

## **Advent Devotional December 25, 2022**

### **Scripture**

John 3:31-36

*31 The one who comes from above is above all; the one who is of the earth belongs to the earth and speaks about earthly things. The one who comes from heaven is above all. 32 He testifies to what he has seen and heard, yet no one accepts his testimony. 33 Whoever has accepted his testimony has certified this, that God is true. 34 He whom God has sent speaks the words of God, for he gives the Spirit without measure. 35 The Father loves the Son and has placed all things in his hands. 36 Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life; whoever disobeys the Son will not see life but must endure God's wrath.*

### **Devotion**

#### **The Rev. Balajiedlang (Bala) Khylllep, Associate Director of PTS World Mission Initiative**

Are you confused yet? If you are like me, you find John's Gospel in so many ways difficult to understand. Nicodemus' confusion when Jesus talks about being born again or born from above resonates with me. I can empathize with John's disciples who seem to be confused about who to believe as superior—John, their prophet and leader who was way ahead of Jesus in proclaiming and baptizing, or this Jesus, whom they witnessed being baptized by John himself and just beginning his ministry.

In these verses, John the Baptist is confronting his disciples that he is nothing in comparison with this Jesus. He was just a messenger sent ahead to prepare the way for the one who comes from above. Therefore, he urged his disciples and those who question his authority to turn their ears and hearts toward Jesus and believe his testimony because he is the one sent by God, full of the Spirit, and is the very Word of God.

John set a great example for all of us. His willingness to set himself aside and with joy, allowing Jesus to be lifted above his popularity, is an important reminder for us as Christians, especially as we live in a world full of misinformation and disinformation. There is so much information we consume that is crafted to uphold control and power over others. It's confusing to know who to believe and what is true in these days, but John reminds us through humility that the truth will be and is revealed.

### **Prayer**

Gracious and loving God, we come before you this Christmas Day knowing that often times we have failed to listen to your gentle and truthful word. We're often confused between the power and prestige of this world with the humble and lowly message brought through Jesus Christ. Give us the ears to hear, eyes to see, and a discerning heart to know and believe what is true and to cling to the truth proclaimed through your only begotten Son, Jesus Christ. Amen.