
“First Watch” Touch Points for *Evangel’s Prayer Vigil* team

For the week of *December 22, 2013 – the second Sunday of Advent*

Share with others on the Prayer Vigil throughout the week, during our Connections time on Sundays, or using our FaceBook group “First Watch Prayer Vigil.” www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=63044309096 .

This series—aimed to support our “Stepping Out in Faith—for the Sake of the Gospel” initiative—is based on *The One Year Book of Praying Through the Bible* by Cheri Fuller (Tyndale House, 2003). We will focus on specific topics that relate to faith, witness and outreach. “The driving force behind this proposal is to increase our evangelistic witness and the impact on our neighborhood and community.” (From the overview document, available at www.evbapt.org/docs/steppingOut.pdf)

The Lord Reached Down

O Lord, what are mortals that you should notice us, mere humans that you should care for us? For we are like a breath of air; our days are like a passing shadow. Bend down the heavens, Lord, and come down.

Psalm 144:3-5

Prayer for the Week

Lord, as we celebrate your birth [this week], I praise you for coming to earth so that we who believe in you know your forgiveness and experience your love. You are Emmanuel, God with us! Although as mere humans we are like a breath of air, our days like a passing shadow, you reached down from on high and brought us out of darkness into your marvelous light.

Notable Quote

Christ himself is living at the heart of the world; and his total mystery—that of creation, incarnation, redemption, and resurrection—embodies and animates all of life and all of history.

Michel Quoist (b. 1921)

Reflection

This psalm, which contains praise to God for victory in battle and a question—Why should God stoop to help humanity since we are like a vapor and our days like a passing shadow?—also contains a prayer for the Lord to divinely intervene: “Bend down the heavens, Lord, and come down.” This cry for deliverance, a desire to be rescued from enemies and drawn out of deep waters, echoes throughout the Psalms. But the fact is, the Lord *did* bend down the heavens and come down when he became a baby born in Bethlehem. God gave his only begotten Son so that everyone who believes in him will not perish but have eternal life. {This week}, on Christmas, join your voice with the praise of believers throughout history and around the world who celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ, and give him thanks and worship for the sacrifice of his Son to heal and save us. Lift up your heart to the Lord who reached down, the One who cares for us though we are mere mortals and who loves us with an everlasting love.

PRAYER PROMPTS

- Prayerfully reflect on the lessons from Sunday’s worship service, the music, Scripture, and Pastor Dave’s message*, “What Child Is This?” (John 1:1,14) as he concludes with the fourth of this year’s Advent series. Pray for opportunities to apply the lessons of this series, other elements of the service, and the thoughts from this Touch Points as you go through this week.
- Continue to pray for our “Stepping Out in Faith” initiative: for the identification of a church planter, for unity and commitment as we seek to bring success to this evangelistic effort by growing ourselves. Pray for Mark Albrecht of Converge Mid-America as he seeks the Lord’s direction to find the best person for the Wheaton area—and for the recent contact Pastor Dave had with one potential planter in the area. In the meantime, take seriously Bill France’s challenge to pray that God will lead 25 adults and 50 children to Evangel—a seemingly impossible task! But not impossible for God! In fact, we have seen several new faces, including a recent growth in Coffeefreak that has not occurred in some time. Let’s ask the Lord to fill both sides of the sanctuary with people who are eager to worship and to be partners with God to reach those appointed to eternal life!

A podcast of the sermon, plus pdf documents of the sermon outline and PowerPoint notes are posted on the website, normally by Monday.

Touch Points is e-mailed every Friday and normally posted on the website (www.evbapt.org) by Saturday.

Printed copies are available in the lobby on Sunday.