



Pilgrim Rest  
MISSIONARY BAPTIST CHURCH

Preaching, Teaching and Reaching for  
Transformation and Liberation

## “CONSCIOUS AND INTENTIONAL MINISTRY: DOING WHO I AM”

Also I heard the voice of the Lord saying: “Whom shall I send, And who will go for Us?” Then I said, “Here am I! Send me.” Isaiah 6:8

THE PASTOR’S PEN December 4, 2022

## ADVENT (Adapted from The African American Lectionary)

Advent, from the Latin word *adventus* (“coming”), is the liturgical season characterized by expectant waiting and preparation. During this season, we celebrate Christ’s coming into the world while expectantly waiting and preparing for his promised return. We are reminded that God is faithful, a fulfiller of promises made. We rejoice that God is Emmanuel, God with us, and that God’s presence among us brings light, joy, and hope even in our darkest situations. Perhaps that is why the consistent message given to humans during this season is “fear not” or “do not be afraid” (Matthew 1:20; Luke 1:12, 30). This is the message of the liturgical season and this is the message to the Church as we observe World AIDS Day.

World AIDS Day, established on December 1, 1988 by the World Health Organization, is an opportunity for the church to combat the fear, prejudice, and discrimination that affect those living with HIV/AIDS. This is particularly significant for African American churches since the CDC reports that African Americans comprise 44% of all new HIV infections. By raising awareness of the global fight against HIV/AIDS, supporting those living with the virus, and commemorating those who have died, we show Christ’s redeeming love and demonstrate that God is with ALL of us, thereby giving hope to those infected with a disease that is often viewed as hopeless and outside the presence of God.

### Read: Isaiah 5:1-7

It is a time of economic and political stability. Judah is faring well during the reign of King Uzziah. They are doing so well that they have forgotten the One who is responsible for the peace, protection, and prosperity that they enjoy.<sup>1</sup> They simply expect it to continue. However, Isaiah’s prophetic utterance pronounces impending disaster. The reason is simple: they have not lived up to God’s expectations.

During this season of Advent, we often have expectations of God. We expect God to be faithful, dependable, and available. We expect God to provide. But in the midst of wanting and waiting, we must also witness to what God has already done and given. Like the house of Israel, the house of God must acknowledge that God protected, planted, provided for, and prospered us. However, God’s graciousness and blessings were given for a purpose. God did it with the expectation that a harvest of justice and righteousness would come from us.

As we observe World AIDS Day, the church must fulfill the expectation of God. We must promote justice for people suffering from HIV/AIDS beginning with our treatment of them in the house of God. We must live righteously with one another by advocating for each other, welcoming one another, and ministering to each other regardless of one’s HIV status or how one contracted the disease.

God is looking for justice and righteousness, not from the world but from God’s own planting. We are a part of God’s vine (John 15: 1-5) and our celebration of Advent should bear fruit on God’s behalf. According to Isaiah 5:1-7, God is serious about this. The Lord will not abide “wild grapes.”

### Celebration

The celebration for this text is found in verse 2. The Lord of hosts has already given and done what is necessary for the vineyard to bring forth the expected harvest. The vineyard has been:

- Positioned—God has located it in a place with the resources to serve its purpose. It need not fear lack. What it requires it will have because it is located on a “fertile hill.” The resources we need are inside the building, among the people we overlook and ignore, as we search for provision outside the door.
- Prepared—God has painstakingly readied the vineyard for a harvest. God has cleared out what hindered and has gotten the soil ready for growth.
- Protected—We do not have to live in fear of people with HIV/AIDS. We can arm ourselves with knowledge rather than cower in our corners afraid of myths. We can support, love, encourage, care for, and advocate for those infected. The vineyard that God builds has a watchtower!

All of the Lord’s work is undergird with expectation and hope, the hope of a fruitful harvest. God expects his work to prosper, produce, and increase. We can experience abundant life, all of us. This abundance is not determined by a doctor’s diagnosis or blood test. The abundance comes as justice is rendered to all and righteousness reigns among us.

# The Pilgrim Rest Oasis

*Sharing the Faith · Securing the Future*

Through faith God has given us the space to be an oasis in the middle of the city.

An oasis is a fertile spot in the desert where refuge, relief, and refreshment is found.

Be part of God's plan for Pilgrim Rest and this community.

Start contributing to the Oasis today!  
Let's continue to make progress!



Thank you for your continued support of God's plan for us.



*Your contribution can be dedicated to a specific activity or the Oasis, in general.*

	<b>Educational Enrichment</b>	<b>Technology Literacy</b>	<b>Athletics &amp; Recreation</b>	<b>Performing Arts</b>	<b>Facility Innovation</b>
\$500	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>15 Subject books for elementary (math, literature, history, etc.)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1 iPad</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>10 basketballs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>10 art sets for aspiring artists</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>External security lighting to keep the street well-lit and safe</li> </ul>
\$1,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>100 Summer Bridge books to help students retain learning during breaks</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>100 "learn how to code" kits for elementary students</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>10 tennis rackets</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>4 beginner saxophones or 8 beginner violins</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Camera security system to keep everyone safe</li> </ul>
\$2,500	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>9 students can be challenged to excel using interactive problem-solving programs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1 computer for graphic design and website creation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>12 sets of golf clubs for children</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>10 Play Scripts with performance/ licensing fee and cast instructions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Wireless PA system to easily communicate at the school</li> </ul>
\$5,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1 smartboard to help teachers engage students in learning</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1 STEM lab cart of materials for a classroom with multiple activities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3-day Speed and Agility workshop for 15 young aspiring track stars</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>100 pairs of tap shoes for aspiring dancers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Battery operated floor scrubber to keep the building looking its best</li> </ul>
\$10,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1 trip for 15 students to visit 1 HBCU</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>100 Robotic kits to reinforce studies in STEAM subjects</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Open gym for 20 young people 1 X a week throughout the winter in a safe place</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>200 tickets to see Alvin Ailey Dance Company</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>LED light fixtures throughout the school to promote learning and natural light</li> </ul>

## WORK FOR THE WEEK

### DECEMBER MEMORY VERSE

<sup>6</sup>When they could not find them, they dragged Jason and some brothers and sisters before the city authorities, shouting, "These people who have been turning the world upside down have come here also

**Acts 17:6**

### DECEMBER MEDITATION QUOTE

"I'm no longer accepting the things I cannot change...I'm changing the things I cannot accept."

**Dr. Angela Davis**

### TODAY'S STUDY QUESTIONS AND MEDITATION:

Imagine the specific prayer that Jesus is praying for you. What is Jesus praying? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Are you displaying the full revelation of God and God's power (God's glory)? \_\_\_\_\_

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### FOR THE YOUTH

Can my friends see the evidence of Jesus in my life based on my actions? \_\_\_\_\_

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