



CHRISTCOMMUNITY
CHURCH
Changed Hearts. Changed Lives. Changed Community.

Advent 2022:

Faith in the
Coming King
in the Gospel of Luke

Introduction

Nothing grows our faith like waiting. Scripture frequently connects faith and waiting upon the Lord.¹ As we step into Luke's Gospel this Advent season, we will meet people who were waiting upon the Lord in different ways. Mary is waiting to wed Joseph, the man God provided to become her husband (1:27). The shepherds are waiting for God to bring the dawn as they watch their flocks at night (2:8). Simeon is waiting to see the consolation of Israel before the end of his days (2:25). Anna is serving those who are waiting for the redemption of Jerusalem (2:38). Luke also introduces us to Zechariah and Elizabeth who had all but given up in their wait for God to give them a child of their own (1:7). Luke will show us how God used these periods of waiting to prepare these believers to receive Christ through faith alone at His First Advent.

Though we look back to Christ's First Advent, we join this cast of believers in our wait for His Second Advent – His return on the Last Day (**2 Peter 3**). The time between Christ's comings is a time of faith in what is not yet sight (**2 Corinthians 5:7**). Thus, the Advent season provides an opportunity to examine our hearts through the lens of two questions: *What are you waiting for?* In other words, in what – or in whom – are you putting your faith? And *what have you given up waiting for?* In other words, where has your faith been rattled and your assurance shaken?

Perhaps this Advent you find yourself waiting for your life to take a turn for the better. Perhaps you are waiting for a new opportunity, a new chapter in a relationship, or a renewal of joy in your salvation. Or, like Zechariah and Elizabeth, perhaps you

¹ A clear example comes from the book of Micah, which we preached through last Advent. Micah resolves in his closing reflections, "But as for me, I will look to the LORD; I will wait for the God of my salvation; my God will hear me" (**Micah 7:7**). Micah declared his resolve to wait upon the LORD even as his fellow Israelites refused to repent under God's judgment and their society unraveled under the weight of their sin.

have longings that appear forever unmet. Perhaps you have given up hope for further victory against a sin or further healing from a tragedy. Perhaps you have given up on reconciliation with an estranged family member or friend. And, whether you are striving to wait longer or feel like giving up your wait altogether, perhaps you have grown weary in your wait for Christ's return. Your waiting may have unsettled your faith in ways you fear to admit even to yourself.

But remember that doubt is not the opposite of faith. We are all prone to wander. We are all beset with doubts in our faith and droughts in our joy. Consider what John Calvin writes in the *Institutes*:

Surely, while we teach that faith ought to be certain and assured, we cannot imagine any certainty that is not tinged with doubt, or any assurance that is not assailed by some anxiety. On the other hand, we say that believers are in perpetual conflict with their own unbelief. Far, indeed, are we from putting their consciences in any peaceful repose, undisturbed by any tumult at all.²

The question is not *whether* we experience doubt in our faith and anxiety in our assurance; the question is *which way* we run with them. When we bring our wandering hearts into the Gospel's light, our doubts and anxieties can become the pathway – not the roadblock – to deeper faith in Christ.

Luke wrote his Gospel to equip us for this very task. One of the distinctives of Luke's Gospel is his transparency about his attention to detail and accuracy as a self-conscious historian (Luke 1:1-4). Luke mentions his credentials and care as an author, not to draw attention to himself, but to tune our hearts to the purpose of his Gospel. He has written so "that you may have *certainty* concerning the things you have been taught" about the gospel of Jesus Christ (1:4). Luke is confident that God's Word can handle our biggest questions and deepest doubts. Not only that, but Luke knows firsthand that God's grace to us in Christ transforms doubt into faith, blossoms faith into joy, and uses joy to energize us in our praise and proclamation of the Gospel. We

² John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, 3.2.17, qtd. in Sinclair B. Ferguson, *The Whole Christ: Legalism, Antinomianism & Assurance – Why the Marrow Controversy Still Matters* (Wheaton: Crossway, 2016), 188. *The Whole Christ* is a great book for personal devotions or group study. See chapters 9 & 10 for an excellent discussion of faith and assurance.

will see this pattern of growth at work among those who wait upon the LORD in Luke's Gospel. And our prayer this Advent is that we, too, will experience our doubts give rise to faith and our joy burst forth in praise and proclamation of Christ, the King Who came and is coming again!

