



*Charles H. ...*

The high Word plays  
in every kind of form,  
mixing, as he wills,  
with his world  
here and there.

- St. Gregory

# In the Journal

## *Pillar Journal Vol. 8 No. 1*

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*A seasonal journal produced by Pillar Church in Holland, MI to guide us through the Christian year.*

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*Cover:*

*“A Vase of Flowers”*

*by Margareta Haverman, 1716*

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## FROM HIS FULLNESS

The Incarnation of Jesus reveals the most fundamental parts of God's nature, heart for his people, and salvation plan for the world. It is light out of darkness, it is grace out of sin and pain. And it all comes from the fullness of God. From his fullness. Fullness is both the source and the goal.

We live our days by a metric of scarcity, of grasping. We are quick to claim and hoard. We too often operate under the framework of "I'll get mine, then you can have yours" or maybe even more accurate, "I'll get mine at the expense of yours." But even at the foundations of the earth, the grace upon grace nature of God is revealed to us from his fullness. Fuller, deeper, truer than we could even imagine. And yes, Advent, just like so many other moments in the life of faith, points us toward our deep neediness.

We need Christ's coming. Both then in the incarnation and again someday in the fullness of time. But in our neediness we draw from the fullness. Cups run over. Boundary lines fall in pleasant places. Thousands are fed. Nets are bursting at the seams. And one day the leaves of the tree will be for the healing of the nations. Finally and fully.

So we look to the light, Jesus. God with us. From his fullness we have all received grace upon grace.

As you go through the season, this journal is split into 4 sections, one for each week. Engage with each week as you see fit. There is a newly composed essay, scripture to study, a poem or prayer, and visual art to contemplate. Peace to you this Advent.

- Jonathan Gabhart

"St. John the Baptist, bearing witness"  
Annibale Carracci, ca. 1600





## JOHN 1 THE PROLOGUE

*Throughout the season you are invited to interiorize these words. Read them and study them. Get them inside. And open yourself and listen to what God might be speaking to you through them.*

In the beginning was the Word,  
and the Word was with God,  
and the Word was God.  
He was in the beginning with God.  
All things came into being through him,  
and without him not one thing came into being.  
What has come into being in him was life,  
and the life was the light of all people.  
The light shines in the darkness,  
and the darkness did not overcome it.

There was a man sent from God, whose name was John.  
He came as a witness to testify to the light,  
so that all might believe through him.  
He himself was not the light,  
but he came to testify to the light.  
The true light, which enlightens everyone,  
was coming into the world.

He was in the world,  
and the world came into being through him;  
yet the world did not know him.  
He came to what was his own,  
and his own people did not accept him.  
But to all who received him,  
who believed in his name,  
he gave power to become children of God,  
who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh  
or of the will of man,  
but of God.

And the Word became flesh and lived among us,  
and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son,  
full of grace and truth.  
John testified to him and cried out,  
"This was he of whom I said,  
"He who comes after me ranks ahead of me  
because he was before me.""

From his fullness  
we have all received,  
grace upon grace.

As Kingfishers Catch Fire  
Gerard Manley Hopkins

As kingfishers catch fire, dragonflies draw flame;  
As tumbled over rim in roundy wells  
Stones ring; like each tucked string tells, each hung bell's  
Bow swung finds tongue to fling out broad its name;  
Each mortal thing does one thing and the same:  
Deals out that being indoors each one dwells;  
Selves — goes itself; myself it speaks and spells,  
Crying *Whát I dó is me: for that I came.*  
I say *móre*: the just man justifies;  
Keeps grace: *thát* keeps all his goings graces;  
Acts in God's eye what in God's eye he is —  
Christ — for Christ plays in ten thousand places,  
Lovely in limbs, and lovely in eyes not his  
To the Father through the features of men's faces.

The high Word plays in every kind of form, mixing, as he wills, with his world here and there.

- St. Gregory

The divine Paul, the great Apostle, who is both an initiate himself and initiates others in the divine and secretly-known wisdom, calls [this mystery] the foolishness of God and his weakness, because, I think, of its transcendent wisdom and power; the great and divinely-minded Gregory calls it play, because of its transcendent prudence. For Paul says, 'The foolishness of God is wiser than men and the weakness of God is stronger than men' (I Cor. 1:25); while Gregory says, 'The high Word plays in every kind of form, mixing, as he wills, with his world here and there.' Each, by privation of what with us are most powerful attributes, points to what the divine possesses, and by negations of what is ours makes affirmation of the divine. For with us foolishness, weakness and play are privations, of wisdom, power and prudence, respectively, but when they are attributed to God they clearly mean excess of wisdom, power and prudence.

