

Messenger – Second Week of Advent

The angel replied, "I am Gabriel. I stand in the presence of God, and I have been sent to bring you this good news." -Luke 1:19

Do you have a Nativity Scene somewhere in your home? Maybe there is an angel somewhere in your Nativity set? Where do you put the angel? It was my job when I was chaplain at the hospital to hang the angel over the roof of the stable. I used a push pin, some thread...and the wood of the bottom of the altar in the chapel!

Angels have several important jobs in the birth of Jesus. First one angel and then a whole big choir of angels told shepherds out in the field at night looking after their sheep about Jesus being born and where they could go to see him. In these weeks before Christmas, angels appear to help prepare the way for Christmas. On the Second Sunday of Advent (December 6th, 2020), in church we read the Gospel story of John the Baptizer telling people to ask God to forgive their sins so they would be ready to meet Jesus (Mark 1:1-8). But where did John come from? Another Bible story tells us. Before John was born, the angel Gabriel appeared to John's father Zechariah to tell him that he was going to have a son, that he was supposed to name him "John," and that his son John would grow up to prepare the way for Jesus! The whole story is found in the Gospel of Luke, chapter 1, verses 5 to 24.

Getting ready for Christmas is important. Its even more important to take extra time to get ready for Christmas this year because of the pandemic. This week we can think about what angels did to help people get ready for Jesus. We might even want to ask for an angel on the top of the Christmas tree this year! And maybe angels might be helping us get ready too!

Below is the "angel version" of a favourite bedtime prayer that I found on the internet, with thanks to VaLinda Jones for sharing it. You might like to use it at your bedtime this week:

*Now I lay me down to sleep, I pray the Lord my soul to keep.
Two angels standing near my bed, one at foot and one at head.
To guide me safely through the night and wake me in the morning light. Amen*

Next Friday: Who is the second person the angel Gabriel was sent to? [Hint: the Third Candle in the Advent Wreath is pink. It reminds us of.... who?]