

SUNDAY RECAP | CHRIST COMMUNITY CHURCH

The *Sunday Recap* is a quick rundown of our time of worship together on Sunday and a quick look ahead to next Sunday. Our hope is that this will help us continue to reflect on the good news of the gospel all week long. Enjoy!

RECAP FOR: Sunday, December 16th, 2018

Take me directly to:

1. [PREPARE for this Sunday](#)
2. [REFLECT on last Sunday](#)
3. [Further Reflection and Study](#) (resources, questions, etc.)
4. [Resources for Kids \(and Parents\)](#)
5. [Sermon Review](#)

PREPARE FOR THIS SUNDAY [\(back to table of contents\)](#)

// Call to Worship //

We gather in preparation, for good news is about to be proclaimed.
We gather in expectation, for joy is about to explode in our midst.
We gather in celebration, for we are those people who have said
yes to the manger,
yes to love enfleshed,
yes to the One incarnate for others,
yes to the wholeness of God
With preparation and in expectation, let us celebrate!

// Prayer of Confession //

Leader: God of salvation, in Christ you have done great things—
our hearts are filled with joy.
By your power you lifted us out of the wasteland of sin
and brought us with joy and laughter into your kingdom.
Salvation is your gift to us.

All: But we confess that often we try to replace your gift with our own efforts. We try to complete what is already perfect;

Leader: we try to add to what is already full;
we try to earn what we already have.

All: Forgive us for our foolishness.

Leader: Help us to focus on your grace.

Help us to live grateful lives in return.
For Jesus' sake alone, Amen.
—based on Psalm 126

// Assurance of Pardon //

How can we know that our sins are forgiven? Because Christ has died in our place. Your sins have received the full wrath of God in the person of Christ. Now he has only love and compassion for all those with faith that Jesus is all they need. Shame and guilt are now powerless, God has declared you forgiven. Receive this gift and rejoice in the God of Grace. Amen.

// Passing of the Peace //

May the peace of Christ dwell in you richly this Advent season! Take a moment to display His peace by greeting one another here this morning.

// Lighting of Advent Candle //

Then the glory of the LORD shall be revealed,² and all the people shall see it together,²
for the mouth of the LORD has spoken. ²
—Isaiah 40:5

Pastoral Prayer and Offering

Sermon- Advent Week #4

// Benediction //

(based on Psalm 73)

May his name endure forever,
his fame continue as long as the sun.
May all nations be blessed in him.
May Jesus Christ be praised!
Merry Christmas and Peace Be With You!

All: And also with you!

REFLECT ON LAST SUNDAY [\(back to table of contents\)](#)

// Call to Worship //

Leader: Rejoice in the Lord always.

All: I will say it again: Rejoice!

Leader: Let your gentleness be evident to all.

All: The Lord is near.

Leader: We rejoice in the hope of Christ's coming.

Let us worship our God!

—based on Philippians 4:4-5

“Adore the King” by Ryan Hammer

[O Come, O Come Emmanuel](#)

// Prayer of Confession //

Leader: While we ask, Lord, for the most meaningful Advent season ever, we sadly confess having done so little with so much.

Forgive us Lord,

for not bending the knee,

for not reading your Word,

for not searching our hearts,

for not facing our sins.

Forgive us according to your tender mercies, O God!

Grant that when Christmas morning breaks for us this year, we may have a fresh sense of your presence and a renewed resolve to live to the praise of Christ's glory.

ALL: Amen.

// Assurance of Pardon //

Leader: Surely God's salvation is at hand for those who fear him, that his glory may dwell in our land.

Steadfast love and faithfulness will meet;

righteousness and peace will kiss each other.

Faithfulness will spring up from the ground,
and righteousness will look down from the sky.

The Lord will give what is good,
and our land will yield its increase.

Righteousness will go before him and will make a path for his steps.
In Christ, God's salvation is at hand, and righteousness has come.

ALL: Thanks be to God!

—based on Psalm 85:9-13

[He Has Come for Us \(God Rest Ye Merry Gentlemen\)](#)

// Passing of the Peace //

During ADVENT as we celebrate the coming of the Prince of Peace, it seems fitting that we would welcome one another with peace here this morning. Take a moment to do just that.

// Lighting of Advent Candle //

The LORD says to his servant,
“It is too light a thing that you should be my servant
to raise up the tribes of Jacob
and to restore the survivors of Israel; I will give you as a light to the nations,
that my salvation may reach to the end of the earth.”
—from Isaiah 49:6

Pastoral Prayer and Offering

Sermon- Advent Week #3

CCC Kids sing Christmas Songs!

[Do You Hear What I Hear](#)

[Jesus Loves the Little Children](#)

// Benediction //

Leader: May the Lord make you increase and abound in love for one another and for all.
Go in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.
Peace be with you!

ALL: And also with you!

FURTHER REFLECTION & STUDY [\(back to table of contents\)](#)

Scripture to Meditate On:

And his mercy is for those who fear him...
Luke 1:50

Heidelberg Catechism

Q & A 33

Q. Why is he called God’s “only begotten Son”
when we also are God’s children?

A. Because Christ alone is the eternal, natural Son of God.¹

We, however, are adopted children of God—
adopted by grace through Christ.²

¹ John 1:1-3, 14, 18 ; Heb. 1

² John 1:12; Rom. 8:14-17; Eph. 1:5-6

This Weeks Theological Word and Definition:

Covenant (Biblical)

There are three key points to define Biblical covenants:

The covenants we are concerned with in Scripture are God's covenants with his people or mankind in general.

God is the author and initiator of them.

They are divine commitments bound by oath—God's promises or oaths to humans with seals and/or signs.