In our Advent series, we will hear from **the first two chapters of Luke's Gospel** as they record the events surrounding Jesus' First Advent. Our calls to worship will come from **Psalms** that taught Israel to wait upon Christ's arrival and that now teach us to wait upon His return with faith and joyful worship. Our weekly congregational response is **Question and Answer 1 of the Heidelberg Catechism**. This catechism question will give us the opportunity to proclaim the assurance we have in the person and work of Christ. Our assurances of pardon will come from **Jesus' "I am" statements in the Gospel of John**. In these passages, Jesus strengthens our faith by assuring us of the truth about who He is and what He came to do for our salvation. Lastly, our benediction will come from **1 Thessalonians 5:23-24**. Paul's prayer will send us out with the assurance that God will faithfully complete His work in us until Christ's return!

This devotional is designed to encourage daily meditation and prayer in personal devotions and/or family worship. You are encouraged to use it the week prior to the associated sermon to help you and your family prepare for worship. In addition to the Scriptures and associated questions, there are opportunities to pray for the various aspects of the Church. On Wednesdays, we will pray for the various missionaries and missional ministries that we support at CCC through Faith Promise. On Saturdays we will get to enjoy Advent and Christmas hymns and prayerfully meditate on their lyrics. Finally, on the Lord's Day Sabbath, we will pray for the means of grace to strengthen our faith in Christ. May God bless our time in personal devotion, family worship, and corporate worship. May He grant us deeper faith and assurance in Christ the coming King!

Soli Deo Gloria!

German Schedule

DATE	CALL TO WORSHIP	ASSURANCE OF PARDON	BENEDICTION	SACRAMENT
SUNDAY, 11/13: LURE 1:1 - 25	Psalm 113	John 6:35-40	1 Thessalonians 5:23-24	Lord's Table
SUNDAY, 11/20: LURE 1:26 - 38	Psalm 89:1-8	John 8:12	1 Thessalonians 5:23-24	
SUNDAY, 11/27: LURE 1:39 - 56	Psalm 34:1-3	John 10:7-11	1 Thessalonians 5:23-24	
SUNDAY, 12/4: LURE 1:57 - 80	Psalm 107:1-3, 10-16	John 10:14-18	1 Thessalonians 5:23-24	Lord's Table
SUNDAY 12/11: LURE 2:1 - 21	Psalm 148	John 11:21-27	1 Thessalonians 5:23-24	Baptism
SUNDAY, 12/18: LURE 2:22 - 40	Psalm 98	John 14:1-7	1 Thessalonians 5:23-24	Lord's Table
SUNDAY 12/25: LURE 2:41 - 52	Psalm 84:5-12	John 15:5-11	1 Thessalonians 5:23-24	Baptism

Weekly Congregational Response

Leader:

“What is your only comfort in life and death?”

Congregation:

**“That I am not my own,
but belong with body and soul,
both in life and in death,
to my faithful Savior Jesus Christ.
He has fully paid for all my sins with his precious blood,
and has set me free from all the power of the devil.
He also preserves me in such a way that
without the will of my heavenly Father
not a hair can fall from my head;
indeed, all things must work together for my salvation.
Therefore, by his Holy Spirit he also assures me of eternal life
and makes me heartily willing and ready
from now on to live for him.**

HEIDELBERG CATECHISM:

LORD’S DAY 1, Q & A 1

Weekly Benediction

Now may the God of peace himself sanctify you completely,
and may your whole spirit and soul and body be kept blameless
at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.
He who calls you is faithful;
He will surely do it.

1 THESSALONIANS 5:23 - 24

The Week of November 13th

LUKE 1:1-25

Monday 11/7 **Psalm 113:** Meditate on God's greatness (**verses 4-6**) and compassion (**verses 7-9**). Then praise God for specific ways He has been good to you this year.

Tuesday 11/8 **John 6:35-40:** What is the Father's will for His people? Consider how Jesus' faithfulness to the Father's will anchors your comfort and hope for eternal life.

Wednesday 11/9 Pray for the Robertsons as they serve with Mission to the World in Chile. Ask God to use them to build up His people in their faith in Christ alone!

Thursday 11/10 **Luke 1:1-25:** Meditate on Luke's purpose in writing his Gospel (**verses 1-4**). How would you like to grow in the certainty of your faith this Advent season?

