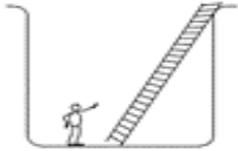


Dear Saints and Friends of Gregory Memorial,



*I bring you good news that will bring great joy to all people. The Savior – yes, the Messiah, the Lord – has been born today in Bethlehem, the city of David!*

**-Luke 2:10b-11**

What do you do when you realize you're lost, or at least, not sure you're still headed in the right direction? I've come to be more aware, when I'm driving to a new place and I'm unfamiliar with the landmarks, that I tend to keep going in the hopes that something will become apparent or that I'll ultimately find my goal. Even when I realize that I don't know where I am, I sometimes still continue to go on, thinking that what I'm looking for is just after the next turn or two. I'm sure there's a psychological argument behind this, but what I do know is this: despite the best advice and teaching otherwise, we have a tendency to continue forward even when we no longer know where we're going. And just as wilderness professionals will tell you that the best way to attempt to become "unlost" is to return to the last place you recognized the path, the best way to start to get yourself out of a hole you've dug is to stop digging.

But what then? Once you've stopped digging, what next? Once you admit you're lost, then what? Sometimes, it can seem overwhelming trying to figure out how to undo what has been done, and it can even feel as if such a prospect is unattainable. Baseball manager Davey Martinez, when realizing his team was in a hole that seemed impossible to get out of, advised his players, "1-0." He realized that his team being 4<sup>th</sup> in the division with a 19-31 record seemed an insurmountable reality to overcome, if the hopes were to make the playoffs (at the very least), and so he began to coach his players to show up every day and just go 1-0 for the day. His advice was not to focus too much on the big picture, but instead to focus on the day-to-day. "If we can go 1-0 today and keep that up for most of the rest of the season, then our record will take care of itself." Lo and behold, the Washington Nationals not only made the playoffs, they won the World Series, all by focusing on going 1-0 for the day, and starting over again the next day.

We're entering the new year in the life of the Church, as we approach the First Sunday of Advent (December 1, 2019). And perhaps this is a mindset we can all benefit from, as we move forward – both as individual disciples and as a congregation: let's try to go 1-0 for today. If we feel

overwhelmed and deep in a pit, let's first stop digging, and then consider one thing we can do today that might help us climb out, one foothold we might be able to make. If we feel like a project or a task we need to do is too big, let's start by thinking of one thing we can do today that might make it a bit easier to accomplish. And if there are some things you want to change about your life, perhaps the beginning of Advent is a great time to consider making one step toward that change each day, making your daily record 1-0.

For instance, if you feel overwhelmed and stuck in a pit, one foothold that might help is to focus on what you're thankful for; gratitude has been shown to rewire our brains in a positive way as we go through life. If you know you'd like to keep in touch better, then perhaps make one phone call, or write one letter, or even just think out what you might want to say that you'd like the other person to know. All it takes is one small movement in the right direction; go 1-0 for today. And if, just maybe, you've been thinking that it's been awhile since you've been to church (I know there are some of you out there reading this), then maybe Advent is a great time to think about coming to one Sunday service, or one Christmas Eve service. Just aim to go 1-0 for the day, and then take the next day as it comes.

In the season of Advent we prepare: prepare to again greet our Lord as he arrives in our world and into our lives, prepare to proclaim anew the good news we have received, and prepare to recommit our lives to discipleship. In the birth of Jesus, God chose a new thing for the world, a new way to be present, and new reality for that day, and for every day that has come since. We celebrate this as we, too, seek to start a new day in the presence of our Lord, and to start a new day again and again every day forward.

After all, the best way to get out of the pit begins when you stop digging. From there, we'll be here to help hold the ladder.

