

1 8 d e c e m b e r 2 0 1 1
west valley presbyterian church
a church for the West Valley

FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT

FATHER, FORGIVE THEM.

Now into that pronoun 'them' I feel that I can crawl. Can you get in there?

charles spurgeon on Luke 23:34

reverence for one creator God

in three persons - Father, Son and Spirit

called to worship

from Zechariah, father of John the Baptist, Luke 1.67-79

Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, for he has visited and redeemed his people!

That we should be saved from our enemies that we might serve him without fear, in holiness and righteousness for all of our days.

And you child will go before the Lord to prepare his ways,

to give knowledge of salvation to his people *in the forgiveness of their sins.*

to give light to those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death.

advent reading and lighting of the shepherd's candle

Luke 2.8-11, 15-20

8 And in the same region there were shepherds out in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. **9** And an angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were filled with fear. **10** And the angel said to them, "Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people.

11 For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord..." **15** When the angels went away from them into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let us go over to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has made known to us..." **20** And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

O Come all ye Faithful

John F. Wade, 1767

Oh, come, all ye faithful, Joyful and triumphant!
Oh, come ye, oh, come ye to Bethlehem;
Come and behold him Born the king of angels:
Oh, come, let us adore him, Oh, come, let us adore him,
Oh, come, let us adore him, Christ the Lord.

Sing, choirs of angels, Sing in exultation,
Sing, all ye citizens of heaven above!
Glory to God, Glory in the highest:
Oh, come, let us adore him, Oh, come, let us adore him,
Oh, come, let us adore him, Christ the Lord.

Yea, Lord, we greet thee, Born this happy morning;
Jesus, to thee be glory given!
Word of the Father, Now in flesh appearing!
Oh, come, let us adore him, Oh, come, let us adore him,
Oh, come, let us adore him, Christ the Lord.

greeting . announcements

renewal by one holy God

by the Spirit, through the Son, to the Father

What Child is This? *-offering*

William Chatterton Dix, 1865.

What Child is this who, laid to rest,
On Mary's lap is sleeping?
Whom Angels greet with anthems sweet,
While shepherds watch are keeping?

*This, this is Christ the King, Whom shepherds guard and Angels sing;
Haste, haste, to bring Him laud, The Babe, the Son of Mary.*

So bring Him incense, gold and myrrh,
Come peasant, king to own Him;
The King of kings salvation brings,
Let loving hearts enthrone Him.

*This, this is Christ the King, Whom shepherds guard and Angels sing;
Haste, haste, to bring Him laud, The Babe, the Son of Mary.*

personal meditation

Psalm 51.17

The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit;
a broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise.

communal confession

from Psalm 51

God of forgiveness,

- 1 Have mercy on me,
according to your steadfast love;
according to your abundant mercy
blot out my transgressions.
- 2 Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity,
and cleanse me from my sin!
- 3 For I know my transgressions,
and my sin is ever before me.
- 4 Against you, you only, have I sinned
and done what is evil in your sight,
so that you may be justified in your words
and blameless in your judgment.
- 7 Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean;
wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.
- 8 Let me hear joy and gladness;
let the bones that you have broken rejoice.
- 9 Hide your face from my sins,
and blot out all my iniquities.
- 10 Create in me a clean heart, O God,
and renew a right spirit within me.
- 11 Cast me not away from your presence,
and take not your Holy Spirit from me.
- 12 Restore to me the joy of your salvation,
and uphold me with a willing spirit.
- 13 Then I will teach transgressors your ways,
and sinners will return to you
for forgiveness.
Amen.

communal celebration

Psalm 32.1-2

Blessed is the one whose transgression *is forgiven*, whose sin is covered!

Blessed is the one against whom the Lord counts no iniquity!

