

MMI DEVOTIONS

Advent comes from the Latin word *advenio* which means to come or arrive. It is the four Sundays before Christmas in which Christians focus on the coming of Jesus Christ two thousand years ago. Often churches will use four candles to help remind the faithful followers of Christ, the blessings and rewards of Jesus the Messiah. The first candle is the hope candle, followed by the peace candle, and then the joy candle and finally the love candle. Some churches will use a Christ candle which will be lit on Christmas Eve and all Sundays after Christmas.

Advent colors are blue and purple reminding us of the coming of the King of Kings and the Lord of Lords. Christmas is celebrated on December 25 with communion and gift giving. The first Christmas services occurred in the late 4th Century when the Roman Empire tried to connect the birth of Christ with a pagan winter solstice festival of "the birthday of the unconquered son". The colors of Christmas include white for purity, red for the blood of Jesus Christ and green for eternal life. Gift giving was part of the very first Christmas when the Magi gave gifts to Christ and the Holy family (Matthew 2:1-12). St. Nicholas gave gifts to the poor and needy children during the Christmas celebrations near the town of Nicea in the 6th Century. Christmas trees arrived into the church in the 16th Century with Martin Luther decorating his Christmas tree with candles, nuts and fruit. The first Christmas tree in England arrived in 1841 and was a gift from Prince Albert of Germany to Queen Elizabeth of the British Empire.

MMI ADVENT MATERIALS

It is that time of year again to prepare for the Advent season. Please note the suggested resources:

- Practicing Grace by Dr. Jeff Johnson – purchase at www.amazon.com or through Wesleyan Publishing House.
- The Bright Star of Bethlehem by Mitri Raheb (MR2) – purchase at www.creativecommunications.com or 800.325.9414
- A World Awaits by C.S. Lewis (CS3) – purchase at www.creativecommunications.com or 800.325.9414
- Waiting for Jesus in a Hurry-Up World by Jennifer Christ – This is a family devotional book (MN5) – purchase at www.creativecommunications.com or 800.325.9414
- Jesus: Beloved Son by Henri Nouwen (HN2) – purchase at www.creativecommunications.com or 800.325.9414

- Preparing for Jesus by Walter Wngerin Jr. – ISBN: 0-310-20644-8
- Come, Lord Jesus: Devotions for the Home - Augsburg Fortress – ISBN: 0-8066-2982-7
- O God, Hear Our Cry Advent Prayer (ME-R) – purchase at www.creativecommunications.com or 800.325.9414
- Watch for the Light readings for Advent and Christmas – The Plough Publishing House – ISBN: 0-87486-917X
- Dietrich Bonhoeffer's Christmas Sermons editor and translator Edwin Robertson – ISBN-10: 0-310-25955-X

*Creative Communications also has materials in Spanish including Advent calendars, prayer cards and children's materials.

The last several years we have done Advent Devotionals from John of Damascus (655-790), Athanasius (c.296-373), John Wesley (1703-1791), Ephrem the Syrian (c.306-373).

This year everyone will receive a weekly devotional from the writings and sermons of Dietrich Bonhoeffer (1906-1945). We will begin sending out the first devotional the week of November 21.



2 TIMOTHY 2:2

Pastor Tóth Sándor Péter is our 2 Timothy 2:2 missionary in Hungary. We have partnered with Peter for three and a half years and we appreciate the good work that he and his family are doing. Peter's ministry opportunities include: leading worship, preaching the Word, leading Bible study, caring for the flock, attending meetings, and the all important paperwork .

Below is an update that we have received from Peter along with a few pictures. Continue to pray with us for the great work that Peter and his family are doing for our Lord, Jesus Christ.

Dear MMI Leaders,

Thank you for the opportunity to take part in the 2 Timothy 2:2 program for the past three and a half years, and I am really thankful for your support. It helped to take care of the children and my wife, and to continue in ministry.

Our youngest child, Márton turned one year old on August 20th. His "big" sister Sarolta turned three years old on September 19. Sarolta has started going to preschool and she is developing in knowledge and social skills wonderfully. She prays with us every day before going to bed. Márton is very-very active. He started walking in July and he is now starting to talk. He is growing quickly. He smiles a lot and is usually happy and curious.

Judit and I are still quite tired. In April I was in the hospital for a week, due to exhaustion and stress. It was a blood circulation problem in my brain. For three weeks now we have all been sick with cold and flu. And now for some good news...



I am thankful for a change in my working conditions. For ten years I either worked the night shift or the swing shift. Finally I have a stable work schedule! I work Monday to Friday from nine to five, like most normal people. It seems that soon I will be able to work much closer to home, which will cut down my daily travel time. It is like a miracle!

We are trying to make some changes in the way that the church services are organized. Following an all day planning meeting in

April, we decided to have a more interactive and personal worship form. We used the "Christianity Explored" series during the summer months (study of the Gospel of Mark) and are now using the "Discipleship Explored" series (study of Philipians). As before, I fulfill my weekly ministries: leading worship, preaching the Word, leading Bible study, caring for the flock, attending meetings, doing paperwork, and of course helping my wife in raising our family.

I still try to be involved with some music groups, as my limited time allows. Three of the groups gave a garden concert in May at the Budapest Ministry Center. In this was I could combine ministry and music!

On some occasions I was able to participate in music and literature evenings at our local culture center. In order to further develop my creative skills, I attended a "Creators' Camp" during the summer. There I met with many poets and musicians and together we were able to write poems and set them to music. During the past six months my musical friends and I continued our recording project. You can listen to some of these by following the Sound Cloud link listed below.

During this time we had several special programs and guests in the Budapest church, including:

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2 TIMOTHY 2:2 (con't)

- A team from New York visited Hungary in July and our church hosted a “Gulyás party” for them.
- Hungary retreat with Todd and Rachel Daningburg in Komárom, Hungary.
- Visit from Eric and Kari Perry from Battle Creek, Michigan. They gave a special presentation called “Escape from Sorrow”.
- Theology day with the Wesleyan Alliance.



My vision for the Hungary FMC is still the same – for numerous small groups to be established in which people can support one another in love and grow in community. I am thankful that Ildikó Kóber is now working as an assistant pastor and can help with the church work. It is helpful to work with a team of people who have a shared vision. The work is not easy, there have been some disappointments, but I am hopeful for the future. Please pray for



open and responsive hearts and for people who want to grow in faith.

Here are some videos of my family and church:

Márton is six months old: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QMsUB4yeotU>

Sarolta's first two years: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AcodCGDIksM>

Reports of the local television about our projects:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C2EqpoHhdY>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=M254A32lgbI>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jeouhXtmpCQ>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8dzpw3ysva4>

One of my sermons: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=n1BHKWc6-oY>

A mandolin song: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7n8oRFRrhH8>

A music video: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9pxil7Y_n-o

My soundcloud stream: <https://soundcloud.com/t-th-s-ndor-p-ter>

Your support was so helpful.

Thank you very much.

In Him,

Tóth Sándor Péter

PROJECT BARNABAS

The Project Barnabas shipment which was originally scheduled to be sent in the fall of 2016 has been postponed. We are still receiving items and wish to fill the container before sending supplies to Hope Africa University and Kibuye Hope Hospital in Burundi. Due to high cost factors, we need to be good stewards and get as much into this shipment as possible. So, if you have anything that you would like to send, we are still accepting donations.

Our only receiving point is the Free Methodist World Ministry Center in Indianapolis, 770 N. High School Road, Indianapolis, IN 46214. Please contact Jan Ellis at 317.244.1247 with any shipments, questions or concerns you have.



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