

Advent Devotional December 22, 2020

Scripture

Revelation 21:22-22:5

22 I saw no temple in the city, for its temple is the Lord God the Almighty and the Lamb. 23 And the city has no need of sun or moon to shine on it, for the glory of God is its light, and its lamp is the Lamb. 24 The nations will walk by its light, and the kings of the earth will bring their glory into it. 25 Its gates will never be shut by day—and there will be no night there. 26 People will bring into it the glory and the honor of the nations. 27 But nothing unclean will enter it, nor anyone who practices abomination or falsehood, but only those who are written in the Lamb's book of life. 22:1 Then the angel showed me the river of the water of life, bright as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb 2 through the middle of the street of the city. On either side of the river is the tree of life with its twelve kinds of fruit, producing its fruit each month; and the leaves of the tree are for the healing of the nations. 3 Nothing accursed will be found there any more. But the throne of God and of the Lamb will be in it, and his servants will worship him; 4 they will see his face, and his name will be on their foreheads. 5 And there will be no more night; they need no light of lamp or sun, for the Lord God will be their light, and they will reign forever and ever.

Devotional

The Rev. Mikayla Kovacic '19

I remember that, as a child, for weeks leading up to Christmas I thought and dreamt of what might await me under the tree on Christmas morning. I also remember the tingle that welled inside me when I thought about the possibility of that big gift—the one I'd "forever" been asking for—being proudly displayed next to the tree. Yes, that big gift would catch my eye as I came down the stairs, and the rest of the day would fade into the background of my joy and excitement.

We always say and hear that Advent is a season of waiting, of anticipation, of hopeful expectation. But what are we really waiting for? What are we really expecting? What are we really hoping for at the culmination of this season?

Throughout the season of Advent, we wait. We wait and prepare to welcome Immanuel, God with us, once again. Yet this passage from Revelation reminds us that, in our time of waiting, we are not merely commemorating the first coming of Jesus—we are waiting, preparing, anticipating, and expecting in hope the *second* coming of Christ. This passage paints a picture for us of what life will look like when God's throne, once again, moves from heaven to earth. In place of the tender whispers of a mother's lullaby and the delicate breaths of a newborn will be a river of the water of life, trees bearing twelve kinds of fruit, and leaves that heal the nations.

This vision from Revelation reminds us that Jesus, God incarnate, has come to reconcile the whole of creation, restore our life, and renew our hope. So this Advent, may we celebrate and wait with hopeful expectation and anticipation of the hope, joy, love, and peace that both has and is yet to come.

Prayer

God of light and love, we thank you for the gift of Immanuel, God with us. Help us to prepare our hearts, our lives, our homes, and our churches for you once again. In all things, teach us to wait with hopeful expectation of what will be. Amen.