More Than Conquerers

Your faultless blood has washed our sinned stained hearts
Your living word is changing who we are
Your endless grace runs deeper than our faults
Your true relentless love has conquered all

*Nothing can prevail against the power of the Lord our God
In everything we are more than conquerers because of who you are and all you've done
And everything has changed and death has lost its sting because you died and rose again for us.*

Your perfect life restores us from the fall
Your nail pierced hands reach out to heal us all
Your empty grave has broken Satan's hold
Your Spirit now renews and makes us whole

The story of my life will be: Jesus crucified and resurrected

the preaching of the Word

the gospel by exposition

jim powell, pastor

Luke 23.32-43

forgiveness - the center of it ALL

Proverbs 15.28

The heart of the righteous ponders how to answer, but the mouth of the wicked pours out evil things.

Luke 6.45

Out of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaks.

(to better understand the excruciating nature of the historic cross of Jesus - its why and what - visit <http://marshill.com/media/luke/jesus-crucifixion-and-death...> give yourself 90 minutes with a friend)

heart of f _____ . (23.32-34)

free.

full.

hearts of f _____ . (23.35-38)

empty.

ironic.

heart of f _____ . (23.39-43)

justice.

Jesus.

Joy to the World

Joy to the world, the Lord is come! Let earth receive her King;
Let every heart prepare Him room,
And Heaven and nature sing, And Heaven and nature sing,
And Heaven, and Heaven, and nature sing.

Joy to the earth, the Savior reigns! Let men their songs employ;
While fields and floods, rocks, hills and plains
Repeat the sounding joy, Repeat the sounding joy,
Repeat, repeat, the sounding joy.

No more let sins and sorrows grow, Nor thorns infest the ground;
He comes to make His blessings flow
Far as the curse is found, Far as the curse is found,
Far as, far as, the curse is found.

He rules the world with truth and grace, And makes the nations prove
The glories of His righteousness,
And wonders of His love, And wonders of His love,
And wonders, wonders, of His love.

sacrament of the Lord's Supper

the gospel by experience

benediction

from Mary, "magnificat" after receiving Word of Jesus, Luke 1.50

Now receive the Lord's mercy (forgiveness), for those who fear him, from generation to generation. Amen.

the church season of Advent

Advent literally means coming.

The celebration of Advent dates back to the fourth century. During Advent (beginning the fourth Sunday before Christmas day), we identify with God's people who came before Jesus' birth and eagerly anticipated the coming of their Messiah. Since we live in the blessings of Christ and the righteousness/forgiveness we enjoy through him, we often take for granted what it must have been like to live before his Advent.

At present, God's story of redemption is "already but not yet" - so while we on one hand seek to identify with those preceding his birth, we also hope and long for Jesus' second Advent. First, he came in the greatest humility ever known - God became a man - but when he returns, it will be in the greatest exaltation ever known - King of kings and Lord of lords.

The Scriptures do not require us to do anything different during the Advent season. That said, there are some real advantages for individuals, families, and the church to recognize the Advent season.

We are reminded in Advent that Christmas is more than gifts and good deeds. The story is more than happiness and wonder. There is darkness and gloom. There is longing. With the Advent of Jesus there is joy and light, redemption and grace, judgment and final victory. In a way, recognizing Advent is expected. In another way, it's counter-cultural. Advent allows us to see both the horror of sin and the blessings Christ came to make known, "far as the curse is found."

Historically, Advent has been symbolically celebrated in corporate worship by means of color and light. The primary sanctuary color during Advent is purple, the color of royalty, welcoming the coming King. This points to the important connection between Jesus' birth and his death.

In addition, churches have historically lit the candles of the Advent wreath. The evergreens of the wreath symbolize the new and everlasting life brought through Jesus Christ. The wreath consists of five candles: four candles around the wreath and one white candle in the center. One candle is lit each week with a corresponding Scripture reading until all are lit. The growing light and development of the story progressively reminds us that Jesus is the light of the world that comes into the darkness of our lives to bring newness, life, and hope. For us, the first candle is the prophecy candle; the second is the Bethlehem candle, the third is the Angels candle, the fourth is the Shepherd candle, and the center, white candle is the Christ candle, lit Christmas Eve or day.

