



In a very real sense, the Christian community lives in Advent all the time... The disappointment, brokenness, suffering, and pain that characterize life in this present world is held in dynamic tension with the promise of future glory that is yet to come. In that Advent tension, the church lives its life."

Fleming Rutledge, *Advent*

To those joining us on line today...THANK YOU!

We are made to worship together, but we find ourselves living in a particular and unprecedented moment that has not touched American lives in generations. The good news is that while we are made to worship God together, we do not need to be in a particular place to meet with God. So I hope you have gathered together with your housemates, family, and maybe a couple others. God is present with us at all times, and He delights to meet with you today regardless of where you are or how many people you are with. We seek to offer this service as an encouragement to you amid these difficult times. We look forward to worshiping together again, breaking bread and giving hugs to one another. You are missed.

As an encouragement to others, please take a picture of your home gathering, post it to social media with the hashtag *#abbottchurchathome* and tag us on Instagram *@abbottchurchbaltimore*

Please send prayer requests to the pastor by text message 410.299.6929

You can access children's bulletins at the following address:
www.childrensbulletins.com/Covid19-childrens-activites-for-churches

ORDER OF WORSHIP

The Christian Year

Christian-year spirituality is nothing less than the calling to enter by faith into the incarnation, the life and ministry, the death and resurrection of Jesus. God's saving action is not only presented to us through the practice of the Christian year, it also takes up residence within us and transforms us by the saving and healing presence of Christ in our lives. As we enter the saving events of Jesus, he shapes us by the pattern of his own living and dying so that our living and dying in this world is a living and dying in him.

-Robert Webber

Advent

Advent is a season of hopeful expectation and preparation, as the Church anticipates the coming of Christ – both at his birth in Bethlehem many years ago, and at his future, final coming to judge the world at the end of time. During Advent, we prepare our hearts for the Lord, so that when he comes, he may find us watching and waiting.

WELCOME TO ABBOTT CHURCH

CALL TO WORSHIP (read responsively)

Psalm 122 (selected verses)

I was glad when they said to me,

"Let us go to the house of the Lord!"

Our feet are standing within your gates, O Jerusalem.

Jerusalem—built as a city that is bound firmly together.

To it the tribes go up, the tribes of the Lord,

as was decreed for Israel, to give thanks to the name of the Lord.

For there the thrones for judgment were set up,

the thrones of the house of David.

Pray for the peace of Jerusalem:

"May they prosper who love you.

Peace be within your walls,

and security within your towers."

For the sake of my relatives and friends I will say,

"Peace be within you."

For the sake of the house of the Lord our God,

I will seek your good.

SILENT PREPARATION

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT CANDLE - Litany of Expectation and Hope

Eddie and Julia Prescott family

Leader: Why do we light the Advent candles?

All: The light reminds us that Jesus is the light of the world who comes into the darkness of our lives to bring newness, life and hope.

Leader: What is the meaning of the first lighted candle?

All: The first lighted candle is the candle of Expectation and Hope. It draws attention to the anticipation of the coming of a Messiah that weaves its way like a golden thread through Old Testament history. As God's people were abused by power hungry kings, led astray by self-centered prophets, and lulled into apathy by half-hearted religious leaders, there arose a longing among some for God to raise up a new king who could show them how to be God's people. They yearned for a return of God's dynamic presence in their midst.

Leader: King Jesus has come, far exceeding the expectations of those who first longed for his coming. What are we still waiting for?

All: Our world is not yet fully redeemed. So, we again with expectation, with hope, await God's new work in history, the second Advent, in which He will again reveal Himself to the world. And we understand in a profound sense that the best, the highest of our expectations will fall far short of what our Lord's Second Advent will reveal!

OPENING HYMN

Come, Thou Long Expected Jesus

Come, thou long-expected Jesus,
Born to set thy people free;
From our fears and sins release us;
Let us find our rest in Thee.
Israel's strength and consolation,
Hope of all the earth thou art;
Dear Desire of ev'ry nation,
Joy of every longing heart.

