

**WEEK 2: PEACE**

# ***DEVOTIONALS FOR ADVENT***

***FEATURING UNION BAPTIST CHURCH ASSOCIATE MINISTERS***



# DECEMBER 4

## DEVOTIONAL SCRIPTURE: LUKE 1:26-39

written by Rev. Dave Young

In our devotional reading, we find this unassuming phrase that the church has historically called "Mary's Fiat". In Luke 1:38, "let it be done", when properly understood, punctuates and drives the entire nativity scene. Mary's acceptance of God's will is not as simple as that phrase we find in our Bibles. Buried beneath the layers of Mary's language lies both an unwavering partnership with God and the unresolved fear of following God's purposes into the unknown.

Mary would face social and religious ostracization because of her pregnancy during her betrothed status to Joseph. The threat of birthing a poor Palestinian Jew living under Roman occupation might have given Mary anxiety. Even the possibility of death by being stoned might have floated in Mary's mind as a real possibility.

Mary teaches us that following the will of God is weighty. Likewise, Mary's fiat reminds us that following God without knowing all the details is an act of faith that opens the door to God's joyful surprises.

Mary pivots from her perilous reality to the redemptive possibilities that await on the other side of her, "yes." As a result of Mary's single word of approval, God released through her womb one single Word of hope to the hopeless, one single Word of deliverance to the downtrodden, and one single Word of reprieve to the rejected.

PEACE

Mary's "yes," vaulted her into the dramatic play of God's redemptive story and made her an acclaimed actress in God's salvation history. Her obedience presented the opportunity for God to bring to fruition Israel's long-awaited Messiah, the one who would scatter the proud, overturn kingdoms, lift the lowly, and fulfill the prophets' promises with His stretched arm. Mary's sacrificial "yes" begot the ultimate sacrifice, which sealed our salvation.

Mary's simple "yes" is an unforgettable reminder to the Christian Church that we never know how our consent to God can make us pivotal characters in God's redemptive play. Your willingness to submit to the will of God may be the key to someone's deliverance. May we mirror with our lives Mary's courageous collaboration with God.

### **Something To Think About**

During this Advent season, ask yourself, "what is God asking me to do that requires me to give a wholehearted and unreserved yes?"



**PRAYER FOR TODAY: LORD, I SURRENDER MY WILL TO YOUR WILL. LET YOUR PEACE RULE IN MY HEART. I WILL FOLLOW YOU.**

# DECEMBER 5

## DEVOTIONAL SCRIPTURE: PSALM 24

written by Dr. Harry Lawson

Peace during this Advent season is found in Psalms 24. David in the writing of this Psalm first establishes ownership in verse one; "The earth is the LORD's, and the fulness thereof; The world, and they that dwell therein". David identifies who can stand in His Holy place.

If you want Peace in these trying times David concludes this Psalms with the answer "Lift up your heads, O ye gates; Even lift them up, ye everlasting doors; And the King of glory shall come in". Looking for Peace let the King of Glory and the Prince of Peace come in. That is real peace, my friend.

**PRAYER FOR TODAY: GOD, HELP ME TO SEE EVERY THOUGHT OF WORRY OR ANXIETY AS AN OPPORTUNITY TO PRAY. HELP ME TO RELEASE MY TROUBLES TO YOU. GIVE ME YOUR PEACE THAT BRINGS CALM IN THE MIDST OF CHAOS.**

# DECEMBER 6

## DEVOTIONAL SCRIPTURE: JOHN 14:23-27

At this time of year, we cheerfully give gifts to others and our hearts are delighted to see the looks of appreciation and joy on their faces. As Jesus prepared to go to the cross, He gave the gift of parting reminders and promises to His disciples. He reminded them to obey His teachings. He promised them the Holy Spirit would come to them.

And He gave them the gift of His peace. "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give to you." He said this gift would never be taken away. He gave His peace to help the disciples face the coming dark days without despair or fear. Jesus offers His peace to all those who believe in Him. Since we have His peace, we too can confidently face the coming days and whatever they may bring.

**PRAYER FOR TODAY: MERCIFUL LORD, THANK YOU FOR THE GIFT OF YOUR PEACE. FILL ME WITH YOUR PEACE TO FIGHT THE FEAR THAT COMES WITH THE DIFFICULTIES OF LIFE. THANK YOU FOR POWERFUL PRESENCE THAT BRINGS PEACE**

# DECEMBER 7

## DEVOTIONAL SCRIPTURE: ACTS 1:9-11

written by Rev. Shaquisha Kiki Barnes

Those who have lost loved ones often place emphasis on the last conversation. In doing the same with Acts 1, we glean valuable wisdom concerning restoration. As the text opens, forty days after Jesus is resurrected, the apostles lose their Savior again. How can restoration follow such a deep loss?

