

KAC *ADVENT* STUDIES

Reflections on the Coming of Jesus



Kiama Anglican Churches
November-December 2020

Advent and the Seasons of the Year

In ancient and not so ancient times the Church year was divided up into seasons such as 'Epiphany' (towards the start of the calendar year, celebrating Christ's appearance on the earth), 'Lent' (beginning on Ash Wednesday and running up to Easter), 'Trinity' (celebrating the nature of our triune God) and, of course, Easter and Christmas. However, the church year began (and in much of the world still begins) with the four Sundays leading up to Christmas which are called 'Advent'.

It is this 2020 Advent season that this four-part series of sermons and studies celebrates. Advent celebrates both the first and second comings of Jesus. As we look at the Old Testament passages we will see the anticipation and prediction of both of these events and the need for them; and from the New Testament we will note the coming of Jesus to that manger in Bethlehem and the final fulfillment of Jesus' incarnation, birth, perfect life, death, resurrection, ascension and reign in his coming again to bring and demonstrate his perfect kingdom.

We will be reminded of God's overarching plan of salvation and his means of dealing with the rebellion that sin represents through the death of Jesus. We will be reminded that God is continually calling a people to himself to be as 1 Peter 2:9 (and Exodus 19) puts it *a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's special possession, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light.*

So as the Christmas season draws near and we so easily get caught up in the hustle and bustle of events, presents, decorations, family dinners, kids' expectations and the seemingly ever present portly old gentleman in a red suit, let us take the time to turn to 'the reason for the season' and to remember that it is all about, as one card I saw said, 'Kid born in shed saves world!' - all about Jesus our Lord and Saviour.

Happy Advent!

Greg Holmes (November 2020)

A Word About the Format of These Studies.

If you look at these 'studies' you will not that they are not the normal Question and Answer style.

For each week there are four passages set - one from the Old Testament, one from the Psalms, one from the later New Testament and one from the Gospels.

If you are using these as a group, the idea is to read through the passages one by one (or, if there are enough people, a smaller group could look at each passage and 'report back') and then share some thoughts on each of the questions.*

The first section basically asks you to talk about what jumps out at you from the passage - it might be the main point or it might be something that has impressed itself on you.

The second section enables you to ask what questions the passage raises for you. What puzzles you? What words don't you understand? What phrases are difficult? Of course, you then need to seek answers either in the group or through other resources.

The third section ask you to ponder what your response to this should be. This is the application of the passage for you. What are you going to DO in response to God's Word?

The final section suggest you should seek things to pray about from the passage.

This is a different approach than we are used to and needs each person to commit to giving serious thought and perhaps some research into the passages.

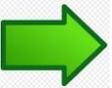
It is of course possible, with just a few modifications, to do this as individuals.

There will be a set of notes with some commentary on each of the passages.

**This is based on what has been called 'The Swedish Method' of Bible Study*

KAC Advent 2020 **1**

Readings and Discussions

	Old Testament	Psalm	New Testament	Gospel
	<u>Isaiah 64:1-9</u>	<u>Psalm 80:1-7, 17-19</u>	<u>1 Corinthians 1:3-9</u>	<u>Mark 13:24-37</u>
What shines from the Passage? 				
What questions does the passage raise? 				
What personal response can you see? 				
What are you prompted to pray about? 				

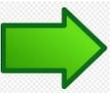
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Readings and Discussions

	Old Testament	Psalm	New Testament	Gospel
	<u>Isaiah 40:1-11</u>	<u>Psalm 85:1-2, 8-13</u>	<u>2 Peter 3:8-15a</u>	<u>Mark 1:1-8</u>
What shines from the Passage? 				
What questions does the passage raise? 				
What personal response can you see? 				
What are you prompted to pray about? 				

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Readings and Discussions

	Old Testament	Psalm	New Testament	Gospel
	<u>Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11</u>	<u>Psalm 126</u>	<u>1 Thessalonians 5:16-24</u>	<u>John 1:6-8, 19-28</u>
What shines from the Passage? 				
What questions does the passage raise? 				
What personal response can you see? 				
What are you prompted to pray about? 				

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Readings and Discussions

	Old Testament	Psalm	New Testament	Gospel
	<u>2 Samuel 7:1-11, 16</u>	<u>Psalms 89:1-4, 19-26</u>	<u>Romans 16:25-27</u>	<u>Luke 1:26-38</u>
What shines from the Passage? 				
What questions does the passage raise? 				
What personal response can you see? 				
What are you prompted to pray about? 				