

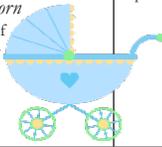


GRACE
CHURCH of DUPAGE

27W344 Galusha Ave. Warrenville, IL 630-393-7344

www.gracedupage.org

DECEMBER 2016

| SUN | MON | TUE | WED | THU | FRI | SAT | |
|--|---|--|--|---|--|--|--|
| | | | | | 1 Church Decorating 9:30 AM - Noon 2:00 - 4:30 PM 6:30 - 9:00 PM | 2 7:00 AM Great Doctrines 8:30 AM Biblical Counseling Church Decorating 9:30 AM - 1:00 PM  | 3 |
| 9:00 AM Sunday School 10:30 AM Worship Service/Communion 12:15 PM Trailblazers Luncheon 6:00 PM Worship Service | 4 6:15 AM Ladies' Prayer Group 7:00 PM Baby Shower for <i>Amber Osborn</i> at the home of Dana Larimer  | 5 6:00 PM Choir Rehearsal 7:00 PM Open Gym | 6 6:30 PM RENEW - Youth Ministry 7:00 PM  Choir 7:30 PM Prayer Meeting | 7 7:00 PM Choir Rehearsal | 8 7:00 PM MTA Seminar (Part 1) | 9 7:00 AM Great Doctrines 8:30 AM >Biblical Counseling >MTA Seminar (Part 2) | 10 |
| The Cure of Souls CARE, COUNSEL, AND NEW CREATIONAL LIFE | | | | | | | |
| "HE IS THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD" CHRISTMAS CONCERT AT GRACE | 11 9:00 AM Sunday School 10:30 AM Worship Service 6:00 PM CHRISTMAS CONCERT AT GRACE | 12 6:15 AM Ladies' Prayer Group | 13 7:00 PM Open Gym  | 14 6:30 PM RENEW - Youth Ministry 7:00 PM  Choir 7:30 PM Prayer Meeting | 15 | 16 | 17 7:00 AM Great Doctrines 8:30 AM Biblical Counseling |
| 9:00 AM Sunday School 10:30 AM Worship Service/Communion JOIN US FOR: Family Desser & Devotional at 6pm on December 18th  | 18 6:15 AM Ladies' Prayer Group | 19 7:00 PM Open Gym | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 Church Offices Closed | 24 |
| 25 9:00 AM No Sunday School 10:30 AM Christmas Day Worship Service 6:00 PM No Worship Service | 26 Church Offices Closed | 27 7:00 PM Open Gym | 28 | 29 | 30 | 31 | |
| 1 9:00 AM No Sunday School 10:30 AM Worship Service 6:00 PM No Worship Service | 2 Church Offices Closed | 3 | 4 6:30 PM RENEW - Youth Ministry 7:00 PM  Choir 7:30 PM Prayer Meeting | 5 | 6 | 7 | |

Advent 2016

by Dan Brendsel

The post-Thanksgiving rush is upon us, a time of year that many in contemporary culture refer to as “the Holiday Season.” For the culture which is the Church, the weeks in December (or more precisely, the days stretching from the fourth Sunday before Christmas to Christmas Day) are called by a different name—Advent. The word “advent” is simply from the Latin term for coming or arrival. Christians across the continents and across the centuries have devoted Advent season to concerted time in prayer, fasting, and intentional expressions of yearning for the coming of Christ. While there is a special emphasis on the first coming of Christ during Advent since the season culminates with the celebration of Christmas, Advent is also and especially meant to draw our attention and expectation toward the second coming of Christ.

What this means is that Advent is for longing. It’s not just looking back in remembrance at what has happened, but looking forward with expectancy to what will happen. Advent is for forthrightly expressing and arousing great expectations: “Come, Thou long expected Jesus!” “Come, Desire of nations!” The season is meant to stir up longing, to cultivate longing, to correct our longings, and to cause them to mature toward longing for Christ’s appearing.

This season of cultivating and calibrating desire is especially needful, given the day and age in which we live. On the one hand, good desires are regularly treated as ultimate, though they were given by God to be penultimate pointers to desire for fellowship with him. Too often our desire stalls on toys and food and comfort and sex and status and security and romance and long life as all that matters, as the end of our quest. It’s not that these are bad things to desire. Far from it. But we were meant to desire a still greater reality. Our desires, as C. S. Lewis has noted, are typically too weak. On the other hand, perhaps we buy into the prevalent strategy of anesthetizing

great desires. Expect to be disappointed; there’s nothing worth being excited about; the world is meaningless; guard your heart by not allowing it to get its hopes up. In this context, we tend to downplay intense desire and seek, instead, to drug ourselves (with narcotics or busy-ness or sex or sports or work or video games and “chillaxing”). We seek to numb our hearts so that they won’t get too worked up only to be let down.

One way or another, our desires malfunction. So we need strategies and practices and rhythms of life that arouse our desiring hearts and train them to desire as they ought. One such practice is the observance of Advent. Through prayer, fasting, moments of silence, expressions of lament and yearning, we cultivate not only the capacity for expectancy but expectancy for the right thing—namely, the coming of King Jesus. Advent is for the right stirring of our longings. It’s a way for us through ceremony and practice to join the throng of saints who longed for the first appearing of Christ, thus experientially firing and forming our yearning for the second appearing of Christ. During Advent, we join Israel of old in praying and fasting for the coming of the Messiah who will set all things to rights: “O come, O come, Emmanuel, and ransom captive Israel!”

