

# *The Advent Disciple*

DECEMBER 20, 2020

104 ELM AVENUE  
P.O. BOX 1344  
LOUISA, VA 23093

540-848-6441  
LOUISACHRISTIANCHURCH.ORG  
LCCPASTORV@GMAILCOM

## ***LOVE***

Listen to the Gospel according to Luke:

In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. And he came to her and said, "Greetings, favored one! The Lord is with you." But she was much perplexed by his words and pondered what sort of greeting this might be.

The angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus. He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give to him the throne of his ancestor David. He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end."

Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I am a virgin?" The angel said to her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be holy; he will be called Son of God.

And now, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son; and this is the sixth month for her who was said to be barren. For nothing will be impossible with God."

Then Mary said, "Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word." Then the angel departed from her.



*The  
people  
who  
walked in  
darkness  
have seen  
a great  
light.*

Isaiah 9:2

Advent is about love. Francis Bacon once wrote: “A crowd is not company, faces are but a gallery of pictures, and talk is but a tinkling cymbal, where there is no love.” We are social beings. That is our blessing and our curse. We long for each other. We long to touch, to share, to bare some part of ourselves, to be understood, to invite others into our lives. We all long to lessen the loneliness that lurks in the background of even our most crowded moments.

We are born alone and we will ultimately die alone, but in between we desperately want to be known, to be understood, to belong, to find some kind of acceptance just as we are—some intimacy of soul. And so we reach out with fragile, delicate efforts of love.

But love is dangerous. We can hurt each other. Hearts can be broken. Rejection can come. If you try to belong, you can be excluded, and that can hurt more than being alone. Love, and the vulnerability that comes with it, can be the riskiest business of all. But there is no love without such risks. Like hunger and thirst, the longing for love is implanted deeply within us, and God offers us many opportunities to care, to reach out, and to love.

There is some part of this gift of life that can't be stored up or locked away. Some part of this spirit that God has placed in us will die if we do not spend it or share it or give it away. Love is always a risk, but it is a risk upon which the very heart of our life depends. To love is to touch the heart of God. To look into the eyes of another and recognize our common soul is to see the face of God. Even to feel the ache of a heart broken for love is to discover God's grace.

### **Let us pray:**

Your love, O God, is great, and the risks you have taken were supreme.

**Teach us the way of love, and help us to walk in it.**

From the depths of your creating love, you made us male and female.

**Teach us the way of love, and help us to walk in it.**

In the goodness of your covenant, you created us a community of your love.

**Teach us the way of love, and help us to walk in it.**

In the fullness of time you sent us Jesus, a man of love that risked all for the sake of the world.

**Teach us the way of love, and help us to walk in it.**

In your resurrection power, you have revealed your love to all humanity.

**Teach us the way of love, and help us to walk in it.**

Help us, O God, to reveal your love as we discover anew the tremendous power of the Christmas story and meet again the Christ-child, born anew among us.

**Amen and Amen.**

Peace Love JOY Peace Love JOY

## HOLY NAME CALLING

WONDER COUNSELOR, THE WORD

read

*For a child has been given for us, a son given to us; authority rests upon his shoulders; and the child will be named: Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Parent, Prince of Peace.*

~Isaiah 9:6

*In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.*

~John 1:1

In the translation of Isaiah above, the predicted Messiah is called “Wonderful Counselor.” There’s an older translation that calls the Messiah, “Wonder Counselor,” which we like better, for reasons of poetry, if not accuracy.

A “Wonder Counselor” is not only wonderful as a counselor, but she or he also counsels wonders. Gives advice that makes our jaws drop. Recommends we marvel at the world. Counsels us to fall in love not only with that which is easy to love – easy commitments, lovable people – but also that which is difficult to love: narrow paths, enemies, forgiveness. If we look closely at Jesus, we can see both how he counsels wonder and how he is also the Word, the one who ordered and created and spoke the world into being. “Look!” he says. “Look at how glorious the world is, the stars and planets, the animals and plants, the way it all works together. Look how wonderful you are, in all your parts and all yourself. Look how wonderful even your enemies are.” The baby that the shepherds and magi and star lined up to love would grow up to spend his life pointing to the wonders of the world, both interior and exterior, and inviting people to love it back to life.

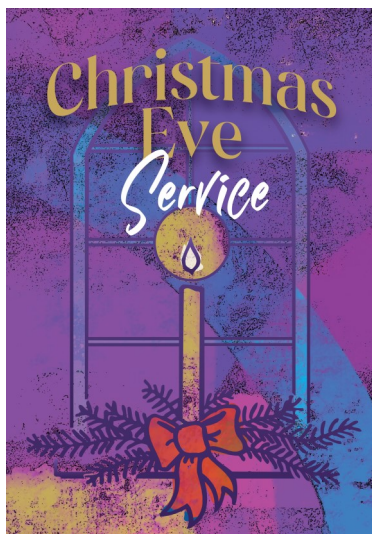
## TITHES AND OFFERINGS

You can give online.  
Visit our website,  
[louisachristianchurch.org](http://louisachristianchurch.org)  
and click on  
“**Tithe Here**”  
to donate using a credit  
card.

You can also donate by  
mailing your contribution  
to:

**Louisa Christian Church**  
**P.O. Box 1344**  
**Louisa, VA 23093**

We thank you for  
your support.



*Please make your reservations for our*

### Christmas Eve Service

Call or text message 540-748-0274 and leave a message indicating your intent to attend the Christmas Eve Service and how many people will be attending in your family. **Even if you regularly attend Sunday Services, please take the time to verify your plans to attend on Christmas Eve.**

**DEADLINE: December 20th**



## Advent Calendar

(Actions, Questions,  
Things to Ponder that will help  
you experience the  
Hope, Peace, Joy and Love  
of the Season)

### December 21

Draw something  
Bake something  
Or  
Make something  
Share it  
with someone.

### December 22

Write your own  
Christmas blessing  
or grace. Share it  
with your friends  
and family

### December 23

Designate days on  
your 2021 calendar  
to count your  
blessings, stop and  
say a prayer of  
thanks.

### December 24

Write a gratitude  
list of 10 things  
that make you  
happy, and then say  
“Thank You” to God  
10 times

In this final week of Advent, our attention is on love. The following Scripture verses may sound very familiar, so we will hear them twice. The first time is in the New Revised Standard Version. The second time you'll be reading from the Message. Listen for the call to love in these words.

Matthew 22:36-40 says, “Teacher, which commandment in the law is the greatest?” He said to him, “‘You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind.’ This is the greatest and first commandment. And a second is like it: ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’ On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.

“Teacher, which command in God’s Law is the most important?” Jesus said, “‘Love the Lord your God with all your passion and prayer and intelligence.’ This is the most important, the first on any list. But there is a second to set alongside it: ‘Love others as well as you love yourself.’ These two commands are pegs; everything in God’s Law and the Prophets hangs from them.”

*Three purple candles and one pink candle are lit.*

God, we have learned to love from being loved by you. And so today, let us enact that love. Let us live that love. We know that what the world needs now is more love. We need to remember how much you love each one of us and we must share that love with others. Amen.



— FOURTH SUNDAY OF —  
**ADVENT**