St. Maximus



## ADVENT WEEK 1

### 10,000 Places Jonathan Gabhart

Take a close read of the quotes and poem on the previous pages. They point to, in a profound way, the “from his fullness” reality of God. As we started throwing this idea around for the season of Advent, I remembered an experience I had a few years ago. I was on a study week on Flathead Lake in Montana. I was there with a group of pastors who were studying and gathering around the pastoral imagination of Eugene Peterson. Eugene and Jan Peterson had a life long connection to “the Flathead” and we went there to experience a little bit of the geography that shaped and formed them. One morning I woke up incredibly early, not because I wanted to, but my father-of-young-children internal clock woke me up compounded by being two time zones west than normal. I decided to embrace it. The day before I had written out the poem “As Kingfishers Catch Fire” in my journal for the joy of learning it and memorizing it. So I grabbed my journal, walked down to the lake, grabbed a kayak and went for a pre-dawn paddle.

As I floated along the calm, cold water, I got stuck (in a good way) on Hopkins’ line: “Christ plays in ten-thousand places.” It brought to mind so many things. First, it reminded me of my daughter. One of the reasons we named her Lila is based on an ancient meaning of the word: the play and creativity of God. It reminded me of my younger son Charlie, who plays in such a way that you viscerally feel his sense of freedom. And then my mind really started going, how could you even number the ways and places that Christ plays? Could I record 10,000 places that I have personally seen and experienced Christ playing? I’m always on the lookout for a new project, so the game was afoot.

I opened to a blank page in my journal and I started a list.

1. Mist rolling over the Flathead in the morning
2. Singing the Doxology with some close friends before dinner
3. Charlie laughing under the rain dripping off our roof
4. The smell of corn in the air during a warm Fall day in Iowa
5. Honest conversation at book club
6. Reading books to Lila before bed

For about 5 days, I kept adding to the list. Thinking, “Hey, if I keep this up maybe I can write out 10,000 things.” I wasn’t sure how long it would take or what the practice could look like, but it seemed like an interesting endeavor of prayer and reflection.

I go to 27. I completed .0027% of my project. And then I promptly forgot about it for approximately 2.5 years. That is where “From his fullness” comes in. As this gathering energy emerged for our Advent season at Pillar I thought of the Hopkins poem, I thought of Flathead Lake, and I thought of my quickly conceived and quickly abandoned grand scheme. It is out of the fullness of God we receive grace upon grace. It is from the fullness of God that we could even have the capacity to notice, discern, or discover all the places Christ plays in the world, in our lives.

And then at the Doxology Conference this Fall, hosted by the Eugene Peterson Center and held at Pillar, Chris Green shared that this phrase from Hopkins is in some ways borrowed from a much older text. Namely, a sermon from St. Gregory where we says, “The high Word plays in every kind of form, mixing, as he wills, with his world here and there.” And from there, later, Maximus the Confessor offers commentary on Gregory’s words with, “For with us foolishness, weakness and play are privations, of wisdom, power and prudence, respectively, but when they are attributed to God they clearly mean excess of wisdom, power and prudence.”

Of course. Of course, these words that I were offered to me by trusted teachers and friends, words that have captured my imagination for years, that captured the imagination of Eugene Peterson enough to title a book after them would have resonance far beyond what I even knew or could imagine. Which, to me, points toward the truth, depth, and necessity that Christ plays all around, and ours is the task to notice.

“The High Word” as Gregory said, is the Word made flesh, the light of the world, Jesus. This High Word has been “at play” for eternity with the Father and the Spirit, and because of his Incarnation, we have the capacity to see it and know it. So this Advent, we prepare for Christ’s first coming, and we wait until that great and glorious day when he comes again to make all things new. And as we prepare and wait, I want to invite you into this same act of prayer and reflection that I quickly conceived and quickly abandoned. You’re invited to contribute a “place that Christ plays” in the hope that we could accumulate 10,000 places from the Pillar community throughout the Advent and Christmas seasons. There will be multiple ways to contribute your places so be on the lookout for that. And part of the joy is that 10,000 is sort of a placeholder for “as many as you could imagine.” So be generous with yourself. What physical place have you seen Christ at play? What conversation? What friend, sibling, parent, stranger? What word of literature or poetry? What Scripture? All of it is fair game. The high Word plays in every kind of form, mixing, as he wills, with his world here and there. From his fullness, we have all received grace upon grace.

