

Advent Devotional - Day 17

2025

December 17th



Scripture: Philippians 2: 5-8 Verse: *"In your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus: Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage; rather, he made himself nothing by taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to death - even death on a cross!"*

Reflection:

The heart of Christmas shows us not just that God came near but how God came—quietly, humbly, and in service. Jesus refused the trappings of power and instead chose vulnerability: a birth in a backroom, a life spent washing feet and listening, a ministry that put others before prestige. That way of being reframes strength as self-giving care rather than control.

For Mt. Hope, this changes the questions we ask about everything from leadership to programming. Authority should be measured by who is served and who is lifted up, not by titles or numbers. Leaders lead by clearing space, sharing power, and doing the hard, often unnoticed work that makes others flourish.

Practically, a servant posture means designing ministries that empower the vulnerable, giving voice and responsibility to those usually sidelined, and budgeting with the needs of the poorest in view. Humility becomes a discipline: we choose listening over lecturing, presence over performance, and sacrificial service over preserving comfort—so our life together looks more like the Christ we celebrate.

Prayer:

God of the manger, teach us to lead like the One we follow — with low hands, listening hearts, and readiness to serve. Make our authority a gift for others: give voice to the overlooked, strength to the weary, and room for the powerless to lead. Shape our plans, our budgets, and our time so that sacrifice and justice mark every choice. Amen

Today's Mt Hope Mindful Response Challenge:

Serve in a hands-on role this year not to be noticed but rather to make an impact on someone with work that matters deeply. Remind your church leadership to start all church meetings with a short report of appreciation for ordinary people of our congregation and community whose small acts of service went above and beyond to follow God's example.



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