

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

# THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT

## AND THEIR VOICES PREVAILED....

Luke 23.23

### reverence for one creator God

in three persons - Father, Son and Spirit

#### called to worship by the Word

*from Psalm 103.20-22*

Bless the LORD, O you his angels, you mighty ones who do his word, obeying the voice of his word!

**Bless the LORD, all his hosts, his ministers, who do his will!**

Bless the LORD, all his works, in all places of his dominion.

**Bless the LORD, O my soul!**

#### advent reading and lighting of the angel's candle

*Luke 2.10-14, Matthew 28.2-6, Revelation 19.6-10*

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. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord... And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among those with whom he is pleased!"

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And behold, there was a great earthquake, for an angel of the Lord descended from heaven and came and rolled back the stone and sat on it. His appearance was like lightning, and his clothing white as snow. And for fear of him the guards trembled and became like dead men. But the angel said to the women, "Do not be afraid, for I know that you seek Jesus who was crucified. He is not here, for he has risen, as he said.

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Then I heard what seemed to be the voice of a great multitude, like the roar of many waters and like the sound of mighty peals of thunder, crying out, "Hallelujah! For the Lord our God the Almighty reigns. Let us rejoice and exult and give him the glory, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and his Bride has made herself ready; it was granted her to clothe herself with fine linen, bright and pure"...

And the angel said to me, "Write this: Blessed are those who are invited to the marriage supper of the Lamb." And he said to me, "These are the true words of God." Then I fell down at his feet to worship him, but he said to me, "You must not do that! I am a fellow servant with you and your brothers who hold to the testimony of Jesus. Worship God."

## Angels We Have Heard on High

Angels we have heard on high  
Sweetly singing o'er the plains,  
And the mountains in reply  
Echo back their joyous strains.

**Glo-ria, in excelsis Deo!**

**Glo-ria, in excelsis Deo!**

Shepherds, why this jubilee?  
Why your joyous strains prolong?  
Say what may the tidings be  
Which inspire your heavenly song?

Come to Bethlehem and see  
Him Whose birth the angels sing;  
Come, adore on bended knee,  
Christ the Lord, the newborn King.

See within in a manger laid,  
Jesus Lord of Heaven and earth  
Lend your voices, lend your aid,  
To proclaim the saviors birth.

greeting . announcements

## renewal by one holy God

by the Spirit, through the Son, to the Father

## How Deep the Father's Love for Us

*offering*

How deep the Father's love for us,  
How vast beyond all measure  
That He should give His only Son  
To make a wretch His treasure  
How great the pain of searing loss,  
The Father turns His face away  
As wounds which mar the chosen One,  
Bring many sons to glory

Behold the Man upon a cross,  
My sin upon His shoulders  
Ashamed I hear my mocking voice,  
Call out among the scoffers  
It was my sin that held Him there  
Until it was accomplished  
His dying breath has brought me life  
I know that it is finished

I will not boast in anything  
No gifts, no power, no wisdom  
But I will boast in Jesus Christ  
His death and resurrection  
Why should I gain from His reward?  
I cannot give an answer  
But this I know with all my heart  
His wounds have paid my ransom

## personal meditation

*Psalm 103.8-13*

- 8** The LORD is merciful and gracious, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love.  
**9** He will not always chide, nor will he keep his anger forever.  
**10** He does not deal with us according to our sins, nor repay us according to our iniquities.  
**11** For as high as the heavens are above the earth, so great is his steadfast love toward those who fear him;  
**12** as far as the east is from the west, so far does he remove our transgressions from us.  
**13** As a father shows compassion to his children, so the LORD shows compassion to those who fear him.

## communal confession

*The Valley of Vision, book of puritan prayers*

O Lord, convince me that I cannot be my own God, or make myself happy,  
nor be my own Christ to restore my joy, nor my own Spirit to teach, guide and rule me.  
Help me to see that grace does this, by providential affliction. When riches are my idol you wing them away.  
When pleasure is my all, you turn it to bitterness. Take away my roving eye, curious ear, greedy appetite, lustful  
heart; show me that none of these things can heal a wounded conscience, or support a tottering frame,  
or uphold a departing spirit. Then take me to the cross and leave me there. 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!**

## Hark the Herald Angels Sing

Charles Wesley, 1739

Hark the herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn King!  
Peace on earth and mercy mild, God and sinners reconciled"  
Joyful, all ye nations rise, Join the triumph of the skies  
With the angelic host proclaim: "Christ is born in Bethlehem"  
Hark! The herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn King!"