*Conversation Question  
for Children and Families:*

*The Bible says Jesus gives us grace upon grace—  
that means lots and lots of love and kindness!*

*Can you think of something kind Jesus has done for you?*

## WEEK 1 INTERIORIZATION

*Read it over and over again. Make notes.*

*Write it out. Draw Pictures. Get it inside.*

In the beginning was the Word,  
and the Word was with God,  
and the Word was God.

He was in the beginning with God.

All things came into being through him,  
and without him not one thing came into being.

What has come into being in him was life,  
and the life was the light of all people.

The light shines in the darkness,  
and the darkness did not overcome it.







## A POEM

### ADVENT SUNDAY

Christina Rossetti

BEHOLD, the Bridegroom cometh: go ye out  
With lighted lamps and garlands round about  
To meet Him in a rapture with a shout.  
It may be at the midnight, black as pitch,  
Earth shall cast up her poor, cast up her rich.  
It may be at the crowing of the cock  
Earth shall upheave her depth, uproot her rock.  
For lo, the Bridegroom fetcheth home the Bride:  
His Hands are Hands she knows, she knows His Side.  
Like pure Rebekah at the appointed place,  
Veiled, she unveils her face to meet His Face.  
Like great Queen Esther in her triumphing,  
She triumphs in the Presence of her King.  
His Eyes are as a Dove's, and she's Dove-eyed;  
He knows His lovely mirror, sister, Bride.  
He speaks with Dove-voice of exceeding love,  
And she with love-voice of an answering Dove.  
Behold, the Bridegroom cometh: go we out  
With lamps ablaze and garlands round about  
To meet Him in a rapture with a shout.

## ADVENT WEEK 2

### Full Focus Joel Boersma

When “golden October” turns to “somber November” (T.S. Eliot), holidays are on the horizon. For those of us living in the Northern hemisphere, the darkness comes early; the palpable bite in the air carries with it the first rumors of winter. In one sense, the natural instinct is to huddle around the open fire and prepare for the long hibernation. Yet there is also plenty that is energizing, with the season marked by a kind of fullness.

The commercial calendar of the broader culture, for example, generates no shortage of buzz: shopping, gatherings, good cheer, Christmas spirit and the like. Thus there are gifts to be received, but also challenges to be navigated. In light of this, the church's liturgical life offers a key counterpoint. It calls into question a merely sanguine approach, as well as the tendency toward sentimentalism.

Contrary to the spirit of the cultural mainstream, preacher and teacher Fleming Rutledge has noted the lectionary readings take an “apocalyptic” turn following All Saints’ and the weeks preceding Advent. Few words can get the blood flowing like apocalypse. While misconceptions abound, the word's plain meaning is revelation or unveiling. The fullness of “God the Father almighty” is made known in the only begotten Son (Jn. 1:18). These are the days of waiting, longing, and hoping for God's self-disclosure, namely: the once and future advent of Jesus Christ. During this time, the church catholic has established its own habits of being, due sense of expectation, and indeed, experience of fullness.



The waiting and anticipation of Advent is “strangely rich and fulfilling,” writes the priest-poet Malcolm Guite, it “falls in winter, at the end of the year, in the dark and cold, but its focus is on the coming of light and life.” Advent, then, is a paradoxical season. The Prologue to Saint John’s Gospel is an essential text for exploring fullness and engaging paradox: Eternal Word and Christ child, light and darkness, a world created by the Word and a world that knows Him not, the glory of God revealed in the humility of the Son. Such themes convey paradox and mystery: realities that are, in truth, wondrously compatible and mutually illuminating.

In the Christian story, what appears contradictory is held together as a unified whole. In his classic study on the Puritans, Harvard historian Perry Miller wrote: “They believed that all knowledge was one, that life was unified, that science, economics, political theory, aesthetic standards, rhetoric and art, all were organized in a hierarchical scale of values that tended upward to the end-all and be-all of creation, the glory of God. They insisted that all human activity be regulated by that purpose.” To speak of the unity of knowledge is to be in good company with the Evangelist: “all things came into being through him, and without him, not one thing has come into being.” All things were made through Christ, and all things are redeemed by grace. Such claims reveal the capacious nature of the Gospel: the all-encompassing good tidings and great joy of Christ’s advent.