During their last time together, Jesus commands them to wait for the baptism of the Holy Spirit, when the apostles ask if this is the time Jesus will restore the kingdom to Israel. In essence, Jesus says, this time is not about what the Father can do for you, but what you can do through the power of the Spirit.

Christ's disciples will soon be given the mantle to continue the work Jesus began, bringing restoration through the kingdom of God. With the Spirit's help, we are fully equipped to bring what we are seeking.

### **Something To Think About**

- Has God ever answered your prayer by equipping you for a task you could not do on your own?
- Remember a time God restored you after a great loss or trial. Can you look back and recognize the presence of God in that process?
- Have you felt the Spirit compelling you to help someone in their journey of restoration?

**PRAYER FOR TODAY: GOD, REMIND ME WHEN I TRY TO CARRY SPIRITUAL, EMOTIONAL OR RELATIONAL BURDENS THAT YOU NEVER INTENDED FOR ME TO CARRY TO TURN THOSE OVER TO YOU. TEACH ME HOW TO TRUST YOU SO THAT I CAN EXPERIENCE THE PEACEFUL REST THAT ONLY YOU CAN PROVIDE.**

# DECEMBER 8

## DEVOTIONAL SCRIPTURE: EPHESIANS 1:15-19

written by Dr. Harry Lawson

In this text, Paul had heard of the new converts at Ephesus and therefore he thanked God for them. Advent is a wonderful time to celebrate anyone accepting Christ as Savior. Paul did not cease to give thanks to God for them.

During Advent, we as Christians should be praying that blinded eyes are opened and a greater understanding of His Word, Will, and Way. Those who are saved must understand the greatness of His power and live in a way that will encourage the lost to ask "What Must I do to be saved?"

During Advent and always we should be a living contagious example of Jesus and His love. Are you seeking the lost during this Advent season?

**PRAYER FOR TODAY: FATHER, THANK YOU FOR SENDING THE PRINCE OF PEACE INTO THE WORLD. HELP ME TO CONSIDER WITH FRESH AMAZEMENT THE WONDERFUL BLESSING OF THE SAVIOR BEING BORN TO BRING SALVATION TO WORLD.  
AMEN**

# DECEMBER 9

DEVOTIONAL SCRIPTURE: LUKE 1:76-80

During the advent season, we see the good news of the coming of Christ appearing in unexpected places. The good news was proclaimed to a peasant teenage girl; the good news was shared with Shepherds in the fields of Bethlehem; the good news was even heralded by a seeming weird prophet in the wilderness named John the Baptist. John was divinely deputized by God at his birth to preach a sermon that pointed to the triumphal entrance of Christ.

We, like John, have been tasked with spreading the message of salvation that conveys Christ's second coming. God reminds humanity in the season of advent that He can place the treasure of the gospel—riches of God's glory—in earthen vessels to guide others into the path of peace.

**PRAYER FOR TODAY: HOLY GOD, THANK YOU FOR ETERNALLY DECREERING SALVATION TO THOSE WHO BELIEVE. THANK YOU FOR PLACING THAT PROMISE ON THE LIPS OF JOHN THE BAPTIST AS A FORE-RUNNER FOR CHRIST'S ADVENT INTO THE WORLD. MAY YOU BESTOW UPON ME THE SAME DIVINE COMMITMENT, SO THAT I MAY SPREAD THE GOOD NEWS OF CHRIST TO OTHERS. AMEN.**



**DECEMBER 10**

## DEVOTIONAL SCRIPTURE: PHILIPPIANS 4:6-7

Have you ever tried to hold in a sneeze? The pressure builds and builds in your sinus cavity and the tingling sensation will not fade away. The best solution and the only relief is to just let the sneeze come out! In today's passage,

Paul reminds us to release our troubles to the Lord so that we can experience His peaceful relief. We are to take all our anxiety, concerns, requests, every situation to the God in prayer. We don't have to try to manage and navigate life on our own holding on to the buildup of pressure in our hearts and minds.

Instead, we can view every situation as an invitation to present our petitions to Christ. When we do, we get to experience His peace that surpasses all our earthly understanding. His peace will stand guard at our hearts and minds and protect us from doubt and the lies of the enemy.

**PRAYER FOR TODAY: GOD, HELP ME TO SEE EVERY THOUGHT OF WORRY OR ANXIETY AS AN OPPORTUNITY TO PRAY. HELP ME TO RELEASE MY TROUBLES TO YOU. GIVE ME YOUR PEACE THAT BRINGS CALM IN THE MIDST OF CHAOS.**