1-5

Third Sunday of Advent

“Make a joyful noise to the Lord, all the earth! Serve the Lord with gladness! Come into his presence with singing! Know that the Lord, he is God! It is he who made us, and we are his; we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture. Enter his gates with thanksgiving, and his courts with praise! Give thanks to him; bless his name! For the Lord is good; his steadfast love endures forever, and his faithfulness to all generations.”

PSALM 100: 1-5 ESV

Shout, sing, clap, serve our Lord with joy!

Worship the Lord with gladness!

Acknowledge that the Lord is God!

Thank the Lord in His presence, His gates and in His courts –
EVERYWHERE and continuously!

But why?

BECAUSE HE LOVES US WITH AN UNIMAGINABLE, LOVE THAT
ENDURES FOREVER!

He will keep in perfect peace the one who trusts in Him.

PRAYER

Father God, We thank and praise you with joyful noise for your amazing and enduring love for us. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.

CHERYL BOGEN

MONDAY, DECEMBER 16

LUKE 2: 9-11

“An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them, “Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people. Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord.”

LUKE 2: 9-11 NIV

I can tell you that if an angel came down to talk to me, I would be terrified as well! Even if they said, “don’t be afraid,” I would be scared as all get out. How would I know to believe them? How would I know to trust them? Even if they said, “I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people,” I would doubt them. This type of thing isn’t normal.

But, then again, the birth of our Lord and Savior wasn’t normal either. Think about it. The man who came to save the world was born in a manger? He was born as humble as humble gets. The first to hear about it were the shepherds in the fields. Not the kings or high priests, but the shepherds. Or as we say today, “The common folks.”

As a common folk, I often think about how blessed we are. We already know Jesus Christ as our Savior. We are blessed to live in a country where we can freely worship and tell others about Jesus Christ without persecution. All of us need to do just that. It can be as simple as living your life as a Christian. Show with others how you handle tough situations with grace and prayer. Not with cursing and yelling. It is a monkey see; monkey do world. Set the example for those around you at home and work. They will notice and start asking questions. That opens the door for discussions about Jesus Christ.

PRAYER

Dear Lord, help me be a good example of how a Christian lives and acts in everyday life. May others be able to look at me and want to be a Christian as well. Let me show them what it is like to know the King of Glory and rely on him to run my life. Amen.

BERNIE UCHTMAN

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 17

1 PETER 1: 3-9

“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! According to his great mercy, he has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you, who by God’s power are being guarded through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. In this you rejoice, though now for a little while, if necessary, you have been grieved by various trials, so that the tested genuineness of your faith—more precious than gold that perishes though it is tested by fire—may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ. Though you have not seen him, you love him. Though you do not now see him, you believe in him and rejoice with joy that is inexpressible and filled with glory, obtaining the outcome of your faith, the salvation of your souls.”

1 PETER 1: 3-9 ESV

This passage reminded me of a praise song - *Living Hope* by Phil Wickham. When I listen to that song, I am indeed filled with “inexpressible joy” and gratitude. Both the Bible verse and the praise song point toward faith. Even though we have not seen him, we love him and believe in him. By keeping our hearts and minds fixed on Jesus, we are strengthened and encouraged as we walk through this very broken world. How wonderful!

PRAYER

Dear Lord, Heavenly Father, thank you for my salvation and for being my Living Hope. May everyone reading this devotional feel a much lighter load as we walk through this temporary and broken world. Amen.

SHELLEY BONDURANT

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 18

HABAKKUK 3: 17-19

“Though the fig tree does not bud and there are no grapes on the vines, though the olive crop fails and the fields produce no food, though there are no sheep in the pen and no cattle in the stalls, yet I will rejoice in the Lord, I will be joyful in God my Savior. The Sovereign Lord is my strength: he makes my feet like the feet of a deer, he enables me to tread on the heights.”