Furthermore, the Eternal Word—who was with God and who was God—becomes the Incarnate Lord: “the Word became flesh and lived among us and we have seen his glory.” It is worth noting that glory, in this context, pertains to the flesh, rather than the purely spiritual. That God became human is an ample safeguard against the old heresies—Gnosticism chief among them—that “virus in the bloodstream of religion and keeps resurfacing every generation or so” (Eugene Peterson).

Each week during the fall term, Young Life’s college fellowship has engaged John’s Prologue, with various speakers exploring different angles. Recently I hosted a panel with three Hope College student-athletes, representing volleyball, football, and cross-country. The basic idea was to see John 1 through the eyes of an athlete: discipline in training, excellence in preparation, humility in victory, grace in defeat, and sacrifice of private interest for the sake of the team—each reflecting Saint Irenaeus’ adage, “the glory of God is humanity fully alive.” All such pursuits matter because all things were made by God through Christ. They reflect the Advent fact that the Word became flesh and blood and moved into the neighborhood (Jn 1:18, MSG).

The Word became flesh—and we have seen his glory. This might lead one to further wonder: what might glory look like? C.S. Lewis here is worth quoting at length:

Meanwhile the cross comes before the crown and tomorrow is a Monday morning. A cleft has opened in the pitiless walls of the world, and we are invited to follow our great Captain inside. The following Him is, of course, the essential point...It may be possible for each to think too much of his own potential glory hereafter; it is hardly possible for him to think too often or too deeply about that of his neighbor. The load, or weight, or burden of my neighbor’s glory should be laid daily on my back, a load so heavy that only humility can carry it, and the backs of the proud will be broken.

Lewis’ reflections unlock another paradox: the weight of glory is the way of humility. When Jesus speaks of glory in John’s Gospel, he is often referring to his death by crucifixion. Jesus Christ emptied himself of all the rights and privileges of the Eternal Son of God in order to save the world. Hence humility is at the heart of the Advent message: “we have seen his glory...full of grace and truth.”

Advent, in the end, is the season where we watch for grace. God became human in Christ: thus the glorious truth that grace is offered “far as the curse is found.” According to the old theologians, grace does not destroy nature, but perfects it; all creation will one day be healed and whole. Grace can be received, then, in ways that are humane and ordinary: a meal with loved ones, helping a neighbor in need, playing catch in the backyard, a circle of friends around a good fire.

And yet, Fleming Rutledge reminds us that “if the Christian faith is going to have any guts, it simply cannot be satisfied with exclusively human hope.” The gift of Advent is that ordinary means of grace are given full focus. The church’s witness, therefore, of waiting, longing, and hoping prepares us to receive abundantly beyond what we could be ask or imagine: the fullness of Grace upon grace.

*Conversation Question  
for Children and Families:*

*Jesus came to be with us!  
What does it feel like to know  
that Jesus is always near you?*

## WEEK 2 INTERIORIZATION

*Read it over and over again. Make notes.  
Write it out. Draw Pictures. Get it inside.*

There was a man sent from God,  
whose name was John.  
He came as a witness to testify to the light,  
so that all might believe through him.  
He himself was not the light,  
but he came to testify to the light.  
The true light, which enlightens everyone,  
was coming into the world.





## A PRAYER

God of salvation, in Christ  
you have done great things— our hearts are filled with joy.

By your power you lifted us out of the wasteland of sin  
and brought us with joy and laughter into your kingdom.

Salvation is your gift to us.

But we confess that often we try  
to replace your gift with our own efforts.

We try to complete what is already perfect;

we try to add to what is already full;

we try to earn what we already have.

Forgive us for our foolishness.

Help us to focus on your grace.

Help us to live grateful lives in return.

For Jesus' sake alone, Amen.

Prompt for further prayer:

Do you feel the need to add to what is already full?

“St. John the Baptist, bearing witness”

Annibale Carracci, ca. 1600

## ADVENT WEEK 3

### A Lot of Houses Molly Kehrer

“Mommy, why is the church Jesus’ house?” Our four year old asked from the backseat on the way home from church on a recent Sunday. His question came on the heels of my admonishment at the end of the 10:30 service, when I’d had enough of his running through pews and wrestling with an older brother while we chatted with friends. “Stop running in church!” I’d whispered-yelled to him as I pulled him close. “This isn’t a playground, it’s Jesus’ house!” A half hour later, his little, curious voice told me as much about the posture of his heart as it did his locked-safe memory. Somehow he is always bent towards wonder, even when I haven’t been sensitive to his tender spirit. Grace upon grace, here God was turning a harsh moment into a teachable one and an opportunity.

