

*Make of us a people of peace, O God,
born of your Word,
born of your Spirit.*

Saturday, Dec. 19

Read Luke 1:39-45

from Pastor Rodney Hubbs, McMechen—First Christian Church

Elizabeth was the wife of a priest, and Mary was a poor, unknown virgin, yet Elizabeth did not look down on Mary. Prejudice had no place then and it should have no place now among God's people. Instead, Elizabeth immediately proclaimed the baby in Mary's womb as her Lord.

So let us rejoice and react the way Elizabeth's baby did when we think about the birth of Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior. May we put away all the hustle and bustle of the holiday season and focus on the love that Jesus brought into this world. Then let us spread the news throughout the land.

*Thank you, Father, for all your abundant blessings.
Help us to celebrate the real meaning of Christmas:
the birth of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.*

© 2009 Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in West Virginia

All rights reserved.

Permission is granted for non-commercial duplication, to include this copyright notice and attribution of authorship, where given.

For more information, contact Rev. David T. Chafin, Editor: dchafin@wvdisciples.org

Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in West Virginia
1402 Washington Avenue - Parkersburg, WV 26101

Visit Prayerscapes.wordpress.com or www.WVDisciples.org
to read online or subscribe by email

We give thanks for your support
of the ministries of the
Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)
in West Virginia
through the Christmas Offering,
and for your faithful support
of Disciples Mission Fund throughout the year.

Advent Prayerscapes:



Created by The Order of Ministry of the
Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)
in West Virginia

Week Three: JOY

Sunday, Dec. 13

Read Isaiah 12:2-6

from Rev. Judy Bennett, Wheeling—Island Christian Church

I was a child when I regularly visited my great uncle's farm and was allowed to help draw water from his well. As I read this passage I experience a child's joy of anticipation. The heart picture of a thick rope – a wooden bucket – a handle to turn and draw the clear cold water to ground level where I could use a dipper and have a refreshing drink.

In this season, it is with joy that we receive God's precious gift to our lives of Jesus Christ – the living water. We come with joy to the well of salvation - God's well, His rope, His bucket, and we draw and drink with thanksgiving and praise.

“Give thanks to the Lord, and call on His name.”

*Life-giving God, help us to drink deeply of your deep, deep well
and rejoice in the delicious taste of your salvation.*

Monday, Dec. 14

Read Psalm 96

from Pastor Rae Browning, Cumberland, MD—First Christian Church

All the earth sings a new song to the Lord. All the earth prepares for the celebration of Christ Birth. We prepare for such occasions with streamers, balloons, cake and candles, candy, posters, singing, dancing, gathering with happiness swiveling our every being.

God's preparation in celebrating the birth of Jesus can be seen everywhere all the time reminding us of how great and amazing is God. He loves us so much that he fills our lives with decorations and signs everywhere we go in this journey. Do we open our eyes to see and ears to hear all that's there for us? Then let us "Worship the LORD in the splendor of his holiness..."

*Prepare us for the joy of the great celebration, Lord,
as we revel in the signs of new life that surround us.*

Tuesday, Dec. 15

Read Galatians 3:23—4:7

from Rev. Richard Howard, Morgantown—First Christian Church

In his epistle to the church in Galatia, the Apostle Paul states our "oneness in Christ" as a fact. We may not always realize the reality of this truth, but the fact remains that all who are made right with God through faith in Christ are, "...one in Christ Jesus."

In verse 28, Paul addresses the issues of race, class and gender, dismissing them all as outmoded considerations. In the midst of the raging debate, Paul says simply, "There *is* no longer Jew or Greek..." For Christians today, there can no longer be the worldly distinctions of upper class and lower class, black and white, male and female, boss and worker, first world or third world. If all are one in Christ Jesus, we must all live and act with this belief as our polar star.

*Gracious God, as we move ever closer to our celebration
of your gift of the Christ Child, may we truly seek to be
one in him, with him, and for him.*

Wednesday, Dec. 16

Read I John 4:7-16

from Rev. Magdalyn Sebastian, Wheeling—First Christian Church

Most of us have been raised on Hollywood movies depicting Christmas as a magical time of year. *Miracle on 34th Street* and *It's a Wonderful Life* form our vision of the time leading to Christmas. In part, we anticipate this time of the year because of our movie-influenced expectation of a world-wide transformation of human behavior.

Yet the writer of 1 John gives us a basis for this hope. God is Love made manifest in Jesus Christ. When our faith is placed in the

human/divine Jesus, we may be transformed. The love that God showed in Jesus is ours to have and to share with one another. Loving one another in Christ's name, we can be transformed and transform the world. More for than "just the season," it can be our *life*. That's pretty magical.

*Savior God, may we believe that we are loved
and can love to heal a fragmented world.*

Thursday, Dec. 17

Read Psalm 85:8-13

from Rev. William Pollack, St. Albans—First Christian Church

The coming of the Lord will be an exciting time! For a world that is in constant hope for a new day, a fresh start and peace in the midst of all the insanity of life, the Lord will come. When He appears, we shall all experience His words of peace along with the certain assurance we are loved. Our scripture text is filled with imagery that relates a beautiful homecoming. It is loaded with the imagining of a new day.

Let us prepare ourselves for the coming of the Lord this Advent season, even as we seek to extend an invitation to those who seek a new day for themselves as well. May Advent create in us a firmer faith and deeper commitment to our Lord who comes!

*Lord Jesus, we wait hopefully and expectantly for your return.
Come as you will, and find us faithful in our Kingdom work.*

Friday, Dec. 18

Read Micah 5:2-5a

from Rev. Dr. Larry Grimes, Bethany College
and Beech Bottom—Community Christian Church

How to make it—
peace, that is.

The roux is always first.
Stir it up from with least of these.
Begin with the little people. Attend to their voice.
They know from ancient days the recipe.

Don't forget the travail. It must be the birthing kind,
a sharp spice that makes all things new.
Add the mercy next. Then God's steadfast love.
From this shall come strength,
strength that secures to the ends of the earth

... and this shall be peace.