Christ by highest heav'n adored, Christ the everlasting Lord!  
Late in time behold Him come, Offspring of a Virgin's womb  
Veiled in flesh the Godhead see, Hail the incarnate Deity  
Pleased as man with man to dwell, Jesus, our Emmanuel  
Hark! The herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn King!"

Hail the heav'n-born Prince of Peace! Hail the Son of Righteousness!  
Light and life to all He brings, Ris'n with healing in His wings  
Mild He lays His glory by, Born that man no more may die  
Born to raise the sons of earth, Born to give them second birth  
Hark! The herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn King!"

# the preaching of the Word

*the gospel by exposition*

*jim powell, pastor*

*Luke 23.13-31*

## **pause.**

the link between Advent and the passion

## **principle.**

the \_\_\_\_\_ link between total guilt and death

## **plot.**

they got what they asked for

## **problem.**

ironically, we must ask: give us what \_\_\_\_\_

# From the Squalor of a Borrowed Stable

From the squalor of a borrowed stable,  
By the Spirit and a virgin's faith;  
To the anguish and the shame of scandal  
Came the Savior of the human race!  
But the skies were filled with the praise of heaven,  
Shepherds listen as the angels tell  
Of the Gift of God come down to man  
At the dawning of Immanuel.

King of heaven now the Friend of sinners,  
Humble servant in the Father's hands,  
Filled with power and the Holy Spirit,  
Filled with mercy for the broken man.  
Yes, He walked my road and He felt my pain,  
Joys and sorrows that I know so well;  
Yet His righteous steps give me hope again -  
I will follow my Immanuel!

Through the kisses of a friend's betrayal,  
He was lifted on a cruel cross;  
He was punished for a world's transgressions,  
He was suffering to save the lost.  
He fights for breath, He fights for me,  
Loosing sinners from the claims of hell;  
And with a shout our souls are free -  
Death defeated by Immanuel!

Now He's standing in the place of honor,  
Crowned with glory on the highest throne,  
Interceding for His own beloved  
Till His Father calls to bring them home!  
Then the skies will part as the trumpet sounds  
Hope of heaven or the fear of hell;  
But the Bride will run to her Lover's arms,  
Giving glory to Immanuel!

## sacrament of the Lord's Supper

*the gospel by experience*

## benediction

*Jude 24-25*

**24** Now to him who is able to keep you from stumbling and to present you blameless before the presence of his glory with great joy, **25**to the only God, our Savior, through Jesus Christ our Lord, be glory, majesty, dominion, and authority, before all time and now and forever. 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](mailto:rachel@westvalleypres.org) or 610.762.0786

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## 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. There will be 2 rehearsals immediately following our sunday morning services, Dec 11, and Dec 18. FMI see Tae and Alice Kim.

**Christmas Babysitting this Friday, Dec 16, 6-9pm!** here at the church. The West Valley girls youth group are offering their babysitting services, free of charge, to all kids in our church family. All ages welcome! Parents, don't miss this opportunity for a much needed date night. Or maybe just a night to do some Christmas shopping without the kids in tow. Your kids will thank you. Snacks and crafts included! RSVP to [office@westvalleypres.org](mailto:office@westvalleypres.org) by Wednesday.

**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](mailto: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.

**Thank you** to all who contributed to the Masso's Christmas care package. It was mailed to Sudan last Wednesday. Let's continue to keep this family in our thoughts and prayers. The Masso christmas tree will remain on the back table during this season of advent. We will continue to collect monetary donations for the Sudan Community project should your family feel led to contribute something this Christmas. Please make the check out to West Valley, with Sudan Comm Project on the memo line.

### wvpc 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:-** Sundays at home of Matt and Jane Nussbaum. For more details and directions, contact Dominic Christison at: [christison.d@gmail.com](mailto: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.

Our 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](mailto:shepherd@westvalleypres.org).

[www.westvalleypres.org](http://www.westvalleypres.org) . 4251 chestnut street, emmaus pa 18049