“Why is it Jesus’s house?” I repeated. “It’s his house because it’s where his people gather. It’s where we go to worship him and pray and celebrate on Sundays and on other important days together with his people.” There. Maybe it wasn’t the most theologically sound answer, but it seemed to satisfy his four year old theology in the moment. As we continued driving, his simple response to mine was, “Jesus has a lot of houses!”

“And the Word became flesh and lived among us.” (Jn. 1.14)  
When I reflect on John 1, my eyes fall to this truth. My heart is compelled by it. He became flesh and lived among us. He dwelt with us. He was here on earth, born a human baby in the humblest of circumstances, raised a boy to human parents and surrounded by imperfect people—some who loved and some who hated him, sent to bring good news offered for all, and destined on a path begun long before the manger.

He lived among us, and he dwells with us now. “From his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace.” (Jn. 1.16) So we enter Jesus’ house on a Sunday morning to be with him and with his people, to worship, to pray together, to hear his Word, to revere him. And it’s his house because it’s where his people gather, a space worthy of our respect and awe and wonder. As I harriedly parented our four year old on Sunday morning in that sacred room, I immediately felt a nudge from the Holy Spirit, “Yes, this is Jesus’ house. And little feet running through the pews and down the aisles are more than welcome. They bring him JOY.” Grace upon grace.

This simple nudging was a gift—a reminder of Christ within the walls of the church, but also a reminder of Christ in me. He came down to be with us, and later sent the Holy Spirit to indwell within us. This means the old can pass away. The new has come. We don’t have to stay in our old patterns of perfectionism, shame, pride, performance, self-pity, indulgence, immorality, or anything else that would otherwise overtake us. We can act and respond with grace, love, acceptance, understanding, justice, kindness, compassion, and mercy—not under our own power, but because Jesus makes his home among us and answers our sincere prayers to make us more like himself. This grace isn’t reserved for Sunday mornings, but is available in every moment, without pretense.

“Jesus has a lot of houses!” When my son exclaimed this joyfully, I knew he was thinking about the churches on every other corner in our community. Lots of churches must mean Jesus lives there, in every one. And while we know that’s true, what’s also true is that Christ makes his home wherever we are, because Christ makes his home in us. We are his people, and the sheep of his pasture. (Ps. 100.3) He protects us, guides us, brings us back to himself, and calls us his own. From his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace.



### WEEK 3 INTERIORIZATION

*Read it over and over again. Make notes.  
Write it out. Draw Pictures. Get it inside.*

He was in the world,  
and the world came into being through him;  
yet the world did not know him.  
He came to what was his own,  
and his own people did not accept him.  
But to all who received him,  
who believed in his name,  
he gave power to become children of God,  
who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh  
or of the will of man,  
but of God.

*"White Plum Blossoms and Moon"  
by Ito Jakuchu, 1755*





A POEM

Advent Good Wishes  
David Grieve

Give you joy, wolf,  
when Messiah makes you meek  
and turns your roar into a cry that  
justice has been done for the poor.

Give you joy, lamb,  
when Messiah saves you from jeopardy  
and all fear is overwhelmed  
by his converting grace.

Give you joy, wolf and lamb together,  
as Messiah brings worldwide peace and,  
side by side, you shelter  
under Jesse's spreading shoot.

*Conversation Question  
for Children and Families:*

*Jesus brings light wherever He goes.  
Where do you see light around you today?*







## ADVENT WEEK 4

### A Depth of Embryonic Hope Anna Anderson

Consider this center image from a triptych of the Annunciation, painted by Robert Campin Netherlandish ca. 1427–32, on view at the Met Cloisters, NYC.

When you look closely at the top left corner of the painting, you'll see the tiny, embryonic baby Jesus, already carrying a cross, making his way through the sunbeam toward Mary's womb. The artist provides a tangible visual for the indescribable moment when Mary discovered she was not just "with child," but also "with God," bearing God in her womb.

What a pregnancy announcement. If you've spent time waiting and longing for two pink lines on a pregnancy test (I'm with you), or grieving the death of a baby who died too soon (I'm so sorry, there are no words), or waiting eagerly for the child in your womb to grow healthily and be born into the world (thanks be to God!)... then perhaps you can relate to Mary's sensitive embodied reality in this moment— and the wave of emotions she must have been experiencing alongside it all. A tiny embryo, a small human person, perhaps the size of a raspberry or a blueberry, was waiting, growing, and changing in tender vulnerability in her womb, carrying the Hope of the world in his very Self.