(continued)

Joy to those who long to see Thee,
Dayspring from on high appear;
Come, thou promised Rod of Jesse,
Of Thy birth we long to hear!
O'er the hills the angels singing
News, glad tidings of a birth:
"Go to Him your praises bringing;
Christ the Lord has come to earth."

Come to earth to taste our sadness,
He whose glories knew no end;
By His life He brings us gladness,
Our Redeemer, Shepherd, Friend.
Leaving riches without number,
Born within a cattle stall;
This the everlasting wonder,
Christ was born the Lord of all.

Born Thy people to deliver,
Born a child, and yet a King,
Born to reign in us for ever,
Now Thy gracious kingdom bring.
By Thine own eternal Spirit
Rule in all our hearts alone;
By Thine all-sufficient merit
Raise us to Thy glorious throne.

CONFESSION OF SIN (in unison)

God of peace and renewal, we are impatient as we await your coming. We grumble against one another, and our hearts are weak. Come among us and save us, that we may have joy and gladness.

(Please confess your sins silently to the Lord)

WORDS OF COMFORT AND ASSURANCE OF PARDON

May almighty God, who sent his Son into the world to save sinners, bring you his pardon and peace, now and for ever.

All: **AMEN**

How long? Will You turn Your face away?
How long? Do You hear us when we pray?
On and on, still we walk this pilgrim way - How long?

How long 'til Your children find their rest?
How long 'til You draw them to Your breast?
We go on holding to Your promises - How long?

*'Til You wipe away the tears from ev'ry eye
'Til we see our home descending from the sky
Do we wait in vain?
Jesus, give us hope again!*

How long 'til Your word will still the storm?
How long 'til You bare Your mighty arm?
How we groan 'til You snatch us from the thorns - How long?

How long? Sweet the dawn that ends the race.
How long? Weak our hearts but strong our legs.
Looking on - great that cloud of witnesses! How long?

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EXTENDING GOD'S WELCOME, ANNOUNCEMENTS and GREETING

Minister: The peace of the Lord be always with you.

All: **And also with you.**

Let us join with the angel voices
Let us join their happy song
All of heaven and earth rejoices
For the Lamb of God has come
He has come to rescue sinners
Come to meet our desperate need
He was born to bring forgiveness
Born for Calvary

Alleluia, Hope has come
Alleluia, Christ has come
We once were slaves in misery
Till You appeared and set us free
Alleluia, Hope has come

Let us lay our gifts before Him
Let us magnify His name
With our thankful hearts adore Him
For the Lord has come to save
He has come to break sin's power
He has come to set us free
Hope was born that glorious hour
Christ the Mighty King

Words and Music by Stephen Altrogge, 2006

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE AND THE LORD'S PRAYER.

Members of the congregation lead us in prayer.

Almighty God, in this holy season, draw our eyes to our coming savior. Help us to leave behind the darkness of sin, walk in the light that shines on our path, and renew within ourselves the hope of glory to which he beckons us. For this, O Lord, we pray:

All Lord, hear our prayer.

Lord Jesus, come to your world as King of the nations. We pray for an end to violence, oppression, and greed, and we pray that truth, justice, and goodness will abound. Before you rulers will stand in silence.

For this, O Lord, we pray:

All Lord, hear our prayer.

Loving Spirit, we pray for all who at this time especially need your pity and protection: the sick in body, mind or spirit; those who suffer from loss of dignity or loss of hope; those who face the future with fear or walk in the shadow of death. For this, O Lord, we pray:

All Lord, hear our prayer.

And for what else should we pray?

Members of the congregation may add their own intercessions at this time, ending with,

For this, O Lord, we pray:

All Lord, hear our prayer.

Now gathering our prayers into one, let us pray boldly as our Savior has taught us:

**All Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name;
thy kingdom come; thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.**

Give us this day our daily bread.

And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.

And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

For thine is the kingdom and the power

and the glory forever and ever. Amen.

