

The Light Of *grace*

Hope: Zechariah

First Sunday in Advent
December 3rd, 2023 – 11:00 AM

AS WE GATHER

God's light of amazing grace shines upon us all! Throughout the seasons of Advent and Christmas, we will get to hear how that promise of grace shines its brilliant light in the stories of several biblical figures and messengers of God's promise. In Advent, we will get to hear how these stories of the light of grace brings hope, peace, joy and love.

The first story we get to hear is about Zechariah, the father of John the Baptist. His story shares how God's amazing grace shines the light of hope over the darkness of despair. In his old age, after years of waiting and not giving up hope, Zechariah is blessed with a son, John the Baptist, who prepared the way for the Light of Grace, Jesus.

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

WE SING

"My Hope Is In You"

April Geesbreght

WE PRAY

WE SING

"Hope For Everyone"

Jason Ingram/Matt Maher

GOD SPEAKS TO US IN HIS WORD

OLD TESTAMENT LESSON

Isaiah 51:1-5

Listen to me, you who pursue righteousness, you who seek the Lord: look to the rock from which you were hewn, and to the quarry from which you were dug. Look to Abraham your father and to Sarah who bore you; for he was but one when I called him, that I might bless him and multiply him. For the Lord comforts Zion; he comforts all her waste places and makes her wilderness like Eden, her desert like the garden of the Lord; joy and gladness will be found in her, thanksgiving and the voice of song. Give attention to me, my people, and give ear to me, my nation; for a law will go out from me, and I will set my justice for a light to the peoples. My righteousness draws near, my salvation has gone out, and my arms will judge the peoples; the coastlands hope for me, and for my arm they wait.

EPISTLE LESSON

Romans 5:1-5

Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. Through him we have also obtained access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and we rejoice in hope of the glory of God. Not only that, but we rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, and hope does not put us to shame, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us.

THE GOSPEL LESSON

Luke 1:67-79

And his father Zechariah was filled with the Holy Spirit and prophesied, saying, "Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, for he has visited and redeemed his people and has raised up a horn of salvation for us in the house of his servant David, as he spoke by the mouth of his holy prophets from of old, that we should be saved from our enemies and from the hand of all who hate us; to show the mercy promised to our fathers and to remember his holy covenant, the oath that he swore to our father Abraham, to grant us that we, being delivered from the hand of our enemies, might serve him without fear, in holiness and righteousness before him all our days. And you, child, will be called the prophet of the Most High; for you will go before the Lord to prepare his ways, to give knowledge of salvation to his people in the forgiveness of their sins, because of the tender mercy of our God, whereby the sunrise shall visit us from on high to give light to those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace."

KIDS' TIME

DCE Liz Peters

MESSAGE

"Advent Hope"

Pastor Doug Slavens

(Today's Readings)

WE CONFESS OUR SINS

P: Let us confess our sins to God, trusting in his mercy for the sake of Jesus our Lord.

C: Almighty God, you have called us to a living hope in Jesus. Yet so often we do not reflect that hope in our lives. We turn away from the promises of your Word. We walk in our own selfish ways instead of following in Jesus' footsteps. We do not love others as we should, and we are not always willing to share our hope with the people around us. Have mercy on us and forgive us.

(a time of quiet before the Lord)

GOD FORGIVES OUR SIN

P: God has had mercy on us. He sent his Son to be our Savior and for his sake forgives our sins. I announce to you that your sins are forgiven in the name of the Father and of the + Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

C: "O Lord, for what do I wait? My hope is in you."

WE CONFESS OUR FAITH -- APOSTLES' CREED

SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION

PREPARATION & WORDS OF INSTITUTION

SHARING OF THE PEACE

P: Come now and receive Christ's body and blood together with His blessings of forgiveness, life, and salvation. The peace of the Lord be with you always.

C: And also with you.

DISTRIBUTION OF THE LORD’S SUPPER

"Light Of The World" Lauren Daigle | Paul Duncan | Paul Mabury
"Living Hope" Phil Wickham/Brian Johnson

COMMUNION BLESSING

PRAYERS

LORD’S PRAYER

WE SING ***"It’s About The Cross"*** Jamison Statema

CLOSING BLESSING

NOTE ABOUT GIVING:

*Our offerings are received in the offering boxes
located near our entrances.
When we give, we are living hope-filled expressions of faith
in our coming Lord Jesus.*