

Advent Devotional December 25, 2019

Scripture

1 John 4:7-16

7 Beloved, let us love one another, because love is from God; everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. 8 Whoever does not love does not know God, for God is love. 9 God's love was revealed among us in this way: God sent his only Son into the world so that we might live through him. 10 In this is love, not that we loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the atoning sacrifice for our sins. 11 Beloved, since God loved us so much, we also ought to love one another. 12 No one has ever seen God; if we love one another, God lives in us, and his love is perfected in us. 13 By this we know that we abide in him and he in us, because he has given us of his Spirit. 14 And we have seen and do testify that the Father has sent his Son as the Savior of the world. 15 God abides in those who confess that Jesus is the Son of God, and they abide in God. 16 So we have known and believe the love that God has for us. God is love, and those who abide in love abide in God, and God abides in them.

Devotional

The Rev. Dr. Judy A. Angleberger '96

For God so loved the world that he sent his only son . . . (John 3:16).

As parents of a newborn, we pour our love and attention into our infant through cuddling, talking to, cooing, and kissing day after day until one day that infant opens his or her mouth and bites Mommy or Daddy on the chin—an attempt at a kiss. Our baby has learned to respond to love. That love continues to grow and find expression in many ways.

John tells us in his first letter that we love because God first loved us. God pours love into us through Jesus and the Holy Spirit, and in time we learn to respond to that love. “God’s love was revealed among us in this way: God sent his only son into the world so that we might live through him” (v. 9).

Today, we celebrate the expression of God’s steadfast love in that God poured God’s love into our world and into our lives through the birth of Jesus—God’s love personified. How do we respond to such love? John answers, “Let us love one another, because love is from God; everyone who loves is born of God and knows God” (v. 7).

Prayer

God of grace, thank you for loving us and showing us the Way to a personal relationship with you through your son, Jesus. We are thankful for his birth and for his saving grace on the cross. Teach us how to respond to such love by loving one another. In Jesus’ name we pray. Amen.