SCRIPTURE FOR THE SERMON

Luke 2:36-40

36 And there was a prophetess, Anna, the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was advanced in years, having lived with her husband seven years from when she was a virgin, 37 and then as a widow until she was eighty-four. She did not depart from the temple, worshiping with fasting and prayer night and day. 38 And coming up at that very hour she began to give thanks to God and to speak of him to all who were waiting for the redemption of Jerusalem.

39 And when they had performed everything according to the Law of the Lord, they returned into Galilee, to their own town of Nazareth. 40 And the child grew and became strong, filled with wisdom. And the favor of God was upon him.

Reader: The Word of the Lord.

All: **Thanks be to God.**

SERMON

Pastor Paul Warren

Advent Role Models: Anna

OFFERING

The offering is a way for members and friends of Abbott Church to support the church's mission and ministry. If you are our guest today, please feel under no compulsion to give. If you would like to give online, you may do so at www.abbottchurch.org/giving

CELEBRATION OF THE LORD'S SUPPER

-Let's take a moment to mourn the fact that our church body is not able to assemble together this Sunday.

-Pray that the Lord would work to enable us to return to a fuller communion with one another soon.

-Give thanks that though we do not celebrate the sacrament of communion together today we have true communion with Jesus and one another through the power of the Holy Spirit, who dwells in every believer giving us union with Christ and all his people.

-Ask God to grow into a deeper hunger and desire to commune with him and his people in this time of waiting and separation.

There is a hope that burns within my heart,
That gives me strength for every passing day;
A glimpse of glory now revealed in meager part,
Yet drives all doubt away:
I stand in Christ, with sins forgiv'n;
And Christ in me, the hope of heav'n!
My highest calling and my deepest joy, To make His will my home.

There is a hope that lifts my weary head,
A consolation strong against despair,
That when the world has plunged me in its deepest pit,
I find the Savior there!
Through present sufferings, future's fear,
He whispers 'courage' in my ear,
For I am safe in everlasting arms, And they will lead me home.

There is a hope that stands the test of time,
That lifts my eyes beyond the beckoning grave,
To see the matchless beauty of a day divine
When I behold His face!
When sufferings cease and sorrows die, And every longing satisfied,
Then Joy unspeakable will flood my soul, For I am truly home.

Words and Music by Stuart Townend and Mark Edwards, 2007

BENEDICTION

PRAYERS FOR REFLECTION

Prayer for those searching

Lord Jesus, you claim to be the way, the truth, and the life. Please guide me, teach me, and open to me the reality of who you are. Grant that I might be undaunted by the cost of following you as I consider the reasons for doing so. Give me an understanding of you that is coherent, convincing, and that leads to the life that you promise. Amen.

Prayer of belief

Lord Jesus Christ, I admit that I am weak and sinful, but through you I am loved and accepted. I thank you for taking my place in death, in order to offer me forgiveness and renewal. Knowing that you have been raised from the dead, I turn from my sins and receive you as my Savior and my Lord. Amen.

Prayer for those struggling with sin

Lord Jesus, grant that I may see in you the fulfillment of all my need, and may turn from every false satisfaction to feed on you, the true and living bread. Enable me to lay aside the sin that clings so closely, and faithfully follow you in life. Amen.

Prayer of commitment to God's people

Lord Jesus, you have called us to follow you in baptism and in a life of committed discipleship in your church. Grant that I may take the steps necessary to be one with your people and live in the fullness of your Spirit. Amen.

Prayer of thanksgiving

Lord, you have put gladness in our hearts; you have satisfied our hunger with good things. In giving all, you have not withheld from us your own dear Son. How can we withhold anything from you, our Lord and our God? Renew us day by day with the gift of your Spirit, that we may give ourselves completely to your service and walk with joy in the footsteps of Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND COMMUNICATIONS:

NEED PRAYER? From 12:00 PM until 1:00 PM, Monday through Friday, someone will be available to pray for anyone in need of prayer. The time will also be focused on praying for the ministry of our church and for God's Spirit to be at work in our midst. If you would like to be part of this new prayer ministry, please let the pastor know. Please text prayer requests to the pastor, Julius and/or George.