With you on the journey,  
Pastor Jason



**WORSHIP INFORMATION FOR DECEMBER, 2019**

**Sunday, 1 December 2019**

“1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of Advent” - Liturgical Color: Blue  
 1<sup>st</sup> Reading: Jeremiah 33:14-18 \* 2<sup>nd</sup> Reading: Mark 8:27-29  
 Sermon Title: "The Days are Surely Coming"

**Sunday, 8 December 2019**

“2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of Advent” - Liturgical Color: Blue  
 1<sup>st</sup> Reading: Isaiah 40:1-11 \* 2<sup>nd</sup> Reading: Mark 1:1-4  
 Sermon Title: "A Call to Prepare"

**Sunday, 15 December 2019**

“3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of Advent” - Liturgical Color: Blue  
 1<sup>st</sup> Reading: Ezra 1:1-4; 3:1-4, 10-13 \* 2<sup>nd</sup> Reading: Luke 2:25-32  
 Sermon Title: "Cause for Celebration"

**Sunday, 22 December 2019**

“4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Advent” - Liturgical Color: Blue  
 1<sup>st</sup> Reading: Psalm 113:1-9 \* 2<sup>nd</sup> Reading: Luke 1:5-25, 57-80  
 Sermon Title: "A Song of Praise"

**Sunday, 29 December 2019**

“1<sup>st</sup> Sunday after Christmas Day - Liturgical Color: White  
 1<sup>st</sup> Reading: Psalm 91:9-12 \* 2<sup>nd</sup> Reading: Mark 1:1-20  
 Sermon Title: "Follow Him"



**OUR PRAYER IN TIMES OF JOY AND CONCERN...**One of our great joys and responsibilities to each other and to God here at Gregory Memorial is the regular practice of praying for each other and our community.

<p>Amy Townson, Josh Ingram’s sister                  Mary Chadwick &amp; Adelaide "Shorty" Smith, "Dink" Armstrong’s sister                  (health issues)                  Evelyn Lichvar, her brother, Martin, &amp; her son, Rick (health issues)                  Becky Scott Smith                  Russell Heiser, Ingrid Phoenix’s grandson (health issues)                  Kenneth Andrews, Childress family’s friend                  Butch Meade, Glenda Mayhew’s brother                  Gladys Wiseman                  Steve “Dee” Shortt, Kim Helmer Shortt’s husband (health issue)                  Verne &amp; Clara Smith                  Sharon Entwistle, Barbara Taliaferro’s friend                  Peggy Allen                  Eddie Frankenstein                  Grace Cibula                  Jerry Hasky (health issue)                  Larry Hicks, Doreen Hicks’s husband (health concerns)                  Donna Wilson, Doreen Hicks’s daughter                  Cathy Rackley, friend of Doreen Hicks (heart catheterization)                  Ed Seldon, future son-in-law of Doreen Hicks (upcoming heart                  catheterization)</p>	<p>Doris Harmison (The Crossings at Ironbridge, Chester, Va.)                  Tom Merritt (health issues)                  Duane Callis, grandson of Larry Hicks (health issue)                  Mark Cheriton, Janet Swinton’s son-in-law (returned health issues)                  Randy &amp; Kay Recher, son &amp; daughter-in-law of Ron &amp; Judy Recher                  (head-on crash in Oklahoma)                  Corey Whelan, Pat Hunter’s grandson (health issues)                  Melvin Huff, Marguerite Bishop’s friend (health issues)                  Pam Henry, Mary Holc’s family member (health issue)                  Sandra Elder, Kelly Knupp’s mother (health issues)                  Velma Allen (severe arthritis)                  Etta Holc (broken foot; home)                  Buck Nunnally (health issues)                  Jim &amp; Adele Linkenhoker, Barb Taliaferro’s friends (health concerns)                  Jackie Woodruff (health issues)                  Shirley MacNeill (heart attack; recovering at home)                  Jane &amp; Bob Jones (health issues)                  Junie ("Bug") Treaster (recovering from brain surgery)                  Family/friends of Helen Williams, Patsy Johnson’s aunt (d. 11/9)                  Family/friends of Gregg Webber (d. 11/13)</p>
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*"Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men on whom his favor rests." Luke 2:14*

ANNOUNCEMENTS



**GATEKEEPER:**  
Bobby Allen

**Dec. 1: "1<sup>st</sup> Sunday in Advent";** Sunday school, 9:45 a.m.; **Worship service, Holy Communion,** 11 a.m.; **WorkCamp planning meeting,** Fellowship Hall, 6:30 p.m.; **Last day to order Xmas Poinsettias!**

**Dec. 2: Worship Com.,** 1 p.m.

**Dec. 3: Poinsettia order goes to florist,** 11 a.m.; **Circle meeting** (Host, location: TBA) 1 p.m.; **Congregational Care,** 6 p.m.; **GS Tr5000,** 6 p.m.; **Facilities Com.,** 7 p.m.

