



Fellowship Church at Plum Creek  
Advent Devotional Week 3

Greetings church family! As advent moves into its third week, we're excited to share some devotionals from our pastors. May your hearts continue to be blessed as you reflect on the beauty of the birth of our wonderful Savior, Jesus Christ. Grace and peace to you!

Love,  
Fellowship Church at Plum Creek





Fellowship Church at Plum Creek  
Advent Devotional Dec. 13  
Luke 1:5-13

<sup>5</sup>There was in the days of Herod, the king of Judea, a certain priest named Zacharias, of the division of Abijah. His wife *was* of the daughters of Aaron, and her name *was* Elizabeth. <sup>6</sup>And they were both righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless. <sup>7</sup>But they had no child, because Elizabeth was barren, and they were both well advanced in years.

<sup>8</sup>So it was, that while he was serving as priest before God in the order of his division, <sup>9</sup>according to the custom of the priesthood, his lot fell to burn incense when he went into the temple of the Lord. <sup>10</sup>And the whole multitude of the people was praying outside at the hour of incense. <sup>11</sup>Then an angel of the Lord appeared to him, standing on the right side of the altar of incense. <sup>12</sup>And when Zacharias saw *him*, he was troubled, and fear fell upon him.

<sup>13</sup>But the angel said to him, “Do not be afraid, Zacharias, for your prayer is heard; and your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you shall call his name John.

*This is how Luke’s gospel begins, how his story begins. They were good folks. They lived responsible lives and worked hard to do the “right thing”. Their families had been well known and respected for generations, and they themselves were faithful, upstanding citizens. He was committed to his work and diligent, she was a pious and astute partner. And yet there was a sharp longing within them, often suppressed - a tug, a hope, a dream - never quite fulfilled by the routine of their ordinary, yet beautiful, well-lived lives. Our longings are sharper and closer to the surface than ever in this year of disaster and dissension, fires and fury, pandemic and panic. We go about our lives as best we can, trying to do the “right thing”, and yet still yearn for healing and wholeness in the broken places and empty bits of our own lives, and for the world. We long for the fulfillment of our unique dreams, and for the salvation of the world. Like Zechariah and Elizabeth our longings are both personal and universal. Their hope was for a baby, their baby, but also for the baby, the one who was to come and set things right. This is the beginning of our story too, in this Advent 2020. Good folks going about our regular lives, trying to do the “right thing”, and yet yearning, longing, aching more than ever for God to come and save us, and set things right. Come, Lord Jesus.*

*Special thanks to our Children’s Pastor Robert for this devotional.*





Fellowship Church at Plum Creek  
Advent Devotional Dec. 14  
Luke 1:14-17

<sup>14</sup>And you will have joy and gladness, and many will rejoice at his birth. <sup>15</sup>For he will be great in the sight of the Lord, and shall drink neither wine nor strong drink. He will also be filled with the Holy Spirit, even from his mother's womb. <sup>16</sup>And he will turn many of the children of Israel to the Lord their God. <sup>17</sup>He will also go before Him in the spirit and power of Elijah, 'to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children,' and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just, to make ready a people prepared for the Lord."

*One of the greatest privileges we have as believers in Christ, is being filled with the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is always about the Father's business. With the Holy Spirit, we are able to demonstrate love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control (Galatians 5:22-23). Yes, by His Spirit we can experience joy and gladness and share that same opportunity with others! There is another spirit we can fall under, and that is the spirit of drunkenness. Notice in the Scriptures John was to never drink wine nor strong drink. God had chosen him to have a great impact for the kingdom and in all his wisdom I imagine He wanted no one to be able to rightly accuse him of being under any other spirit other than the Holy Spirit. After all, God knew one day he would be standing in the waters dressed in a garment of camel's hair with a leather belt around his waist, eating locusts and wild honey, all the while making declarations to "prepare the way for the Lord, make straight paths for Him" (Matthew 3:3-4). That must have been quite a sight to see! This Christmas season what will people behold of you? May you be influenced by the Holy Spirit above anyone or anything of this world.*

~Paul





Fellowship Church at Plum Creek  
Advent Devotional Dec. 15  
Luke 1:18-25

<sup>18</sup> And Zacharias said to the angel, “How shall I know this? For I am an old man, and my wife is well advanced in years.”

<sup>19</sup> And the angel answered and said to him, “I am Gabriel, who stands in the presence of God, and was sent to speak to you and bring you these glad tidings. <sup>20</sup> But behold, you will be mute and not able to speak until the day these things take place, because you did not believe my words which will be fulfilled in their own time.”

