

Advent 1

Sunday, November 27 begins the season of Advent. The word “Advent” means “coming” or “arrival.” We celebrate Christ’s coming into the world and watch with expectant hope for his coming again. The four weeks of Advent present an opportunity for communal discernment and personal examination, as the church prepares to celebrate the Nativity of the Lord and looks with hope for Christ’s return.

<https://www.presbyterianmission.org/ministries/worship/christianyear/advent/>

Please use our devotion as part of your Advent spiritual practice this year. Our devotion is *Attending to Advent: prose, poetry and prayer* by Terri McDowell Ott of the Presbyterian Outlook. Rev. Ott invites us into the season of advent: “Advent leads us into a time of expectant waiting, a time when our faith can find a foothold despite our unsteady world. “This week’s theme focuses on Mary and asks us to consider who we are in relationship to Mary.

Advent devotionals: https://pfpc.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/11/Advent-2022_wk-1_LARGE-PRINT_bw.pdf

Presbyterian Minute: What do we believe about Mary, the mother of Jesus?

The idea that Mary is “God-bearer” (*theotokos*, in Greek) was affirmed by the church in 451, at the Council of Chalcedon. This is the Council that formulated the Christology we still confess today: that Jesus Christ is “fully human and fully divine.” To confess that the young woman named Mary is the bearer of God is consistent with this affirmation. Born to a human woman, Jesus Christ is as fully human as every baby ever born. His birth to a human woman who is uniquely God-bearer reminds us that this human son is also fully divine. Recognizing Mary as God-bearer leads us to ask questions about the character of our relationship to God. What does it mean to say that Mary — and we — are the bearers of God?

Prayer for the first week in Advent:

Faithful God, your promises stand unshaken through all generations. Renew us in hope, that we may be awake and alert watching for the glorious return of Jesus Christ, our judge and savior, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, forever and ever. Amen.

Book of Common Worship, PCUSA, <https://bookoforder.info/Book-of-Common-Worship.pdf>

Scripture texts for this Sunday: Enrich your worship participation by reflecting on the texts before Sunday.

Worship Service:

Isaiah 11: 1-10 and Matthew 3:1-12

Zoom link for Sunday worship:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83805350569?pwd=ZWc2dVhnKzNVb2ZFS045Sjk1cStEQT09>

Gentle blessings, Pastor Cindy