**Dec. 4: Choir practice,** 7 p.m.

**Dec. 5: Christian Ed. Com.,** 7 p.m.

**Dec. 7: "Cookies 'n' Cocoa" Open House,** Fellowship Hall after PG County's Xmas Parade, 3 p.m.

**Dec. 8: "2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday in Advent";** Sunday school, 9:45 a.m.; **Worship service,** 11 a.m.

**Dec. 9: Crater Karakona BS Chapter Xmas party,** Fellowship Hall, 5:30 p.m. (setup 1 p.m.)

**Dec. 11: Choir practice,** 7 p.m.

**Dec. 15: "3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday in Advent";** Sunday school, 9:45 a.m.; **Worship service,** 11 a.m.; **Xmas Choral Cantata,** Sanctuary, 3 p.m.

**Dec. 17: GS Tr5000,** 6 p.m.

**Dec. 18: BS Tr900 Honor Court & Xmas party,** Fellowship Hall, 5:30 p.m. (setup 1 p.m.); **Choir practice,** 7 p.m.

**Dec. 19: Newsletter articles due in church office,** 2 p.m.; **Stewardship & Finance Com.,** 7 p.m.

**Dec. 20: Angel Tree gifts due,** 1 p.m.

**Dec. 21: "Darkest Night" service,** Sanctuary, 6:30 p.m.

**Dec. 22: 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Advent";** Sunday school, 9:45 a.m.; **Worship service,** 11 a.m.; **Christmas Joy Offering,** 11 a.m.; **5-Cents-A-Meal Offering,** 11 a.m.

**Dec. 23: Church office open** 9 a.m.-2 p.m.

**Dec. 24: Church office closed; Xmas Eve family service,** 6:30 p.m.; **Xmas Eve communion service,** 11:30 p.m.

**Dec. 25: Xmas Day;** church office closed.

**Dec. 26 & 27: Church office open** 9 a.m.-2 p.m.; **Newsletter out,** 2 p.m.

**Dec. 29: Sunday school,** 9:45 a.m.; **Worship service,** 11 a.m.; **Local Emergency Aid Offering,** 11 a.m.

**Dec. 31: Committee reports due,** 2 p.m. ....

*Missed the sermon?* GMPC's sermons are on *YouTube* each week. Check out [gmpeva](#) on Facebook, or the [gregorymemorial.org](#) website for the links, or search *YouTube.com* for Sunday's sermon.

FLOWERS FOR THE SANCTUARY

<b>DECEMBER 1</b>	
<b>DECEMBER 8</b>	Rose Scott
<b>DECEMBER 15</b>	Xmas Poinsettias
<b>DECEMBER 22</b>	Xmas Poinsettias
<b>DECEMBER 29</b>	

For assistance with the sign-up, please call Church office at 732-1081 (9:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m., Tuesday-Thursday).

THOSE WHO SERVE – DECEMBER, 2019

 <b>GATEKEEPER:</b> Bobby Allen	<b>DEC. 1</b> 1 <sup>st</sup> Sunday in Advent	<b>DEC. 8</b> 2 <sup>nd</sup> Sunday in Advent	<b>DEC. 15</b> 3 <sup>rd</sup> Sunday in Advent	<b>DEC. 22</b> 4 <sup>th</sup> Sunday in Advent	<b>DEC. 29</b> 1 <sup>st</sup> Sun. after Christmass Day
<b>Ushers</b>	John Carl Allen Rose Scott Wayne Powers	Charles Smyth Austin Smyth Morgan Ingram Josh Ingram	Bobby Allen Donna Allen Velma Allen Larry Johnson	Wayne Powers Brenda Bond Glenda Mayhew Les Mayhew	Sheila Fields Janet Swinton Shill Marguerite Bishop Valerie Harsh
<b>Announcements</b>	Valerie Harsh	Mary Kay Schroeter	Larry Johnson	Rose Scott	
<b>Nursery</b>					
<b>Counting</b>	David Johnson (Sub.)	Sandy Hunter Glenda Mayhew	Morgan Ingram Ron Recher	Donald Hunter Susan Shockley	David Johnson Blake Bishop