<sup>21</sup> And the people waited for Zacharias, and marveled that he lingered so long in the temple. <sup>22</sup> But when he came out, he could not speak to them; and they perceived that he had seen a vision in the temple, for he beckoned to them and remained speechless.

<sup>23</sup> So it was, as soon as the days of his service were completed, that he departed to his own house. <sup>24</sup> Now after those days his wife Elizabeth conceived; and she hid herself five months, saying, <sup>25</sup> “Thus the Lord has dealt with me, in the days when He looked on *me*, to take away my reproach among people.”

*Have you ever spoken a little too quickly without thinking?*

*Zacharias had been praying for years to become a father and it was the dream of Elizabeth to be a mother. Also, being barren in the Hebrew culture brought shame but God redeemed her and answered their prayers. However, Zacharias, a priest from the tribe of Levi, learned the hard way what James taught us in chapter 1 verse 19 of his letter “Know this, my beloved brothers: let every person be quick to hear, slow to speak, slow to anger;” Due to Zacharias’ questioning and doubt the angel, Gabriel, caused Zacharias to be deaf and mute until John the Baptist was born. Zacharias had 9 months to pray and ponder the miracle of God spoken to him through Gabriel. This reminds us to be careful how we speak this Christmas season.*

*Luke 6:45 A good man out of the good treasure of his heart brings forth good; and an evil man out of the evil treasure of his heart brings forth evil. For out of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaks.*

- *Pray for the Lord to help you become quick to listen and slow to speak. (James 1:19)*
- *Pray that the words that you speak will encourage others and build them up. (1 Thess 5:11)*

*Special thanks to our Lead Pastor Chris for this devotional.*





Fellowship Church at Plum Creek  
Advent Devotional Dec. 16  
Luke 1:39-45

<sup>39</sup> Now Mary arose in those days and went into the hill country with haste, to a city of Judah, <sup>40</sup> and entered the house of Zacharias and greeted Elizabeth. <sup>41</sup> And it happened, when Elizabeth heard the greeting of Mary, that the babe leaped in her womb; and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit. <sup>42</sup> Then she spoke out with a loud voice and said, “Blessed *are* you among women, and blessed *is* the fruit of your womb! <sup>43</sup> But why *is* this *granted* to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me? <sup>44</sup> For indeed, as soon as the voice of your greeting sounded in my ears, the babe leaped in my womb for joy. <sup>45</sup> Blessed *is* she who believed, for there will be a fulfillment of those things which were told her from the Lord.”

*What an amazing account, to read about a baby who was not yet born being filled with the Holy Spirit! And what a beautiful response by Elizabeth towards Mary when she came to visit her. It makes me reflect, when I receive brothers and sisters in Christ, am I excited? Do I give thanks to God for their arrival? These days, the pandemic has caused us to go into isolation and for many of us, to the detriment of our psychological and physical well-being. As believers, we are blessed to be part of the body of Christ. We are blessed to be in community, to encourage and comfort one another. Let's pray we would be sensitive to the Holy Spirit's leading to call or visit that someone the Lord lays on our heart. This season let's pray that we would receive one another with enthusiasm when we are blessed by that special visit from believers in Jesus Christ.*

~Paul



Fellowship Church at Plum Creek  
Advent Devotional Dec. 17  
Luke 1:46-56

<sup>46</sup> And Mary said:

“My soul magnifies the Lord,

<sup>47</sup> And my spirit has rejoiced in God my Savior.

<sup>48</sup> For He has regarded the lowly state of His maidservant;  
For behold, henceforth all generations will call me blessed.

<sup>49</sup> For He who is mighty has done great things for me,  
And holy *is* His name.

<sup>50</sup> And His mercy *is* on those who fear Him  
From generation to generation.

<sup>51</sup> He has shown strength with His arm;  
He has scattered *the* proud in the imagination of their hearts.

<sup>52</sup> He has put down the mighty from *their* thrones,  
And exalted *the* lowly.

<sup>53</sup> He has filled *the* hungry with good things,  
And *the* rich He has sent away empty.

<sup>54</sup> He has helped His servant Israel,  
In remembrance of *His* mercy,

<sup>55</sup> As He spoke to our fathers,  
To Abraham and to his seed forever.”

<sup>56</sup> And Mary remained with her about three months, and returned to her house.

