



**“The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son, and will call Him Immanuel” Isaiah 7:14.** The Scripture points to God’s promise of a Savior that would be fulfilled in the person and work of Christ as **St. Luke** reveals in **chapter 2:7**, **“She gave birth to her firstborn, a son. She wrapped Him in cloths and placed Him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn.”** Jesus, the Savior, the God/Man, was born of the Virgin Mary as the Scripture foretold.

God Himself would enter human history taking on human flesh through the miraculous birth to the virgin as the Scripture foretold. Isaiah calls Him “Immanuel” which means God with us, to show us that this is God Himself who has come to “dwell with us in the flesh.” Jesus is the God/Man, “true God, begotten of the Father from eternity, and also true Man, born from the Virgin Mary” as the explanation of the Second Article of The Apostles’ Creed teaches.

God’s promise of a Savior would come as the Old Testament prophecy had foretold, while The New Testament gives to us the fulfillment of that prophecy in the birth of Christ, into human flesh (**John 1:14**), that the true God could be also true Man for us.

This promised Savior, this God/Man would be exactly like all other humans, only He would have no sin. He would live the life of the poor like others, not having roof nor bed nor belongings nor any other earthly possessions. He was born in a stable and would be carried to Egypt for protection from the cruel hand of a jealous king. During His life and ministry, some would try to throw Him down from the top of a hill (**Luke 4:29**) and at another time, some tried to stone Him to death (**John 8:59**). He would suffer in great misery under Pontius Pilate, yet without complaint, He goes to the cross, the willing sacrifice for the sins of the world. He dies on the cross, yet rises triumphant on The Third Day to conquer sin, death and the devil forever.

Today, we celebrate His first coming during the season of Advent while looking forward to His second coming when He will take all believers to Himself in heaven to enjoy the blessings that His death and resurrection have earned for all believers forever.

We may live in a world and culture that has changed, yet our loving God does not change but keeps His promises in Christ for us that all who believe need never fear. We know that as the world changes around us, we are secure in our Savior’s arms that He will preserve His Church, that we would be nourished in Word and Sacrament to strengthen our faith.

Advent and Christmas remind us once again of God’s promises made and then kept in the appearance of Christ into our world, that our salvation has been won and our place in eternity secured through Him who gave His all for us. The Collect for the Day on The First Sunday in Advent reminds us that God has come, that our sins would be lifted from us through His grace and mercy and that He will come again to grant life everlasting.

Stir up Your power, O Lord, and come and help us  
by Your might, that the sins which weigh us down  
may be quickly lifted by Your grace and mercy;  
for You live and reign with the Father and the Holy  
Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

My family and I wish you a most Blessed Christmas and New Year as we rejoice in the birth of our Savior, Jesus Christ who has given us forgiveness, life and salvation!

In Christ’s Service  
Pastor Ahrendt

“Glory to God in the highest...”