

December 2023

The season of Advent begins a new year in the church. It's a season of preparation. And what precisely are we preparing for? We are preparing for our Lord Jesus to come. Which means that we are not preparing for Him to be born, that's already happened. Yes, we do celebrate and commemorate His birth at the high feast of Christmas and it is glorious and a wonderful recollection that God became man and wears our flesh blood as Immanuel - God with us. But we're not waiting for Him to be born. He has done it. It's a historical fact recorded beautifully in the Gospels as we confess in the creeds of the church.



So if we're not preparing for Jesus to come and be born, what is this preparation of ours in Advent? It is the preparation for Jesus to come again on the last day, which certainly involves recognizing why He had to come and be born as a man: because we needed Him to do it. For our sake Christ left His heavenly throne and was found among men. This should make us pause. This should make us consider what great things He has done for us (1 Samuel 12:24). With reverent awe on His accomplished work and His coming again we should take inventory of our lives. We should put away things that are harmful or that are useless, foster the things that are good and beneficial in the eyes of our Lord, and prepare for the midnight cry of the watchman.

God became man for us and He will come again to gather us into His wedding hall. We should prepare for this by ordering our lives around the gifts our Lord gives even as He comes now in grace through His Word and Holy Supper. You know of prayer and repentance and fasting in the season of Lent, but did you know that Advent has historically been shaped this way also? Yes, increased devotions and even giving something up in Advent fit the scope of the season. The King is coming! Let's get ready! If you decide to give something up (a food or drink, TV, the news, sarcasm, etc.) try replacing it with something to benefit your body and soul. Read the Bible (you could memorize the birth narratives); devote time to prayer with your family; exercise the body God gave you; use your hands to make something for others.

If we want to come to Christmas rightly, Advent is a time to prepare. We need to be very cognizant of why God became man and that He will come again. In doing so, we will have a merry Christmas and rejoice exceedingly with great joy for we will be grounded in the truth that the King comes for us, not in anger or to repay us for our sins, but to be the merciful and gracious God with us from now and into eternity.

Behold, your King is coming to you, righteous and salvation has He! Prepare the way of the Lord!

Happy Advent and Merry Christmas, dear saints in Christ.

- Pastor Suggitt



ADVENT MIDWEEK SERVICES

This time of year, the world hustles from one thing to another, always busy and having no rest. The Church, however, makes wise use of her time, grounds herself in Christ, and has peace. As part of your Advent preparations and rest, gather with the Church to receive the peace of our coming Lord as we hear His Word, pray, and sing as ones who long for the King to come even unto us.

Wed. 12/6 at St. Paul, Linkville

6pm Supper
7pm Vespers

Wed. 12/13 at Good Shepherd, Caseville

7pm Vespers

Wed. 12/20 at St. Paul, Linkville

6pm Supper
7pm Vespers



Life Quote

While it is true that we need to be good stewards of God's earthly gifts, it is sinful to think that we are in full control of preserving this world. It is sinful to fret about the destruction of this world before the Last

Day. This world will not run out of natural resources. We will not be wiped out by climate change, a worldwide pandemic, or a meteor shower if and when those things happen. God says that as long as this earth endures—until Judgment Day—seedtime and harvest, cold and heat, summer and winter, day and night will never cease. God is in control. God will protect, provide, and preserve this world. Trust in God and see His grace and mercy, especially when sin affects this world. Trust that He gives you what you don't deserve and more than you could imagine.

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