...It is worth mentioning the role that divine covenants play in Scripture. God's purpose in history is to govern his kingdom of creation and bring forth his holy kingdom. His covenants, therefore, are the way that God administers his kingdom. ...God's covenants embody that relationship: what God has done for us, as well as our obligations to him. Hence, covenant is not a means to an end, but it is the end itself—the communion between God and his people.

(Adapted from Keele and Brown, *Sacred Bond*, pp. 17-18)

Reflection Questions:

- In our *Assurance of Pardon*, we stated, "In Christ, God's salvation is at hand, and righteousness has come." When we confess our sin we are forgiven because of the death of Christ for sin, but where does our righteousness come from? How can we be sure that it's enough?
- How is hope found in weakness?
- Think of a time when you hid your weakness, neediness, or sin. Do you do that often? What do you fear by letting others know of those in you?
- How can you speak the gospel to yourself in the midst of your desire to hide your weakness?

Suggested Resources from last week:

Articles: [Power in Weakness](#) by Ligonier Ministries
[Prepare Him Room](#) by Grace Leuenberger
[The Virgin Birth](#) by David Mathis

*******LENT DEVOTIONALS*******

[Seasons](#) by Village Church
[Advent: The Whole Story](#) by Paul Tripp

Advent Exercise: [A Passover Meal Experience](#) by Brad Watson

RESOURCES FOR KIDS (and Parents) [\(back to table of contents\)](#)

5-minute Video (because we know that's all the time you have) ;)
[Grief in Parents Produces Grace in Parenting](#) with Paul Tripp

Get the New City Catechism App: <http://newcitycatechism.com/mobile-apps/>

New City Catechism

Question 49

Where is Christ now?

Christ rose bodily from the grave on the third day after his death and is seated at the right hand of the Father, ruling his kingdom and interceding for us, until he returns to judge and renew the whole world.

FAMILY BIBLE TIME GUIDE

Read aloud together:

Luke 1:50-53

He shows mercy from generation to generation
to all who fear him.

His mighty arm has done tremendous things!

He has scattered the proud and haughty ones.

He has brought down princes from their thrones
and exalted the humble.

He has filled the hungry with good things
and sent the rich away with empty hands.

Questions for Children and Parents to discuss:

- What is “mercy”? (help them see that it is “NOT getting what you DO deserve”) Can you think of a time when you didn't receive something that you deserved?
- What is the MERCY Mary is talking about here- the MERCY we receive from God?
- If God gives us mercy, what does that tell you about what God is like? What does it tell you about how God feels about us?

Prayer

God of mercy, today we thank you for all the mercy we've received! We certainly deserve to be separated from you forever because of our sin. But instead you sent Jesus so that you could love us and we could love you. Even though we are sinners we are loved because of Jesus. Thank you God. Give us someone to tell this great news to this week! And help us to remind each other when we forget that God is full of mercy. Amen!

Sermon Review ([back to table of contents](#))

Title: “The God of Paradox”

Text: Luke 1:46-55

Watch: <https://cccplainfield.org/sermon/advent-week-3-the-god-of-paradox/>

Podcast: <https://cccplainfield.org/subscribe-to-podcast>

Song lyrics can stick with you. If you were in high school in the 90's and I said, “All right stop... Collaborate and listen, Ice is back with my brand new invention”, I bet you'd know what song I was referring to. They have a way of sticking with you don't they? Well the lyrics of Mary's song here in Luke chapter one do more than just stick with you, they teach you about who God is and why He is so amazing.

There seems to be a theme of paradox in the words of Mary. First, she mentions that God's gift of mercy is for the *terrified*. Most translations say “fear” but that doesn't really get at the depth of the word here. This is much more than a proper respect for God. Respect for God doesn't warrant mercy. Mercy is needed when you believe that you deserve God's wrath but you don't receive it. Why would Mary say such a thing? It can only be that she, a Jewish teenager, understands the law. She knows of the requirement of God's righteousness and realizes she can't meet those. Further she realizes she does not deserve God's blessing, but rather deserves God's cursing.

That is the exact posture from which we approach God. Wasn't that why John the Baptist came? To call the people to repentance? It's the purpose of the law, the prophets, Elijah, and John the Baptist. They all prepare us to be in the proper place when God arrives- a place of repentance.

Mary's blessedness is not in that she is some divine being, but in that she sees who she is before God and knows of her need for mercy.

Secondly, God's strength is for the weak.

Luke 1:51-53

He has shown strength with his arm;
he has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts;
he has brought down the mighty from their thrones and exalted those of humble estate;
he has filled the hungry with good things, and the rich he has sent away empty.

This is a song of praise for God's mercy to Mary, yet here it sounds more like a war song! She claims God is violent against the strong. He will scatter them, break them, and bring them down! And in their place he raises up the lowly, makes the poor rich, lifts up the needy, and exalts the humble.

This is the paradox of God and the paradox of the gospel! Religion has no paradox. The bad get rejected and the good are accepted. But the God of the universe operates differently. He comes for the ones who realize they aren't righteous and don't deserve Him. He assumes the weakness of the weak so the weak can be strong. He assumes the poverty of the poor so the poor can become rich. That is the good news of Jesus coming to earth. That is why Mary breaks out in a song of praise. She can't believe it! She is loved by the Almighty! But this isn't just for her. It's for everyone. Now everyone can come and receive what was promised to Abraham, and be a descendant of Abraham. Why? Because those promises are true in Jesus. So to receive the blessing of God you need not be of a certain lineage or family descent, rather, you only need what the Law, Elijah, John the Baptist, and Mary told us about- repentance and faith in the God who doesn't give us what we deserve. Hallelujah!