Sermon Series Notes

BASED ON READINGS FROM THE YEAR A PERICOPE, FROM 2021 CHRISTIAN WORSHIP (NPH)

A Christmas Mystery

Tagline: Four weeks on ancient promises shrouded in mystery.

The coming of Jesus has always been shrouded in mystery. His first coming revealed how thousands of years of mysterious promises of God would be solved. And his Second Coming at the End of All Things is also shrouded in mystery: No one knows the day or hour he'll re-appear. Join us this Advent for four weeks meditating on the Old Testament mysteries surrounding the Messiah's first coming as we look ahead in mystery and wonder to his second. The readings come from the Advent season of the new pericope of the 2021 **Christian Worship** Hymnal (NPH).

I'm sharing with you some of the notes we put together for our church services. You'll find:

- Sunday's theme, which ties into the over-arching sermon series
- A short prayer based on the theme for starting worship
- The readings based on the new 3-Year pericope from the 2021 Christian Worship Hymnal (NPH), with extremely short summaries of the readings which we put in the worship folder

1ST SUNDAY IN ADVENT

The Mysteries in the Mind of God

Heavenly Father, your ways are higher than mine. Despite all of my sins, you found the perfect way to save me from them and bring me into your family. Today I revel in how you kept those promises. And keep me in the faith as I look forward to another mystery: when you will come again in glory to take me to be with you forever. In your revealed name I pray, Amen.

Isaiah 64:1-9 The Prophet meditates on the mystery of how God can save us from our sins.
1 Corinthians 1:3-9 The Apostle Paul meditates on the mystery of when Christ will be revealed once more.
Mark 13:26-37 When the End will come is a mystery even to Jesus, known only to the Father.

2ND SUNDAY IN ADVENT

The Mystery of the Messiah's Messenger

Heavenly Father, I thank you for all the times you made promises and kept them. Today I especially thank you for the mysterious promises you made to prepare hearts for your First Coming and the wonderful way you kept those promises through Joh the Baptist. I thank you for preparing my heart, too, with your law, and then making your home within me with your gospel. In your dependable name I pray, Amen.

Isaiah 40:1-11 The mystery: When and how will God prepare the way for the Messiah?
2 Peter 3:8-14 God does not measure time as we do, and so, like his timeline for when Christ would come, his timeline for when the End will come remains a mystery to us.
Mark 1:1-8 We solve the mystery of when and how the way will be prepared: In early 1st century Galilee, John the Baptist.

3RD SUNDAY IN ADVENT

The Good News Mystery

Heavenly Father, I thank you for all the times you made promises and kept them. Today I especially thank you for the mysterious promises you made of the coming of Good News of freedom and comfort, and I thank you for keeping those promises to me by giving me freedom and comfort from my sins through Jesus. Help me to share this Good News to all those for who it is still a mystery. Amen.

Isaiah 61:1-3,10-11 God promised through Isaiah the proclamation of Good New of freedom and comfort. The mystery: How would God bring about this Good News?
1 Thess. 5:16-24 We are reminded that our God is a God who keeps his promises. If he says to you, his faithful, that he will do it, he will do it.
John 1:6-8,19-28 John the Baptist solves the Good News mystery: Grace and truth, freedom and comfort will come through Jesus.

4TH SUNDAY IN ADVENT

The Mysterious King

Heavenly Father, I thank you for all the times you made promises and kept them. Today I especially thank you for the promise you made thousands of years ago to establish David's kingdom, and I think you for keeping that promise by establishing the eternal throne of your Son, the heir of David, Jesus. Help me to live in the reality that Jesus Christ still and always will reign as King of Kings. Amen.

2 Samuel 7:8-16 A thousand-year-old mystery for the Israelites: How will God send an heir of David to re-establish his kingdom?
Romans 16:25-27 Paul writes that the greatest mystery of all has been revealed not only to the Jewish people but also to the Gentiles: the message that Jesus Christ is our Saviour and King.
Luke 1:26-38 God reveals to Mary first how David's kingdom would be re-established: through a child she would give birth to, the Saviour, Jesus.