*What an amazing moment in history! The messiah that the Jews have been waiting for has been placed in the womb of a young girl named Mary. Reading through Mary's reaction, "The Magnificat," there are so many promises that Jesus will soon fulfill. The promise that I want us to meditate upon during this Christmas season is the eternal aspect of the reign of Jesus. Words like generation to generation are used and forever. When we enter into this life with Christ we can know that it is a firm foundation. A kingdom that will last forever.*

*Special thanks to our Youth Pastor Brandon for this devotional.*





Fellowship Church at Plum Creek  
Advent Devotional Dec. 18  
Luke 1:57-66

<sup>57</sup> Now Elizabeth's full time came for her to be delivered, and she brought forth a son. <sup>58</sup> When her neighbors and relatives heard how the Lord had shown great mercy to her, they rejoiced with her.

<sup>59</sup> So it was, on the eighth day, that they came to circumcise the child; and they would have called him by the name of his father, Zacharias. <sup>60</sup> His mother answered and said, "No; he shall be called John."

<sup>61</sup> But they said to her, "There is no one among your relatives who is called by this name." <sup>62</sup> So they made signs to his father—what he would have him called.

<sup>63</sup> And he asked for a writing tablet, and wrote, saying, "His name is John." So they all marveled. <sup>64</sup> Immediately his mouth was opened and his tongue *loosed*, and he spoke, praising God. <sup>65</sup> Then fear came on all who dwelt around them; and all these sayings were discussed throughout all the hill country of Judea. <sup>66</sup> And all those who heard *them* kept *them* in their hearts, saying, "What kind of child will this be?" And the hand of the Lord was with him.

*God's timing, what does that look like? If I had to use only one word, it would be trust. No sonograms, no research books, just the ever present reality of Elizabeth's belly growing until its full time came for her to have her baby. Would Zacharias ever speak again? No formula, no advance notice, just God's perfect timing when he would loosen his tongue and give God praise. Yes, trust is what God's timing looks like. Jesus was always about His Father's business and therefore submitted to God's timing whether knowing (John 2:4, 7:6) or not knowing (Matthew 24:36) but always trusting. This advent season, what are you waiting on the Lord for? Can you trust Him with His perfect timing?*

*~Paul*



Fellowship Church at Plum Creek  
Advent Devotional Dec. 19  
Luke 1:67-80

<sup>67</sup> Now his father Zacharias was filled with the Holy Spirit, and prophesied, saying:  
<sup>68</sup> “Blessed is the Lord God of Israel, for He has visited and redeemed His people,  
<sup>69</sup> And has raised up a horn of salvation for us in the house of His servant David,  
<sup>70</sup> As He spoke by the mouth of His holy prophets, who *have been* since the world began,  
<sup>71</sup> That we should be saved from our enemies and from the hand of all who hate us,  
<sup>72</sup> To perform the mercy *promised* to our fathers and to remember His holy covenant,  
<sup>73</sup> The oath which He swore to our father Abraham: <sup>74</sup> To grant us that we, being delivered from the hand of our enemies, might serve Him without fear, <sup>75</sup> In holiness and righteousness before Him all the days of our life. <sup>76</sup> “And you, child, will be called the prophet of the Highest; for you will go before the face of the Lord to prepare His ways, <sup>77</sup> To give knowledge of salvation to His people by the remission of their sins, <sup>78</sup> Through the tender mercy of our God, with which the Dayspring from on high has visited us; <sup>79</sup> To give light to those who sit in darkness and the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace.” <sup>80</sup> So the child grew and became strong in spirit, and was in the deserts till the day of his manifestation to Israel.

*A few years ago, while watching my kids open their Christmas presents at my parent’s house, my mom leaned over and whispered to me “This is what it’s all about”. By “it”, I assumed she meant Christmas. I could see the joy on her face watching her grandkids squeal and gasp over each new package. I smiled back but inside I was saddened. My family, a family deeply involved in ministry, had somehow spent the week leading up to Christmas doing everything but focusing on Jesus. Now the day was here and still no mention to the greatest gift ever given. Zechariah just saw his promised baby born and named him John, his first utterance in 9 months. What a joyous moment for Elizabeth and Zechariah. It was a time to be the proud father and declare all the angel had said to him about his son. Then Zechariah stands up and begins to prophecy about....Jesus. He declares that Jesus will redeem (68), save (69), forgive (77), and bring light to (79) the people of God. His prophecy does have two verses directed toward his new son. But that’s only 2 out of the 11 total verses. See, Zechariah was filled with the Holy Spirit (67), as was his son (15), and the Holy Spirit will always point us toward Jesus. May we fight the tendency to make it all about us and ours. Let this Christmas be one where we remember who it’s all about.*

*Pray for the lost. Pray that the Holy Spirit would point them toward Jesus. Pray that God would use you to grow the kingdom. What an amazing gift to give someone this year. The gift of the gospel.*

*Special thanks to our Worship Pastor Jonathan for this devotional.*

