

# Advent

On Sunday November 29<sup>th</sup>, we began celebrating the season of Advent. This season ends on Christmas Eve. The word “*advent*,” means the arrival or coming of a notable person, thing, or event. During the season of Advent, we remember the first coming of Jesus Christ as an infant.

The days and weeks of the Advent season point us to a period of waiting. God’s chosen people have been waiting for the coming of God’s “*Messiah*” or “*Christ*,” from the very beginning, from the time of Creation. After Adam and Eve sinned and fell from grace, God promised that a daughter of Eve would bear a son who would crush Satan and restore all Satan had destroyed.

These same days and weeks point us to the time that Mary and Joseph waited for the coming of Jesus. For nine months Jesus grew within Mary. Even this time of growth was foretold in scripture.

God promised King David that the promised *Messiah* would be one of his descendants. God inspired King David to look back and see God’s hand in his own birth and, at the same time, to look into the distant future and see the birth of the Messiah. “*For you created my inmost being; you knit me together in my mother’s womb. . . . My frame was not hidden from you when I was made in the secret place, when I was woven together in the depths of the earth. Your eyes saw my unformed body; all the days ordained for me were written in your book before one of them came to be.*” (Psalm 139:13,15-16).

God’s Book, the Old Testament, promised that the Messiah would be the son of David and, at the same time, the very Son of God, born of a virgin. A Messiah was promised, who would be born in Bethlehem, and, as a sign of his birth, a star would appear in the east and Gentiles would come to that light. These same Scriptures promised that the Messiah would perform miracles and teach the people about God’s heart. They promised the Messiah would be falsely accused of egregious sins and be killed on the cross for the forgiveness of our sin. They promised the Messiah’s miraculous resurrection, thereby opening up the doorway to eternal life for those who believe.

At just the right time, when his body was fully formed, as God ordained it, Jesus was born.

Luke’s Gospel declares that Jesus’ birth represented the fulfillment of the promise of the Messiah’s Immaculate Conception and virgin birth in Bethlehem. Matthew’s Gospel declares that a star appeared in the east and certain wise men came from another country to pay tribute to, and to worship the infant King Jesus. The Gospels testify to Jesus’ miracles, teaching and his perfect life. Most importantly, they declare Jesus was falsely accused of a crime, crucified, died and rose from the dead in a miraculous resurrection. Jesus did not establish his promised kingdom after his resurrection; rather he ascended into heaven. Jesus did promise that he would come again.

God did not stop with Jesus’ ascension. The New Testament speaks of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit working together in the creation of a new body here on earth. We read in 1 Corinthians 12:1-27, where Paul told the church at Corinth, “Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it.” As God calls us into a saving relationship, we are baptized and grow in faith, we are made members of the body of Christ. A body that has eyes, ears, legs, arms and hands. We are Christ’s presence on earth. It is God who does the growing and the knitting together. This body has grown mysteriously for some 2,000 years and will continue to grow.

As God ordained it, at just the right time, when Jesus' body on earth is fully formed, there will be a birth. There will be another advent when Jesus will return and he will establish his new Kingdom. The members of his body will receive new eternal bodies and we will live with Father, Son and Holy Spirit forever. This is what we wait for. While we wait, Jesus feeds us with Word and Sacrament and gives us jobs to do. Come wait with us every Sunday morning at 9:00AM (Contemporary Service) and 10:30AM (Traditional Service); Christmas Eve at 5:00PM (Praise Band) & 7:00PM (Choir & Special Music) and Christmas Day at 10:30AM (Communion).

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