Candle lighting during Advent is a symbol with great significance. A common thread in Scripture is that Jesus is the light of the world. In the creation story, we see that he spoke light into existence. The gospel of John says that men have life because of the light that Jesus has given. In [Isaiah 9](#), we are reminded that sin has caused a darkness to cover all of creation, and that we've walked in darkness ever since. But as Jesus is born, he brings light to shine into the world ([John 1](#)) and, through the gospel, into our hearts ([2 Corinthians 4:4-6](#)). We even see in [Revelation 21:23](#) that one day Jesus will restore creation, and when he does, he will become the light we rely on - replacing the sun, moon, and lamps.

As we see these Advent candles being lit from week to week, would we stop and soak in the truth that without Jesus' uncommon grace and God's common grace, the world is an incredibly dark place. But he has called us out of darkness into his marvelous light, and because of that we have cause to celebrate!

the potter's wheel - wvpc kids ministry

nursery (0-24 months) and toddlers (2s-3s): offered during entire service.

children (4yrs-5th grade): dismissed to age appropriate classes following children's sermon, returning to families prior to the Lord's Supper

Room available for nursing mothers located through side hallway door.

Parents: have you received a copy of our children's ministry policies and "agreement to be a blessing"? If not, please see Rachel. Thank you for partnering with us as we join you in your calling to mold your children with the word/hands of the Potter (Isaiah 64:8)

QUESTIONS: contact Rachel at rachel@westvalleypres.org or 610.762.0786

wvpc announcements

Christmas Eve Children's Choir rehearsal today- All children ages 4 yrs old- 5th grade are invited to be part of our kids choir who will be singing 2 songs during the Christmas Eve service. Rehearsal is today, immediately following our Sunday morning service in room 6! FMI see Tae and Alice Kim.

Christmas Eve serving opportunity. West Valley has the opportunity to volunteer as families or individuals at the Christmas Eve Dinner for Families in Need at the Holiday Inn in Fogelsville. From 1 - 3 pm we need folks to set and clear tables, and fill and hand out balloons. For more info or to RSVP contact Alice Kim at alice@carenetlv.org or 610-821-0943 x 231

West Valley Christmas Eve service will be held from 7-8pm. Please feel free to invite your family and friends. Childcare available for children 4 and under. Please plan on bringing a plate of christmas cookies to share after the service for our brief fellowship time.

West Valley Christmas Day service will be held from 10-11 am. Childcare available for children 4 and under.

Order of Worship bulletins are now available on the church's website on Fridays for the upcoming Sunday, should you desire to prepare your heart for worship. www.westvalleypres.org click on media, then liturgy.

Snowblast Winter Festival- Art Show and Sale, Friday Feb 3, 6:00-9:00pm, in the clock building (our former worship space). More information to come... This is West Valley's signature serving opportunity of the year on Main Street in Emmaus. Also, artists, be thinking about what piece you'd like to display or sell. One piece limit.

West Valley community groups!

Royes/Aiello Group- Sundays, meeting at the home of Jeff and Danielle Aiello. For more details and directions, contact the Aiellos at: 610.844.5247

Christison/Nussbaum group:- Next meeting Sunday Jan. 8, at the home of Matt and Jane Nussbaum. For more details and directions, contact Dominic Christison at: christison.d@gmail.com

Buck group: Starting in January. For more details, please contact Chip or Karen Buck: 610.442.4866

visiting? Please help us know how we can serve you by filling out the green visitor card found in the seat back in front of you and dropping it in the offering plate.

Need some additional income? The church needs someone to be responsible for cleaning the common hallway, kitchen, and bathrooms every Sunday after service. This is a paid position as well as a great way to serve your church. Please see Buck Stetka if interested. 610-845-0088 or curtisstetka@yahoo.com.

West Valley elders are Dave Royes, Dave Reed and Matt Nussbaum. Should you have a desire to contact them please email them at shepherd@westvalleypres.org.

www.westvalleypres.org . 4251 chestnut street, emmaus pa 18049