HABAKKUK 3: 17-19 NIV

These verses reveal the loss of all the staples of life for the Israelite people and show what a desperate and desolate situation they found themselves in. Yet Habakkuk chose to rejoice in the Lord and acknowledged that God was his strength.

I love this prayer of Habakkuk's. It reminds me that no matter how bad I think my circumstances might be, God is always and ever faithful and there for me. I can rejoice in Him knowing that He is always faithful to those who love Him. I can be assured that whatever circumstance I find myself in, it's only temporary and the love and care of my Savior is forever.

PRAYER

Father, thank you for the love you show me each and every day. Instill in me true faith that means loving and serving You no matter the circumstances. You are my strength and joy. I pray in Jesus' name, Amen.

VICKI DALZELLE

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 18

JUDE 23-24

“Be merciful to those who doubt; save others by snatching them from the fire; to others show mercy, mixed with fear—hating even the clothing stained by corrupted flesh. To him who is able to keep you from stumbling and to present you before his glorious presence without fault and with great joy”

JUDE 23-24 NIV

We come to church to hear the Word, to worship and fellowship. We stand to recognize the sanctity of God’s Word. We study the Word to learn the Truth. We strive to use Truth to guide our daily lives.

What do we do when we see doubt? Show mercy.

What do we do about false teaching? Be bold, pull them away from the fire of false teaching!

What do we do when we witness sin? Show love, mercy, and compassion, use caution “hating” the stain of sin.

We must keep our eyes on Jesus. He will keep you safe and will lovingly present you before the Throne of God “without fault and with great joy.”

Let us remember why Jesus came so long ago. We need a Savior who lights our Path, who keeps us from stumbling and following false teaching. He helps us discern the “log in our own eye.” He guides us to God’s eternal Throne! Praise Jesus!

PRAYER

Father in Heaven, we thank you for the Word. May we always follow your teachings. Show us when we stumble. Forgive us, give us strength. We praise you and thank you for sending Jesus to light our Paths. In you Son’s name Jesus, we pray. Amen.

LARRY OURY

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 20

HEBREWS 12: 22-23

“But you have come to Mount Zion, to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem. You have come to thousands upon thousands of angels in joyful assembly, to the church of the firstborn, whose names are written in heaven. You have come to God, the Judge of all, to the spirits of the righteous made perfect,”

HEBREWS 12: 22-23 NIV

The culmination of the promise of believing in Jesus as Lord and Savior is living in His eternal Kingdom. For some reason, this verse makes me picture driving in a car for vacation and you are so excited and looking forward to your destination and as you drive over the horizon you see the city at a distance and you get butterflies in your stomach with excitement and anticipation for the days to come. This is how we should feel about our heavenly destination only with so much more excitement and awe. This is the place that God has prepared for us to live with him forever. A place where we are welcomed by thousands of angels in joyful assembly. An unimaginable Kingdom of peace, love, joy and goodness. A place where we will live with our Savior for eternity.

PRAYER

Dear Lord, let us always remember your promise of eternal life with you, in the Kingdom of God, with excitement and awe and gratefulness for what you have prepared for us for our final destination. Amen.

RENEE LAY

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 21

REVELATION 19: 6-7

“Then I heard what sounded like a great multitude, like the roar of rushing waters and like loud peals of thunder, shouting: “Hallelujah! For our Lord God Almighty reigns. Let us rejoice and be glad and give him glory! For the wedding of the Lamb has come, and his bride has made herself ready.”

REVELATION 19: 6-7 NIV

One of the many things I love about church is how our Father draws us together. We pray together. We work together. We sing praise together. When we gather together on Sunday mornings, we are one church, one bride. The Holy Spirit is preparing us to be a part of the great multitude that will greet Jesus when He comes again.

How these verses from Revelation resonate in our hearts! The apostle John describes something so marvelous, so glorious, that he seems to struggle to find the words. He writes, “[it] sounded like...like...like.”

