

EASTSIDE COMMUNITY BAPTIST CHURCH
SUNDAY, DECEMBER 20, 2020
4TH SUNDAY OF ADVENT – CHRISTMAS SUNDAY
SERMON: “AN OPEN INVITATION TO ADORE HIM”
TEXT: Luke 2:1-20

We have arrived at the fourth Sunday of Advent – Christmas Sunday. It is hard to believe that time came fly by so quickly! In five short days we will be celebrating the birth of our Saviour once again! How do you feel about it this year? Has the shine and excitement of Christmas been tarnished by the extraordinary events of 2020? Do you find yourself overwhelmed, scared, perhaps even bitter or angry because life is so different for us? Know that you are not alone! We have cancelled parades and concerts. We have very few get togethers and can't really travel. There is still the threat of sickness that hovers over our world. Yet, here we are at Christmas!

If you are in the doldrums regarding Christmas, I want to encourage you today. One of the best ways to lift your spirits is to turn the Saviour and worship Him! We often do this by joining our voices together in song or by listening to music praising our Lord! There is so much glorious music around Christmas. One our most beloved carols was written in the 18th century by a composer we know nothing about! The song has been handed down from generation to generation, and as technology has developed, the carol has been printed and recorded for all to enjoy. That carol is “O Come All Ye Faithful.” It is a beautiful reminder of why we should adore that baby born in a manger.

As we look at this wonderful invite to worship, let's begin by looking at our scripture today: Luke 2:1-20:

2 At that time the Roman emperor, Augustus, decreed that a census should be taken throughout the Roman Empire. ² (This was the first census taken when Quirinius was governor of Syria.) ³ All returned to their own ancestral towns to register for this census. ⁴ And because Joseph was a descendant of King David, he had to go to Bethlehem in

Judea, David's ancient home. He traveled there from the village of Nazareth in Galilee. ⁵ He took with him Mary, to whom he was engaged, who was now expecting a child.

⁶ And while they were there, the time came for her baby to be born. ⁷ She gave birth to her firstborn son. She wrapped him snugly in strips of cloth and laid him in a manger, because there was no lodging available for them.

The Shepherds and Angels

⁸ That night there were shepherds staying in the fields nearby, guarding their flocks of sheep. ⁹ Suddenly, an angel of the Lord appeared among them, and the radiance of the Lord's glory surrounded them. They were terrified, ¹⁰ but the angel reassured them. "Don't be afraid!" he said. "I bring you good news that will bring great joy to all people. ¹¹ The Savior—yes, the Messiah, the Lord—has been born today in Bethlehem, the city of David! ¹² And you will recognize him by this sign: You will find a baby wrapped snugly in strips of cloth, lying in a manger."

¹³ Suddenly, the angel was joined by a vast host of others—the armies of heaven—praising God and saying,

¹⁴ "Glory to God in highest heaven,
and peace on earth to those with whom God is pleased."

¹⁵ When the angels had returned to heaven, the shepherds said to each other, "Let's go to Bethlehem! Let's see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has told us about."

¹⁶ They hurried to the village and found Mary and Joseph. And there was the baby, lying in the manger. ¹⁷ After seeing him, the shepherds told everyone what had happened and what the angel had said to them about this child. ¹⁸ All who heard the shepherds' story were astonished, ¹⁹ but Mary kept all these things in her heart and thought

about them often. ²⁰ The shepherds went back to their flocks, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen. It was just as the angel had told them.

**O come all ye faithful, joyful and triumphant,
Come ye, O come ye to Bethlehem;
Come and behold Him, born the King of angels:
O come, let us adore Him; O come, let us adore Him;
O come, let us adore Him, Christ, the Lord!**

When life is in such chaos, why should we stop and adore Jesus? Here are few reminders for us today:

BECAUSE OF WHO HE IS!

First and foremost, we worship the Christ Child because of who he is! When sin entered the world we became separated from God and God chose to fix that problem out of his unending love for his creation! Jesus is the fulfillment of ancient prophecies. 700 years before the birth of Christ, the prophet Isaiah foretold of the coming of the Messiah – his birth and his willing sacrifice so that our sins could be forgiven and we could dwell with God eternally.

That little baby was fully man yet fully God. The Almighty clothed in human flesh.

ADORE HIM FOR WHAT HE DID!

The apostle John reminded us that:

¹⁴ So the Word became human and made his home among us. He was full of unfailing love and faithfulness. And we have seen his glory, the glory of the Father's one and only Son. (John 1:14).

Did you know that the idea of a deity taking on human form was a fairly common belief in Jesus' day? Greek and Roman mythology is filled with stories of the gods coming off of Mt. Olympus and mingling with the human race...usually up to no good.

We need to look at what Jesus, God made man, did while he was living with us. All of His actions were based in a depth of love that no one had ever encountered. A love that was sacrificial. A love that was based in mercy, and grace, and reconciliation...wanting the best for us!

Jesus loved the unlovely. He mingled with tax collectors who were considered traitors to their nation and he talked with prostitutes, who were branded as vile. He touched lepers who were kept outside the general population for being unclean and he healed the sick. He even went outside of his Jewish ethnic arena and invited Gentiles into the kingdom of God.

When the right time came, Jesus took the burden of the world's guilt and sin on himself. He willingly went to the cross. 700 years before Isaiah told us:

**⁵ But he was pierced for our rebellion,
crushed for our sins.**

He was beaten so we could be whole.

He was whipped so we could be healed.

⁶ All of us, like sheep, have strayed away.

We have left God's paths to follow our own.

**Yet the LORD laid on him
the sins of us all.**

ADORE HIM FOR HIS FINISHED WORK!

Promises and prophecy have been fulfilled. That little baby, wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger grew into manhood and conquered death, taught us about the realities of eternity and heaven. He lifted us up and gave men and woman worth, purpose, and value. We were weighed down by the chains of our sin and he set us free from that bondage.

One of the greatest reasons to adore and worship Jesus is that all the amazing achievements on earth continue today. He has been and continues to be involved in our lives if we will let him. He has promised to never leave us nor forsake us and has promised to return to us once again.

Jesus is worthy of our adoration, our loyalty, and our trust – we are to give him our best, even when life on earth whirls out of control. May we dedicate each day to worshipping our Lord:

**Yea, Lord, we greet thee,
Born this happy morning;
— Jesus, to thee be all glory giv'n.
Word of the Father,
Now in flesh appearing;**

**O come let us adore Him!
O come let us adore Him!
O come let us adore Him!
Christ, the Lord...**

Let's pray...