\*5 Cents a Meal Offering

**"Christmas Cookies 'n' Cocoa" Open House** - The PG Christmas Parade is at 3 p.m. on Saturday, Dec. 7, and Gregory will again have its Christmas Cookies 'n' Cocoa Open House following the Parade. Missions-Outreach Committee is asking for your support by baking 3 dozen cookies. Hot chocolate will also be served. Cookies can be brought to church from 2-4 p.m. on Friday. or at noon on Saturday (day of parade). There is a sign-up sheet in the Fellowship Hall for bringing cookies. Your participation will be greatly appreciated! [*Missions-Outreach Com.*]

**Angel Tree** - A Christmas family has been obtained from the Department of Social Services for our Angel Tree this year by our Missions-Outreach Committee. The Angel Tree is set up in the Narthex. Gift deadline is Friday, December 20 by 1 p.m. Your participation will be especially appreciated! [*Missions-Outreach Com.*]

**Special Services during Advent** - There will be two special services during Advent, which are sure to enhance your experience. First, the Choral Cantata, "Wonder of Wonders," will be held on Sunday, December 15, at 3:00 p.m. in the Sanctuary. You won't want to miss it! Second, our annual "Darkest Night" service will be held on Saturday, December 21, at 6:30 p.m. Offering comfort to those who mourn and grieve in this season, may it offer light in the darkness we face.

## THE BEST GIFT

On Christmas Eve a young boy with light in his eyes



Looked deep into Santa's, to Santa's surprise,  
And said as he sat on Santa's broad knee  
"I want your secret. Tell it to me."  
He leaned up and whispered in Santa's good ear  
How do you do it, year after year?

"I want to know how, as you travel about,  
Giving gifts here and there, you never run out.  
How is it, dear Santa, that in your pack of toys  
You have plenty for all of the world's girls and boys?  
How is it that sack on the back of your sleigh  
Is full, never empty, as you make your way  
From rooftop to rooftop, to homes large and small,  
From nation to nation, reaching them all?"

And Santa smiled kindly and said to the boy,  
"Don't ask me hard questions. Don't you want a toy?"  
But the child shook his head, and Santa could see  
That he needed the answer. "Now listen to me,"  
He told the small boy with light in his eyes,  
"My secret will make you sadder and wise."

The truth is that my sack is magic inside,  
It holds millions of toys for my Christmas Eve ride.  
But though I do visit each girl and each boy,  
I don't always leave them a gaily wrapped toy.  
Some homes are hungry, some homes are sad,  
Some homes are desperate, some homes are bad.  
Some homes are broken, and children there grieve.  
Those homes I visit, but what should I leave?

"My sleigh is filled with the happiest stuff,  
But for homes where despair lives, toys aren't enough.  
So I tiptoe in, kiss each girl and boy,  
And pray with them that they'll be given the joy  
Of the spirit of Christmas, the spirit that lives  
In the heart of the dear child who gets not, but gives.

"If only God hears me and answers my prayer,  
When I visit next year, what I will find there  
Are homes filled with peace, and with giving, and love  
And boys and girls gifted with light from above.  
It's a very hard task, my dear little brother,  
To give toys to some, and give prayers to others,  
But the prayers are the best gifts, the best gifts indeed,  
For God has his own way of meeting each need.

"That's part of the answer. The rest, my dear youth,  
Is that my sack is magic. And that is the truth.  
In my sack I carry on Christmas Eve Day  
More love than a Santa could ever give away.  
The sack never empties of love, or of joys  
'Cause inside it are prayers and hope, not just toys.  
The more that I give, the fuller it seems  
Because giving is my way of fulfilling dreams.

