



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 61:1-11

The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me, because the Lord has anointed me to bring good news to the poor; he has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to those who are bound;
² *to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all who mourn;*
³ *to grant to those who mourn in Zion—to give them a beautiful headdress instead of ashes, the oil of gladness instead of mourning, the garment of praise instead of a faint spirit; that they may be called oaks of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, that he may be glorified.*
⁴ *They shall build up the ancient ruins; they shall raise up the former devastations; they shall repair the ruined cities, the devastations of many generations.*
⁵ *Strangers shall stand and tend your flocks; foreigners shall be your plowmen and vinedressers;*
⁶ *but you shall be called the priests of the Lord; they shall speak of you as the ministers of our God; you shall eat the wealth of the nations, and in their glory you shall boast.*
⁷ *Instead of your shame there shall be a double portion; instead of dishonor they shall rejoice in their lot; therefore in their land they shall possess a double portion; they shall have everlasting joy.*
⁸ *For I the Lord love justice; I hate robbery and wrong; I will faithfully give them their recompense, and I will make an everlasting covenant with them.*
⁹ *Their offspring shall be known among the nations, and their descendants in the midst of the peoples; all who see them shall acknowledge them, that they are an offspring the Lord has blessed.*
¹⁰ *I will greatly rejoice in the Lord; my soul shall exult in my God, for he has clothed me with the garments of salvation; he has covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decks himself like a priest with a beautiful headdress, and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels.*
¹¹ *For as the earth brings forth its sprouts, and as a garden causes what is sown in it to sprout up, so the Lord God will cause righteousness and praise to sprout up before all the nations.*

Song

Psalm 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.]

Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming

Lo, how a Rose e'er blooming
From tender stem hath sprung!
Of Jesse's lineage coming
As men of old have sung.
It came, a flower bright,
Amid the cold of winter
When half-gone was the night.

Isaiah 'twas foretold it,
The Rose I have in mind:
With Mary we behold it,
The virgin mother kind.
To show God's love aright
She bore to men a Savior
When half-gone was the night.

This Flower, whose fragrance tender
With sweetness fills the air,
Dispels with glorious splendor
The darkness everywhere.
True man, yet very God,
From sin and death He saves us
And lightens every load

("Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming" Words German Carol, Music *Gestliche Kirchengesang* © Public Domain, 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.

Jesus, you are the promised Messiah, which means Anointed One. You read the first part of Isaiah 61 when you were in the synagogue at Nazareth and declared, "Today this Scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing."

Jesus, we need to hear this good news again and again, especially in our day. Many of us feel the poverty and bankruptcy of our own spirits and need to hear the riches of your good news. Many of us are broken-hearted over our sin or the effects of sin in our relationships and world. We need your binding up and healing. Many of us are captive to the Evil One or captive to sin, fear, anxiety, doubt, loneliness. Proclaim your true forgiveness and freedom to us. Many are blind to the truth of your Word, give them sight. Many of us are mourning the mounting losses we experience everyday in this long season of the virus, comfort your people with that real comfort that can only come from you. Give us all ears to hear in this season the good news.

Anoint us all with the oil of gladness. Clothe us with garments of praise and of your salvation. Put on us your robe of righteousness. Cause righteousness and praise to increase in all the nations. As this year has been like no other, make this Advent season and Christmas like no other in our hearts, homes, families, church and community for your glory. In your name we pray, Amen.