

Advent Devotional - Day 25

2025

December 25th

Scripture: Matthew 1:21 Verse: *"She will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins."*



Reflection:

This verse is short, but it carries the whole weight of Christmas. God doesn't just send comfort or advice—He sends a person. Jesus. A name that means "God saves." That's not just a spiritual idea; it's a real promise for real people. In Penn Hills, where folks are juggling bills, grief, addiction, and fractured relationships, the name of Jesus means rescue. Not from every hard thing overnight, but from the sin that tangles us up and the shame that tells us we're stuck.

Think about how personal this is. God didn't send a system or a checklist—He sent a child. Born into a messy world, raised in a working-class town, and named with purpose. That matters here in Pittsburgh, where people know what it means to work hard and carry burdens quietly. Jesus steps into that kind of life. He doesn't wait for us to clean up first. He comes close, with a name that says, "I'm here to save."

So as we finish our walk through Advent, let this verse remind us why we celebrate. Not just because a baby was born, but because salvation showed up in person. Let it remind us that Mt. Hope should and can be a church that lives like we believe it—offering grace to our neighbors, speaking hope into hard places, reconnecting and making personal relationships with our community, and trusting that Jesus still saves, right here in our Penn Hills community and beyond.

Prayer:

Jesus, Savior and Friend, thank you for coming close—not just to visit, but to rescue. You didn't wait for us to get it all together. You stepped into our mess, into our neighborhoods, into our lives. Help us remember that your name means salvation, not shame. Teach us to receive your grace with open hands and to carry that grace into the lives of others. May Mt. Hope be a place where your name is known, not just in word, but in the way we love, serve, and forgive. Amen.

Today's Mt Hope Mindful Response Challenge:

Throughout this Advent journey, we've been invited to respond to God's presence in real, grounded ways. We have been called to pray honestly, receive grace, serve steadily, welcome widely, tell our stories, live with hope, return changed, and trust the promise. As Advent comes to a close, Mt. Hope Church is called to carry the spirit of this season into the new year. Let us be a church community that doesn't just celebrate Christ's arrival but lives like He's truly among us. Let our worship fuel our outreach, building trust in our neighborhood. Let our hope be more than words, but rather something our neighbors can feel. Let Mt. Hope be known as a church that lives the gospel in everyday ways, where people are welcomed, needs are met, and Jesus is named—not just in sermons, but in how we love.



12106 Frankstown Road
Penn Hills, PA 15235

412-793-0227

mthope@mthopepcusa.org

Merry Christmas

May God grant you and your family a safe and healthy new year with Christ at your center and filled with Hope, Peace, Joy, and Love!