



REDEEMER

CITY CHURCH

December 3, 2017 – First Sunday of Advent



Advent Introduction

Every year, for the four Sundays leading up to Christmas, we observe the season of Advent. The word Advent means “a coming or an arrival.” The coming of Jesus affected a first-order reversal of all previous arrangements – an altogether new creation *ex nihilo*, out of nothing. This expectation was announced by the prophet Ezekiel ahead of time: “Things shall not remain as they are. Exalt the low, and bring low that which is exalted” (Ezekiel 21:26). Indeed, the post-Christmas *kosmos* is something entirely new. It turns the world upside down and refuses to pick up what falls out of its pockets. It is a world where the last are first and the first last (Matthew 20:16). Nowhere is this more evident than in a theme woven throughout the entire Bible: a child supernaturally born from a barren womb. Sarah. Hannah. Elizabeth. Even more so, Mary. These women and their stories are a powerful reminder that salvation is by grace. It is God’s doing. Therefore, it only comes to the humble. The only thing you need to enter God’s upside-down kingdom of grace is need...Each Sunday during Advent, we will emphasize a different theme – a lesson we learn from the lives of these women of faith. This Christmas, may the rearranging truth of the gospel rearrange you.

Advent Theme: Faith

When we first meet Sarah in the Bible, all we’re told is that she had no children. And that’s enough. Everything seemed to be working against Sarah. Her body. Her age. Her family. Yet, she had one thing: God’s promise. “I will give you a son,” God had said. At first, she struggled to believe. She took matters into her own hands, and caused a lot of trouble. Yet, eventually, Sarah and her husband Abraham put themselves in God’s hands, and trusted in what He had said more than what they could see.

Sarah’s story is a lesson in **faith** - our Advent theme this week. Faith is viewing your circumstances in light of what you know to be true of God, not the other way around. Today, we light a candle to remember that God is bigger than any obstacle or limitation we might come up against...We live by faith, not by sight.

Songs of Gathering and Preparation

We prepare our hearts, and bodies for worship by singing about the God we serve.

Glorious Christ

Call to Worship

We read God's Word, the Bible, together. It reminds us of who God is and what He expects from us.

1 "Sing, O barren one, who did not bear; break forth into singing and cry aloud, you who have not been in labor! For the children of the desolate one will be more than the children of her who is married," says the LORD. 2 "Enlarge the place of your tent, and let the curtains of your habitations be stretched out; do not hold back; lengthen your cords and strengthen your stakes. 3 For you will spread abroad to the right and to the left, and your offspring will possess the nations and will people the desolate cities. (Isaiah 54:1-3 ESV)

6 For to us a child is born, to us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder, and his name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. 7 Of the increase of his government and of peace there will be no end, on the throne of David and over his kingdom, to establish it and to uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time forth and forever more. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will do this. (Isaiah 9:6-7 ESV)

Prayer of Adoration and Confession

We pray together, praising God for who He really is (Adoration) and admitting our inability to live up to what He expects of us (Confession).

Song for Advent

In this song for Advent we acknowledge our need of a Savior and anticipate His return.

Come, O Redeemer Come

Songs of Praise and Celebration

Our response to God's free grace is celebratory worship. We express our praise to God for who He is and what He has done to save us

God with Us
Come All Ye Faithful

Assurance of Pardon

We read God's Word together and are reminded that grace and mercy are freely given to all who have faith in Jesus Christ.

13 For the promise to Abraham and his offspring that he would be heir of the world did not come through the law but through the righteousness of faith. 14 For if it is the adherents of the law who are to be the heirs, faith is null and the promise is void. 15 For the law brings wrath, but where there is no law there is no transgression. 16 That is why it depends on faith, in order that the promise may rest on grace and be guaranteed to all his offspring--not only to the adherent of the law but also to the one who shares the faith of Abraham, who is the father of us all, 17 as it is written...

Assurance of Pardon (cont.)

We read God's Word together and are reminded that grace and mercy are freely given to all who have faith in Jesus Christ.

..."I have made you the father of many nations"-- in the presence of the God in whom he believed, who gives life to the dead and calls into existence the things that do not exist. 18 In hope he believed against hope, that he should become the father of many nations, as he had been told, "So shall your offspring be." 19 He did not weaken in faith when he considered his own body, which was as good as dead (since he was about a hundred years old), or when he considered the barrenness of Sarah's womb. 20 No distrust made him waver concerning the promise of God, but he grew strong in his faith as he gave glory to God, 21 fully convinced that God was able to do what he had promised. 22 That is why his faith was "counted to him as righteousness." 23 But the words "it was counted to him" were not written for his sake alone, 24 but for ours also. It will be counted to us who believe in him who raised from the dead Jesus our Lord, 25 who was delivered up for our trespasses and raised for our justification.

(Romans 4:13-25 ESV)

Greeting

In Jesus, we have not only been reconciled to God, we have also been reconciled to one another. Therefore, we greet one another as brothers and sisters.

Prayer of Thanksgiving & Intercession

We again express in prayer our gratitude to God for what he has done and ask him to continue to act for our good and the good of others in our community and the world.

(Children through kindergarten are dismissed for kid's worship)

Proclamation of God's Word

A small portion of God's Word is explained to us and applied to our own lives.

Genesis 11:27-30; 15:1-6; 18:10-14; 21:1-3 *(see insert)*

Confession of Faith: Nicene Creed

We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen...We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, light from light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, of one Being with the Father; through him all things were made. For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven, was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary and became truly human. For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate; he suffered death and was buried. On the third day he rose again in accordance with the Scriptures; he ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and his kingdom will have no end...We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father [and the Son], who with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified, who has spoken through the prophets. We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church. We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins. We look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen

Sacrament of Communion

The ritual meal of Communion is a sign and seal of the grace we have in Jesus. That is, it symbolizes the work Christ did for our salvation (sign) and communicates the grace and mercy we have been given (seal) as a result of His death and resurrection.

Deliver Us

Songs of Response & Sending

We respond to the good news of God's mercy and grace by meditating quietly and by singing again of His goodness and greatness.

Glorious Impossible

Benediction

Because the hand of God's wrath was raised against Jesus, we now receive the hand of God's blessing as we are sent out to live our lives to the glory of God.

May the LORD bless you and keep you;
May the LORD make His face to shine upon you and be gracious to you;
May the LORD turn His face toward you and give you His peace,
Both now and forevermore. Amen.

Announcements

Greeting this morning are the **Bennett & Lear** Community Groups.

Christmas Eve: We will gather in the morning for our regular Sunday morning service. For our annual Candlelight Christmas Eve service we will have two services here at Redeemer City. Those services will be at **5 & 6:30pm**. Childcare will be available through pre-k.

Christmas Party: This year our Christmas Party will be **Saturday, December 16 at 6pm at the Sizemore's Home (227 Lake Link Rd)**. Childcare will be available at the church from 5:45-8:15pm. This event is for adults only. More info to come.

Meals on Wheels: Needs Christmas gifts for their recipients. They want to give a gift to each their 406 recipients. If you are wanting to help in this way, please contact Holly Wampler at **863-289-1779**.

Get Connected: The best way to stay up-to-date with what's happening at Redeemer is through our online newsletter (redeemerwh.org/newsletter) and our mobile app (redeemerwh.org/app).

(There is no offering taken during the service. An offering box is located at the front and the back of the sanctuary.)

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