Friday 11/11 **1 Thessalonians 5:23-24:** Do you ever feel like your growth as a Christian all depends on you? Praise God that *He* is the one who will surely sanctify you completely!

Saturday 11/12 Read the preparatory letter for the Lord's Table and listen to "[○ Come, All You Unfaithful.](#)" Rejoice at the fact that your unfaithfulness does not prevent you from getting to come to the Table and "see what your God has done" in Christ!

Sunday 11/13 **The Lord's Day Sabbath:** Pray for the means of grace to build up our faith and deepen our assurance in Christ this Advent season.

The Week of November 20th

LUKE 1:26-38

Monday 11/14 **Psalm 89:1-8:** What opportunities is God giving you to make His faithfulness known to coming generations this Advent season? Make time to cultivate these opportunities this week. A great place to start is sharing Psalm 89!

Tuesday 11/15 **John 8:12:** Ponder moments in your life when all seemed dark. How has Christ been the light of life to you in those places? Where do you need His help to see His light in your life today?

Wednesday 11/16 Pray for the Blackmans as they serve with RUF at Kennesaw State University. Ask God to draw many students to faith in the Son of God Whose Kingdom has no end.

Thursday 11/17 **Luke 1:26-38:** Reflect on Mary's example of faith in this passage. How can you grow in your faith and submission to God's Word this week?

Friday 11/18 **1 Thessalonians 5:23-24:** Ponder the First Advent when the Son of God became truly human in spirit, soul, and body. Then reflect on God's promise to keep your whole spirit, soul, and body blameless in Christ until His Second Advent.

Saturday 11/19 Listen to "[Savior of the Nations, Come.](#)" Marvel that the Savior of the nations freely "chose such a birth" to accomplish our redemption.

Sunday 11/20 **The Lord's Day Sabbath:** Pray for the means of grace to help us grow in our surrender to God's grace and submission to His word.

The Week of November 27th

LUKE 1:39-56

Monday 11/21 **Psalm 34:1-3:** Does your soul make its boast in the Lord? Repent of the ways you boast elsewhere and taste and see that the Lord is good!

Tuesday 11/22 **John 10:7-11:** Why did Christ become flesh (**verse 10**)? How have you experienced the abundant life given by the Good Shepherd recently?

Wednesday 11/23 Ask the Lord to provide for CCC as we seek a permanent facility that will help us proclaim His mercy from generation to generation.

Thursday 11/24 **Luke 1:39-56:** Give thanks for the ways God has humbled your pride and shown you mercy in Christ. Rejoice in God your Savior for doing these things for your eternal good in Christ!

Friday 11/25 **1 Thessalonians 5:23-24:** Does the promise of Christ's return fill you with joy? Why or why not? How can reflecting on God's faithfulness help fill you with such joy?

Saturday 11/26 Listen to "[Mary's Song](#)" and magnify the Lord, delighting in the opportunity to call Him "blessed" and "love" for generations to come.

Sunday 11/27 **The Lord's Day Sabbath:** Pray for the means of grace to help us magnify the Lord Who brings down the proud and exalts the humble by grace alone, through faith alone, and in Christ alone.

The Week of December 4th

LUKE 1:57-80

Monday 11/28 **Psalm 107:1-3, 10-16:** Meditate on the ways the Psalmist describes God's work of redemption. How has God delivered you from distress? With whom can you share the news of such glorious redemption this week?

Tuesday 11/29 **John 10:14-18:** Ask the Holy Spirit to give people ears to hear Christ's voice as He calls His one flock to Himself. Pray specifically for unbelievers in your spheres of influence.

Wednesday 11/30 Pray for Jim Whittle as he serves with Equipping Leaders International. Ask God to use Jim to equip people to serve Him without fear and in holiness and righteousness in their spheres of influence.

Thursday 12/1 **Luke 1:57-80:** What makes you afraid to serve God (**verse 74**)? How can God's tender mercy grow your faith and joy in serving Him?

Friday 12/2 **1 Thessalonians 5:23-24:** How does God's certain faithfulness give you confidence in your discipleship today?

Saturday 12/3 Read the preparatory letter for the Lord's Table and listen to "[O Come, O Come, Emmanuel](#)." As you meditate on Christ's First Advent, rejoice that His Second Advent is sure to come. Cultivate your longing for the new creation He will bring at His return!

