



First Christian Reformed Church of Lynden

From Generation to Generation for the Glory of God

Advent Devotional 2020

Galatians 4:4-5 But when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth his Son, born of woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons.

The word advent encompasses several meanings, such as anticipation, expectation, coming, longing, desire, waiting, hope of promises fulfilled. We will explore some of these themes in these advent devotionals. This week we will see these themes in three texts from the prophet Isaiah.

Scripture

Isaiah 40:1-11

¹ Comfort, comfort my people, says your God.

² Speak tenderly to Jerusalem, and cry to her that her warfare is ended, that her iniquity is pardoned, that she has received from the Lord's hand double for all her sins.

³ A voice cries: "In the wilderness prepare the way of the Lord; make straight in the desert a highway for our God.

⁴ Every valley shall be lifted up, and every mountain and hill be made low; the uneven ground shall become level, and the rough places a plain.

⁵ And the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together, for the mouth of the Lord has spoken."

⁶ A voice says, "Cry!" And I said, "What shall I cry?"

All flesh is grass, and all its beauty is like the flower of the field.

⁷ The grass withers, the flower fades when the breath of the Lord blows on it; surely the people are grass.

⁸ The grass withers, the flower fades, but the word of our God will stand forever.

⁹ Go on up to a high mountain, O Zion, herald of good news; lift up your voice with strength, O Jerusalem, herald of good news; lift it up, fear not; say to the cities of Judah, "Behold your God!"

¹⁰ Behold, the Lord God comes with might, and his arm rules for him; behold, his reward is with him, and his recompense before him.

¹¹ He will tend his flock like a shepherd; he will gather the lambs in his arms; he will carry them in his bosom, and gently lead those that are with young.

Song

Psalms 59:16 But I will sing of your strength; I will sing aloud of your steadfast love in the morning. For you have been to me a fortress and a refuge in the day of my distress.

[You can Google the hymn to hear it if you would like to sing along.]

Comfort, Comfort Ye My People

Comfort, comfort ye my people,
speak ye peace, thus saith our God;
comfort those who sit in darkness,
mourning 'neath their sorrow's load.
Speak ye to Jerusalem
of the peace that waits for them;
tell her that her sins I cover,
and her warfare now is over.

Yea, her sins our God will pardon,
blotting out each dark misdeed;
all that well deserved his anger
he no more will see or heed.
She hath suffered many a day,
now her griefs have passed away;
God will change her pining sadness
into ever-springing gladness.

For the herald's voice is crying
in the desert far and near,
bidding all men to repentance,
since the kingdom now is here.
O that warning cry obey!
Now prepare for God a way;
let the valleys rise to meet him,
and the hills bow down to greet him.

Make ye straight what long was crooked,
make the rougher places plain;
let your hearts be true and humble,
as befits his holy reign.
For the glory of the Lord
now o'er earth is shed abroad;
and all flesh shall see the token
that his word is never broken.

("Comfort, Comfort Ye My People" Words by Catherine Winkworth (1671), CCLI# 358926 Streaming License #20317932)

Prayer

***II Chronicles 7:14** If my people, who are called by my Name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and heal their land.*

Our Lord and our God, what a glorious blessing to have a shepherd God, a God who is the chief and great shepherd, to whom we are sheep under your care. Because of this we have no real need that is unmet. You can only do good for us so we rest in the pastures you have chosen and lead us into.

Our thirsty and disquieted souls find satisfaction in the living water of your Word. Fill us with your peace in this over-anxious world. Father, lead us away from the unrighteous paths we continually wander off on, enable us to seek your righteousness alone.

We dwell daily in a world in the grip of sin, darkness and death. While in death's shadow be our light and guide. May our only fear be the fear of the Lord which is the beginning of wisdom and salvation. May we dwell secure in the shadow of your cross. May we never despise your rod of discipline and conviction, but submit in obedience to your staff.

Our life is filled with enemies, in the world, our own sinful flesh, and the devil. May we feast on the riches of your grace and goodness, your provision and protection, your health and strength.

Truly you have done more than we deserve, more than we could ask or imagine. Thank you, faithful Shepherd, that not only did you come to us, but you never leave us or forsake us, you are with us always. One thing we ask, one thing we seek after:

Psalm 27:4-5

That I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life,
to gaze upon the beauty of the Lord and to inquire in his temple.

5 For he will hide me in his shelter in the day of trouble.

