

O Come, Let Us Adore Him
Christmas DayB, John 1:1-14
Morning Prayer
Grace Church Newton
December 25, 2023

THIS IS A DRAFT TEXT OF THE SERMON. IT MAY VARY FROM THE PRESENTED VERSION. PLEASE EXCUSE TYPOS AND GRAMMATICAL ERRORS, AND DO NOT CITE WITHOUT PERMISSION.

O, Come, let us adore him. Amen.

Today's gospel, John, is different than the one we heard from Luke yesterday – perhaps less earthy. John represents Jesus as being from before time – with God in the beginning. In fact, the gospel starts with the same phrase that begins the book of Genesis: “In the beginning...”. “In the beginning,” says Genesis, “the earth was a formless void, and darkness covered the face of the deep” (Gen 1:1-2). And in that beginning, says John, “was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God” (John 1:1-2).

But “in the beginning...,” that first Christmas – before humans saw his life lived, before people began to try to interpret and communicate what his life meant, “in that beginning...” God came into the world as a baby.

In Luke's gospel, Jesus is born in a stable, laid in fresh hay. He arrives as a fragile, vulnerable infant, dependent on those around him for his very survival.

What does it mean that God chose to come into history as a baby? What is our response?

- I could say that our response must be one of **humility**. How could it be anything other, if we follow a savior who was laid in a manger at birth?
- I could say that our response must be to join in God's work of **justice** – to hear the call of that song Mary sang when she visited and was blessed by Elizabeth: “God has cast down the mighty from their thrones” and “lifted up the lowly.” God “has scattered the proud in their conceit.” God has “filled the hungry with good things” and “sent the rich away empty” (Luke 1:46-55). Yes, I could say that our response must be to line up behind our God...a God of reversals...a God of restoration. A God who desires healing and wholeness for everyone. How could our response be any other, if we follow the son of Mary?

- Or I could say that our response must be one of *faith* – to hold on to our trust and belief in God through the challenges of the days in which we live. How could our response be anything other, if we follow the son of an unwed teenage mother and her yet-to-be husband, both of whom received God’s message through angels?

There is a time for each of these responses to God’s grace and presence in our world and in our lives – to the fact that God entered into history and became as one of us. Each of these responses – humility, justice, faith – each is a valid, legitimate, response to Christmas. But for today, just for today, I would like to linger in a different place.

For today...I want to adore the baby. I want to linger in that moment of potential and freshness and beauty. Yes, with John, I see all the promise this baby brings to our world. What he will *become*. I see the “light of all people” that “shines in the darkness” and cannot be “overcome” (John 1:5). I see the “true light which enlightens all people” (John 1:9). I see “the glory as of a father’s only son” (John 1:14).

But today...just for today...I don’t want to lose sight of the fact that (as one commentator puts it), “this decisive act of revelation and reconciliation was not an announcement of universal principles or truths; instead it was a baby” [\[Source\]](#).

So, today I want to notice the beauty of the moment God became human. I want to see the love and the grace embodied in that baby who came to be in our world.

O, Come let us adore him.

Amen.