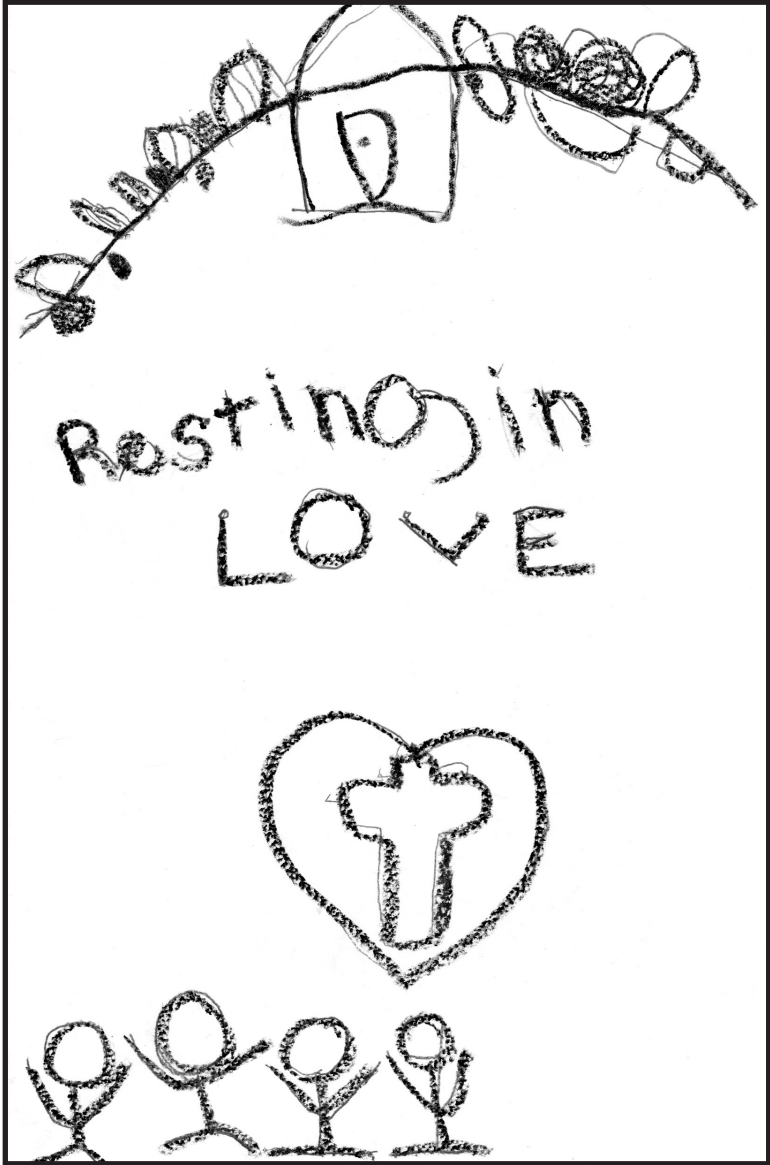
The sweet sounds we hear in our church on Sunday mornings are just a taste of what it will be like when we hear that multitude praising our Lord. When Jesus comes again, we will be eager to join in, ready to sing with loud voices and joyful hearts. After, all we’ve been practicing every Sunday.

PRAYER

Lord, reign in our hearts today. Fill us with joy and gladness as we await Your arrival. Make us ready for the day when You will come for us, your church, your bride. Hallelujah!

LINDA HENTSCHEL

RESTING IN LOVE



PRESSCHOOL SUNDAY SCHOOL CLASS

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 22

PSALM 52: 8

Fourth Sunday of Advent

*“But I am like an olive tree flourishing in the house of
God; I trust in God’s unfailing love for ever and ever.”*

PSALM 52: 8 NIV

The context of Psalm 52:8 makes sense when read in its entirety. The author is not speaking only of his or her believe in God and strength of faith. Verse eight follows a great bit of questioning of the world around him or her and the behavior of people, which is sinful. Greed, deceit, and destruction are words used to describe what is happening. Sound familiar to what we observe today? And the author, looking at the world through eyes of faith, rather than fear, turns all of this surrounding mess over to God to take care of.