Sunday 12/4 **The Lord's Day Sabbath:** Pray for the means of grace to help us serve God without fear and in holiness and righteousness before Him all our days.

The Week of December 11th

LUKE 2:1-21

Monday 12/5 **Psalm 148:** Meditate on the fact that the One whose majesty is above earth and heaven humbled Himself by becoming a human infant. Praise the Lord for the depths of His love and heights of His faithfulness in redemption!

Tuesday 12/6 **John 11:21-27:** Marvel at the fact that Jesus is the One who came to defeat death and give resurrection life to all of God's people. How can believing this fill your life with joy and peace even in the shadow of death?

Wednesday 12/7 Pray for the Mills as they serve with Mission to the World in Thailand. Ask God to fill them with great joy as they proclaim the peace made possible in Christ alone!

Thursday 12/8 **Luke 2:1-21:** How has the good news about Jesus given you joy and peace recently? Who can you share this good news with?

Friday 12/9 **1 Thessalonians 5:23-24:** Ponder the fact that the God of peace is at work in every aspect of your life. Examine your life for areas where you long for further peace and ask God to show you how He is at work in these places.

Saturday 12/10 Read the baptismal letter and listen to "[While Shepherds Watched Their Flocks.](#)" Meditate on the ways Christ's humble birth brought glory to God and peace to those with whom He is pleased.

Sunday 12/11 **The Lord's Day Sabbath:** Pray for the means of grace to help us joyfully respond to Christ the Lord, the One who brings salvation and peace.

The Week of December 18th

LUKE 2:22-40

Monday 12/12 **Psalm 98:** Rejoice that God has redeemed so that you might make a joyful noise to the LORD in worship. Pray for the spread of the gospel among all nations so that others might also make a joyful noise.

Tuesday 12/13 **John 14:1-7:** Where will Jesus bring God's people? Meditate on the ways His promise offers comfort when your heart is troubled.

Wednesday 12/14 Pray for Mwamba Johnson as he serves with Vision Collegiate Ministries. Ask God to use his ministry to help many know Christ, Who is the way, the truth, and the life!

Thursday 12/15 **Luke 2:22-40:** Do you come to God's word expecting Him to use it to expose your sin and comfort you in Christ alone? Which way do you run when God uses His Word to reveal the thoughts of your heart?

Friday 12/16 **1 Thessalonians 5:23-24:** Ask the Holy Spirit to use God's Word to sanctify us completely as we await the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Saturday 12/17 Read the preparatory letter for the Lord's Table and listen to "[Come, Thou Long Expected Jesus.](#)" As you prepare for the Table, meditate on Christ's perfect work which releases us from fear and sin and fills our hearts with joy!

Sunday 12/18 **The Lord's Day Sabbath:** Pray for the means of grace to equip us to wait faithfully for the King Who has come and is coming again.

The Week of December 25th

LUKE 2:41-52

Monday 12/19 **Psalm 84:5-12:** What makes a day in God's courts better than a thousand elsewhere? Rejoice that Christ's faithful work guarantees our eternity in the house of our God!

Tuesday 12/20 **John 15:5-11:** How has Jesus used the Advent series to make His words abide in you (v. 7)? Ask Him to use His Word to help you abide in Him and thus bear fruit for the Father's glory!

Wednesday 12/21 Pray for First Care Women's Clinic in Marietta. Ask God to use their efforts to continue His work of drawing His people – young and old – to Himself through faith in Christ alone.

Thursday 12/22 **Luke 2:41-52:** Ponder the fact that even when Mary and Joseph could not find Jesus, He was faithfully doing the Father's work in the Father's house. Thank Jesus for His perfect faithfulness in accomplishing your redemption!

Friday 12/23 **1 Thessalonians 5:23-24:** Which way do you run when you struggle to see Christ at work in your life? Cling to His continued faithfulness in His Father's work of sanctifying you completely until He comes again.

Saturday 12/24 Read the baptismal letter and listen to "[Joy to the World](#)." Meditate on the ways Christ's return will make blessings flow as far as the curse is found.

Sunday 12/25 **The Lord's Day Sabbath:** Pray for the means of grace to help us enjoy the rest we have in the Son Who is forever faithful in His Father's house.