In the midst of her wondering, questions, and simultaneous faithful willingness, the angel Gabriel insisted to Mary the personal assurance that “no Word from God will ever fail” (Luke 1:37), an anchor point for the months ahead of carrying the developing God-Man within her.

The cross on the back of the tiny Christ child contributes to the theological intensity of the Annunciation scene. Not only was Mary bearing God within her, the Word-from-God made flesh—she was bearing the self-giving God, the God who would die, the God who would be crucified for her and for the whole world. From conception, and from eternity, the Son has chosen to be this God for us... the God who would give himself in total love on the cross so that Mary, and everyone, could be transformed by Love.

Here’s what the transformation could be like: because of him, we can become our truest selves, our child-of-God selves.

John 1:12

But whoever did want him,  
who believed he was who he claimed  
and would do what he said,  
He made to be their true selves,  
their child-of-God selves.

Eugene Peterson’s rendering of John 1:12 in the Message paraphrase captivates me. I so deeply want God to make me my true self—don’t you?

The old self, the false self, the distorted self... that self rears her head in my life far more often than I’d like. That’s the self who judges others, the self who holds on to bitterness, the self who sinks into insecurity rather than rising up to God’s purposes for me. But I want Him—Jesus. I want God-the-Word to do what He said he would do in my life. I want the Word-made-flesh who bore the cross from Gestation Day 1 to show up in such a way, to transform me so deeply, that I could say, with the angel: “no Word from God will ever fail.”

But whoever did want him,  
who believed he was who he claimed  
and would do what he said,  
He made to be their true selves,  
their child-of-God selves.

I’m struck by the past-tense grammar of John’s language. According to the gospel writer, this “re-making” of me and you (if you want Jesus) has already happened. Because Jesus did what he said he would do and is who he claimed to be, the transformation has already been unfolding in us... old has gone, the new has come (2 Cor 5:17).

But I don’t feel and act totally new. Paul in Romans 7 gives voice to my own heart, with all his regret and sense of inadequacy: “I do not understand what I do. For what I want to do I do not do, but what I hate I do” (Romans 7:15).

Here’s the good news: “in the midst of our very human selfishness, the waylaying love of God has broken through to us unconditionally” (Fleming Rutledge, Advent). The transforming love of God is ultimately unconditional, not deterred by our failings and sorrows. God has broken through to us, and will continue to break through to us, here and now.

The Word made his dwelling among us— in the midst of our very human selfishness. “The Word became flesh and blood, and moved into the neighborhood” (John 1:14, MSG), bearing a cross from the start. It’s a lot to wrap our heads and hearts around. The embryonic cross-carrying Christ shows us that we were never going to save ourselves. We were always going to need him. And he was always intending to be the Word who would come up close to us in our neighborhood, to see us, know us, and save us quite personally.

So this Advent, we turn to him again with all our longings, all our weaknesses, all our unfinished business, even our frustrations, anger, and confusion. We lay it before the Word-made-flesh for us and for our salvation, trusting that the forgiveness found in the Cross of Christ is, and always will be, the truest Word for us.

God was never asking us to clean up our own mess. God was never asking us to pull it together and figure it out. God simply asks us to wait for him again. Karl Barth wrote, “What other time or season can or will the Church ever have but that of Advent?”

Tish Harrison Warren puts it this way: “Our Christian life is a long practice in waiting— waiting for God to meet us, to grow us, to save us. And ultimately, waiting for Jesus to set all things right.”

*Conversation Question  
for Children and Families:*

*Jesus gives us so many good gifts. What is one thing you are thankful to God for today?*

## WEEK 4 INTERIORIZATION

*Read it over and over again. Make notes.  
Write it out. Draw Pictures. Get it inside.*

And the Word became flesh and lived among us,  
and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father’s only son,  
full of grace and truth.

John testified to him and cried out,  
“This was he of whom I said,  
“He who comes after me ranks ahead of me  
because he was before me.””

From his fullness  
we have all received,  
grace upon grace.

## A PRAYER

Stir up your power, O Lord,  
and with great might come among us;  
and, because we are sorely hindered by our sins,  
let your bountiful grace and mercy  
speedily help and deliver us;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord,  
to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit,  
be honor and glory, now and for ever.  
Amen.

(Book of Common Prayer)