If Advent is for longing, then it is also for lamentation. What we long for is Christ’s return to set the world aright, for it has gone horrifically wrong. The world is not the way it’s supposed to be, and we are desperate for help. In remarkable contrast to a “Holiday Season” full of vague sentimentality and generic good will and suburban satisfaction in the comforts of wealth, Advent is a protest that the world is broken, that we can’t fix it, and that our only hope is a Savior from the far country, the Lord Jesus Christ. Advent is pleading with God to send his Christ again to make all things new: “No more let ... thorns infest the ground!” “Bid envy, strife, and quarrels cease!” Let your “blessings

flow far as the curse is found!” Advent is for lamentation that such things do not yet describe our world.

So also, Advent is for repentance, for part of what is still broken in the world is us—our desires, our affections, our pursuits, our practices. In contrast to worldly indulgence during “the Holidays,” Christians in all places and times have received Advent as a season of penitence and contrition and fasting in preparation for the coming of Christ: “Prepare ye the way of the Lord!”

Advent is for longing, lamentation, and repentance. And, remarkably, it is also for rejoicing. Now on this side of the first coming of the Messiah—on this side of the incarnation, cross, resurrection, and ascension—our longing is, like the Apostle Paul’s, as sorrowful yet always rejoicing. Advent longing is longing in joy and confident hope that if Christ has come a first time for our life and good, then he will most assuredly come a second time to consummate all his good purposes for us and his creation: “Rejoice, rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to you, O Israel!” “Joy to the world!” “Now he shines, the long expected, let creation praise its Lord, evermore and evermore!” The joy is a humble joy, but it is true joy—an expectant joy, a joy that leans toward fulfillment, a joy well prepared to burst out with fullness on Christmas Day and throughout the following Christmas season, and beyond that at Christ’s second coming.

So this Advent season, let us join together with longing, lamentation, repentance, and rejoicing, as we await together the joy of Christmas morning, and ultimately as we await together the return of our Lord Jesus Christ at the story’s end. Let us sing the age-old prayer, “Savior of the nations, come, virgin’s Son, here make Thy home!” Amen. Come, Lord Jesus.



. . .The Word Became Flesh. . .

by Pastor Daryle Worley

And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth. —John 1:14

Some people say that John's Gospel doesn't include a "Christmas" narrative. I don't agree. In fact, it is through John's account of the coming of Christ that we get our clearest instruction on the theology of the incarnation of the eternal Son of God. With John's Christmas narrative we finally see how it all works.

John 1:14 gives us the bottom line: *The Word became flesh and dwelt among us...* Technically, *Word*, the Greek word *logos*, means *to speak rationally or intelligently*.

In the first-century philosophical world, *logos* was packed with meaning. The Stoics believed the *logos*, which they understood as *reason*, actually *was* God. The Jewish philosopher "Philo maintained that the same truth is to be found in both Greek philosophy and Jewish scriptures and tradition" (Copleston 1:202), and set out to prove it. Both he and the neo-Pythagorean philosophers of the day taught that the *logos* was actually a bridge between transcendent God and finite humanity. So the *logos* was less than God but more than humankind in the nature of its being. When John spoke of the *Word*, then, it struck a very familiar chord in the unbelieving Greek world.

But *logos* also had rich meaning among Jews. In the OT it was connected with God's powerful activity (Carson 115) in creation (Gen.1:3, "God *said*, 'Let there be light.'"), in revelation (Jer.1:4, "The *word* of the Lord came to me saying"), and salvation (Psa.107:20, "He sent forth his *word* and healed them..."). So the *Word* also had meaning in the Hebrew world. And this branch of its meaning is actually more helpful to us in understanding John.

This *Word* was with God in the beginning, but at the same time actually *was* God (Joh.1:1). This *Word* was eternal (2), and also was the creator of *all things* (3). The *Word* is a unique Being!

Life and irrepressible *light* are in Him (4-5). And those who *receive Him* not only receive *life* and *light*, but are given *the right to become children of God!* (12)

The whole picture then comes into focus in verse 14: *the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.* This is almost inconceivable! From a human perspective,

it could never have foreseen! In the words of D. A. Carson (111), "(John's) Prologue summarizes how the *Word* which was with God in the very beginning came into the sphere of time, history, tangibility—in other words, how the Son of God was sent into the world to become the Jesus of history, so that the glory and grace of God might be uniquely and perfectly disclosed."

The Word became flesh, then, at Bethlehem, to reveal God's *glory* and reconcile us to Himself!

"HE IS
THE
LIGHT
OF THE
WORLD"

CHRISTMAS
CONCERT
AT GRACE
CHURCH OF
DUPAGE

◦ 6 PM ◦ DECEMBER 11 ◦

GRACEDUPAGE.ORG/CHRISTMAS-CONCERT



6 November 2016 - 1 Tim, 1:12-20

THE GOSPEL ISN'T A
PHILOSOPHY TO BE DEBATED.
IT IS A GIFT OF GOD WE RECEIVE BY
FAITH THROUGH JESUS CHRIST WHICH
UNITES US TO OTHERS RECONCILED
TO GOD THROUGH THE HOLY SPIRIT.
THE AIM OF OUR CHARGE IS
LOVE THAT ISSUES FROM A PURE
HEART AND A GOOD CONSCIENCE
AND A SINCERE FAITH.

AS GOD'S PEOPLE WE ARE

equipped to live this charge



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JOIN US FOR:

**Family Dessert
& Devotional**

at 6pm on
December 18th