

WELCOME TO ADVENT

Pastor Tim

November 30

I have always loved gardening. It is one of those things that helps to slow me down. I am often reminded that planting and growing and harvesting are things done, not on my schedule or according to my timing, but according to the times and seasons and provisions of God. An accomplished gardener comes to understand those times and seasons. What we learn to do, is to anticipate and appreciate what each season brings.

Waiting isn't easy for most of us. We live in a culture that idolizes speed and efficiency. This is why, the season of Advent provides us such a great opportunity. During the season of Advent, we are invited into the discipline of waiting. Advent is a journey that invites us to step back from all the busyness of life, to quiet ourselves and consider God's greatest gift, the sending of His son Jesus to earth. We are invited to wonder, what it will be like when he comes again. We are invited to put our full trust in Him, even as we wait.

As we begin our journey into Advent once again, we're invited to enter into a journey of hope as we prepare ourselves to celebrate the Savior's coming into our world – knowing that we need his gifts of love, hope, peace, and joy. And we wait with longing hearts for the day when Christ will come again and establish God's kingdom and make all things new.

While waiting isn't easy, there are always signs of hope along the journey. This is why we are inviting you to grow an Amaryllis plant with us this Advent. As you water it and watch it grow, it will create anticipation of the beautiful flower which should bloom around Christmas. It is a metaphor for the waiting we do for Jesus. A reminder of the hope Christ brought when He first came, and the hope we now have of His ultimate return.

I recognize that this is a unique year, but we must never forget that God is at work in this season. As you look at your bulb grow each day, it is a reminder that God is working in your home and in your life, as you seek Him. It is a reminder that God creates beauty out of ashes, and surprises us with His goodness. It is also a reminder that we have a hope that will last; the gift of new life and salvation found in Jesus. A gift that cannot ever be taken from us. A gift whose hope is eternal.

I pray that your hearts will be flooded with light so that you can understand the confident hope he has given to those he called—his holy people who are his rich and glorious inheritance. Ephesians 1:18:18

*How silently, how silently, the wondrous gift is given,
So God imparts to human hearts,
The blessings of His heaven, No ear may hear His coming,
but in this world of sin, where meek souls
will receive him still, the dear Christ enters in.*