"And do you know something? You've got a sack, too.  
It's as magic as mine, and it's inside of you.  
It never gets empty, it's full from the start.  
It's the center of light and love; it's your heart.  
And if, on this Christmas, you want to help me,  
Don't be so concerned with the gifts 'neath your tree.  
Open that sack called your heart, and share  
your joy, your friendship, your wealth, your care."

The light in the small boy's eyes was glowing.  
"Thanks for your secret. I've got to be going."  
"Wait, little boy," said Santa. "Don't go.  
Will you share? Will you help? Will you use what you know?"  
And just for a moment the small boy stood still,  
Touched his heart with his small hand and whispered: "***I will.***"

~Betty Werth, from *CHICKEN SOUP  
FOR THE SOUL CHRISTMAS TREASURY*

**GATEKEEPER: Bobby Allen**

**DECEMBER, 2019**

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<b>1</b> <b>9:45a</b> Sunday School <b>11a</b> Worship service Holy Communion  <b>6:30p</b> WorkCamp plan meeting  <i>Last day to order                      Xmas Poinsettias</i>	<b>2</b> <b>1p</b> Worship Com.	<b>3</b> <b>11a</b> Xmas Poinsettia order Goes to florist  <b>1p Circle</b> (Host: TBA)  <b>6p</b> Cong. Care Com.  <b>6p</b> GS Tr 5000  <b>7p</b> Facilities Com.	<b>4</b> <b>7p</b> Choir practice	<b>5</b> <b>2p</b> Church Cleaning  <b>7p</b> Christian Ed Com.	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b> <b>3p</b> PG Xmas Parade  "Cookies 'n' Cocoa" GMPC Open House after parade
<b>8</b> <b>9:45a</b> Sunday School <b>11a</b> Worship service	<b>9</b> <b>5:30p</b> Crater Karakona BS Chapter Xmas Party, Fellowship Hall (setup 1p)	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b> <b>7p</b> Choir practice	<b>12</b> <b>2p</b> Church Cleaning	<b>13</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>15</b> <b>9:45a</b> Sunday School <b>11a</b> Worship service <b>3:00p</b> Choral Cantata  <i>Poinsettia</i>	<b>16</b>	<b>17</b> <b>6p</b> GS Tr 5000	<b>18</b> <b>5:30p</b> BS Tr900 Honor Court & Xmas party (setup 1p)  <b>7p</b> Choir practice	<b>19</b> <b>2p</b> News articles due in office  <b>2p</b> Church cleaning  <b>7p</b> Stewardship & Finance Com.	<b>20</b> <b>1p</b> Angel Tree Gifts due	<b>21</b> <b>6:30p</b> "Darkest Night" service
<b>22</b> <b>9:45a</b> Sunday School <b>11a</b> Worship service  <b>11a</b> 5 Cents-a- Meal Offering  <i>Poinsettias</i>	<b>23</b> <u>Office open</u>	<b>24</b> <b>CHRISTMAS                      EVE</b>  <u>Office closed</u>  <b>6:30p</b> Xmas Eve family service  <b>11p</b> Xmas Eve communion service	<b>25</b> <b>CHRISTMAS                      DAY</b>  <u>Office closed</u>	<b>26</b> <u>Office open</u>  <b>2p</b> Newsletter out  <b>2p</b> Church Cleaning	<b>27</b> <u>Office open</u>	<b>28</b>
<b>29</b> <b>9:45a</b> Sunday School <b>11a</b> Worship service  <b>11a</b> Local Emergency Aid Offering	<b>30</b>	<b>31</b> <b>2p</b> Committee reports due				

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Gregory Memorial Presbyterian Church  
6300 Courthouse Road ~ PO Box 182  
Prince George, VA 23875-0182

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STAMP

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***DECEMBER NEWSLETTER***



***COME AND JOIN US!***  
*Sunday School 9:45 A.M.*  
*Worship 11:00 A.M.*

*We're on: [Facebook.com/gmpcva](https://www.facebook.com/gmpcva)*  
*Sermons on [Youtube.com](https://www.youtube.com)*  
[WWW.GREGORYMEMORIAL.ORG](http://WWW.GREGORYMEMORIAL.ORG)