Verse eight reminds us to Trust the Lord. It assures us that because God Loves us, He will take care of us now and forever. During this fourth week of Advent, let’s focus on Love. Love of others is not always easy but God’s love is. His Love is always available and endless.

PRAYER

Heavenly Father, please help me to listen and turn my attention to you in the upcoming days so that I can truly focus on the wonder of Christ. I put my hope in you that you will show me something new during this season and draw me closer to you. In your name I pray, Amen.

KAT SVOBODA

MONDAY, DECEMBER 23

ROMANS 8: 38-39

“For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.”

ROMANS 8: 38-39 ESV

We all have times in our life when we feel alone and anxious about what we must encounter in life, even the uncertainty of death. We let our feelings take over and feel separated from God. In this passage, Paul shows us that we need to set aside our feelings and be comfortable the Word of God. In the Advent season, we wait for the Word to become flesh in Jesus. He is our assurance that nothing at all can separate us from the love of God. We have been chosen to be his. We are conformed to the image of Christ, and we belong to him for all eternity. This knowledge gives us peace and we can rest in this assurance and set aside our fears. We are never alone in whatever we face. God’s love is greater than our greatest fear. God has loved and redeemed us and given us the greatest gift-His grace.

PRAYER

Heavenly father, you have loved us for all eternity and given us the greatest gift, your love through Christ Jesus. Help us to rest in this assurance and concentrate on your glorious gift of grace through Jesus. We celebrate his birth and praise and thank you always. Amen.

PATTY CORFMAN

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 24

1 JOHN 3: 1-2

“See what great love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God! And that is what we are! The reason the world does not know us is that it did not know him. Dear friends, now we are children of God, and what we will be has not yet been made known. But we know that when Christ appears, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is.”

1 JOHN 3: 1-2 NIV

John is highlighting the amazing LOVE God has for us. Not only is He willing to call us His children, we actually are His children. Some of our transformation is immediate, but not totally will we be changed until we see Christ.

Jesus will appear, believers will see Him, receive a new body, and be with the Lord forever. It is critical to notice John's point that we are not yet what we will be. Only when Christ returns, will we be made whole, like Him, and see everything He has in store for us.

John also tells us that we are not only LOVED by God, the Father, but that we are called His children which is the highest honor - we are His favorites and we will dwell in heaven with Him. OH, WHAT LOVE! He is our parent and we are His children; Christ LOVES us!!

PRAYER

Heavenly Father, help us to understand the love you have for us. May it give us Peace this Holy Night and in the days ahead. In your Son's name we pray and believe. Amen.

JANE WATSELL

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 25

REVELATION 22: 12

The Christ Candle

“Behold, I am coming soon, bringing my recompense with me, to repay each one for what he has done.”

REVELATION 22: 12 ESV

FULFILLMENT: THE LORD HAS COME

Advent is a time to celebrate the fulfillment of Micah 5:2 – Christ’s first coming as the newborn babe. Revelation 22:12 points us to His promised return. The child born in a manger is the same sovereign King who will return to judge the world and reward the faithful.

Just marvel at God’s sovereign plan, having decreed not only our redemption through Christ’s first advent, but also the consummation of His kingdom at His return. In His perfect timing, the Lord will restore what was lost in Eden. Sin entered through Adam, but through Christ, the second Adam, all things are being made new. At His return, the chasm between God and His elect will be erased.

Christmas, then, is not merely about a past event, but a promise of future restoration. In Christ, we see the fullness of God’s provision and the unfolding of His eternal decree—a glimpse of Eden restored, where we will dwell with our Savior forever.

PRAYER

We praise You for the gift of Your Son, who came to redeem us and who will come again to restore all things. As we celebrate Christmas, help us to live, eager for the day when You will restore all that was lost in Eden. In Jesus’ name, Amen.

EMILY MORALES

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