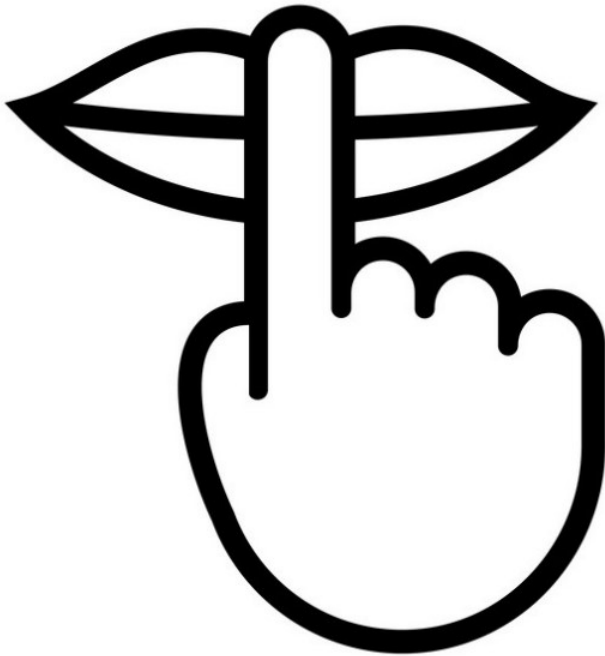


# The Gifts of Advent

## Week 2: The Gifts of Speech and Silence



*A gift is given freely and offered in love. In the weeks before Christmas, we often race around finding just the right gifts for friends and family. The season of Advent is itself a gift—a time set apart to prepare our hearts for the coming of Christ. We give thanks for God's gift to us in the baby of Bethlehem.*

*This series highlights four aspects of Advent that become blessings and gifts in our lives: patience, speech and silence, hope, and family.*

## **Week 2: The Gifts of Speech and Silence**

Encountering the angel of the Lord, Zechariah was struck speechless. His imposed silence became a time to reflect on the wonders of God. Like Zechariah, we are called at times to be silent and listen, at other times to shout with joy.

**Opening Dialogue** (*Eccles. 3:1, 6; Ps. 62:1; Ps. 40:10; Ps. 19:14*)

For everything there is a season:

**A time to keep silence, and a time to speak.**

For God alone my soul waits in silence;

**from God alone comes my salvation.**

I will not hide God's saving help within my heart.

**I will speak of God's faithfulness and steadfast love.**

May the words of our mouths and the meditations  
of our hearts

**be acceptable to God, our rock and our redeemer.**

**Gathering Song**—"Open our eyes, Lord" W&P #113

Open our eyes Lord

We want to see Jesus

To reach out and touch Him

And say that we love Him

Open our ears Lord

And help us to listen

Open our eyes Lord

We want to see Jesus

**Greeting**

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God,  
and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you  
all. **And also with you.**

**Prayer** (Luke 2:68-69, 72)

O God for whom we long,  
we thank you for the gifts of speech and silence.  
Teach us to listen from our hearts and speak of  
your love, that we may shout with Zechariah:

**Blessed be the Lord God of Israel,  
who has remembered his holy covenant  
and raised up a mighty Savior.**

We pray in the name of our Savior, Jesus Christ,  
your gift to all the world.

**Amen.**

**Psalmody**—Psalm 19

**Reading**—James 1:17-21

**Song**

For each perfect gift of thine,  
peace on earth and joy in heav'n;  
for thyself, best gift divine,  
to our world so freely giv'n:  
Praise we sing to Christ the Lord,  
Virgin's son, incarnate Word!  
To the holy Trinity  
praise we sing eternally!

NUN KOMM, DER HEIDENHEILAND (ELW #879 st. 5; ELW #263 st. 6)

**Gospel**—Luke 1:5-25, 57-66

**Reflection**

*The reflection concludes:*

God has given us eternal life,  
**and this life is in Jesus, God's Son.**

**Hymn**—ELW #490

## Prayers

For this time of waiting and watching for the coming of our Savior, **we give you thanks, O Lord.**

When the Spirit intercedes with sighs too deep for words, **we cry to you, O Lord.**

For the hope that shines through the darkest night, **we turn to you, O Lord.**

For the gift of friends and family who walk with us through life, **we praise your name, O Lord.**

Gather us all under the promise of your Son, who taught us to pray:

**Our Father, who art in heaven,  
hallowed be thy name,  
thy kingdom come,  
thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.**

**Give us this day our daily bread;  
and forgive us our trespasses,  
as we forgive those who trespass against us;  
and lead us not into temptation,  
but deliver us from evil.**

**For thine is the kingdom,  
and the power, and the glory,  
forever and ever. Amen.**

## Blessing

The peace of God accompany your waiting, the light of Christ warm your hearts, and the joy of the Spirit fill you with hope. **Amen.**

## Sending Song—ELW #242

## Dismissal

Go in peace. Christ is coming soon.  
**Thanks be to God.**