WE NEED YOU! There are currently many areas of service and leadership that you may be able to fill. Some areas of need are immediate and can be done during this time of COVID and limited in person activities, others are more strategic and longer term. Ministries such as "WeCare", children's ministry, social media, diaconal programs, teaching, and more all have needs. If you know of someone that you believe would make a good elder or deacon, we would encourage you to speak to that person and encourage them towards that ministry. Also speak to one of the elders or the pastor about them and let us know so that we can follow up as well.

The **SALAAM CENTER** is hoping to bless immigrant families with Christmas gifts and bags of food/hygiene items this year. They still have about 30 families with children to be "adopted." It would involve buying a "fun" gift (not clothes, up to \$20) for each child and providing a bag of food/hygiene items for the family. If you would like to adopt a family(ies), please let us know what number of kids you would like. The Salaam Center will then send you the first names of the family members, and the gender and ages of the kids.

They also need bags of food/hygiene items for about 25 couples/individuals. The suggested items for the food bags are: flour, sugar, basmati or jasmine rice, olive or cooking oil, tea or coffee (American is fine), and nuts of any kind or a special holiday treat. You could add hygiene items, like shampoo, toothpaste, deodorant, etc. or other small kitchen or household items if you'd like.

If you'd rather collect food/hygiene items and have the Center make up the bags, no problem.

The Center would like to have items by December 14th, so there's time to fill in any gaps. If anyone who would like to help deliver gifts and food, the Center is planning that all of it will be delivered over 2 days, either the two days before Christmas or the weekend (maybe Friday, Saturday) before Christmas. (This will keep many people from calling or coming to the Center to see when they'll get their gift.).

Please indicate your interest on a tear-off form or send an email to abbottchurchoffice@gmail.com.

HE HEARS

"This is the assurance we have in approaching God: that if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us." — 1 JOHN 5:14

"The Lord is near to all who call on Him, to all who call on Him in truth."

— PSALM 145:18

Please pray for:

- Your church staff, officers and leaders
- Men and women of the military, police and fire departments
- Family members and friends who are not walking with Christ
- Ongoing health concerns for the following members and friends:
Larry Halterman, Milly Flynn, Gene and Diane Shaw, Phyllis Brown, Dawn Brewer, Brent Schepleng, Clint Neuder, Brenda Neuder, Robin and Toni (Billie Mitchell's granddaughters), Narouz family (especially Vicky), Don Sapp, Jackie Lubin
- *Raj Mohan's wife, dementia, and granddaughter, mental health issues*
- *Lydia Frasca, chemotherapy and radiation treatment*
- *David Files, pain management*
- *Armstrong family - bereavement*
- *Rode family - bereavement*

MISSIONARIES AND MINISTRIES WHICH WE SUPPORT:

- Andy and Bev Warren with MTW in Ethiopia
- Jason and Liz Polk with MTW in Ethiopia
- Jessica Ringsmuth with MTW in Kenya
- Bert and Nancy Williams with MTW in Uganda
- Bruce and Pat with MTW in France
- Chris Garriott with RUF at the University of Maryland
- Jacob Jasin with RUF-I at Johns Hopkins University
- Mountain View Bible Camp — Abbott Center for the Arts
- Abbott Tutoring Center — We Care Ministry

Welcome to Abbott.

We're glad we worshiped
with you today!

November 29, 2020

NAME(S) _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY/STATE/ZIP _____

PHONE _____

EMAIL _____

How may we serve you?

(please check the appropriate box)

- I am a visitor
- I would like to find out about how
to become a Christian
- I am interested in membership
(Abbott schedules classes regularly)
- I would like a call from the pastor
- I would like prayer
- I would like to join a
community group
- My contact information has changed

Staff Contacts

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