



THE CHURCH OF THE  
**ADVENT**

**Read:** Ephesians 1:11-23

**Summary:** This past Sunday we celebrated the feast of All Saints and reflected on our union with the Church across time, space, language, and culture. Pastor Jeff preached through Ephesians 1:11-23 and highlighted our common inheritance with the saints in Christ through our baptism. This common inheritance in Christ makes us radically secure. Through our baptism we have been sealed with the Holy Spirit and inherit the renewal all of Creation in the risen and ascended Christ.

This common inheritance also assures us that we are deeply loved. Paul prays that we would see that we are God's glorious inheritance, his treasured possession, his adopted sons and daughters through our faith in Christ. Finally, this common inheritance means that we are greatly empowered to take redemptive risks for the sake of the Gospel. Rooted in deep love and security of God, we have also come to share in the immeasurable greatness of God's power in the ascended Christ, who now reigns as King of all Creation.

- Questions:**
1. This weekend we celebrated the communion of all saints across the ages. Ephesians also draws heavily on the imagery of the Body of Christ to explain our communal lives as Christians. What does it mean that we are united with the saints as one body across time, space, language, and culture?
  2. Our common inheritance in Christ makes us radically secure. Where is this security rooted? What assurances to we have of this security now?
  3. Each one of us is God's treasured possession, part of God's glorious inheritance in the saints. How should that fact shape the way we with one another? As a community at Advent? With other churches across DC?
  4. Pastor Jeff mentioned a quote at the beginning of his sermon: "Sometimes Christians can be critiqued for being so heavenly minded that they are of no earthly good." How does the ascended humanity of Jesus actually orient our heavenly empowerment towards our earthly lives now?
  5. Pastor Jeff closed his sermon with an illustration of what redemptive risk looks like. Discuss other similar examples. What redemptive risks is God prompting you to take in your life?

**Prayer:** Spend some time in prayer dwelling with Paul on 1) the hope to which he has called us, 2) the riches of God's glorious inheritance in the saints, and 3) the immeasurable greatness of God's power towards those of us who believe (Ephesians 1:18-19). Pray that God would enlighten our hearts to understand more fully the radical security, love, and empowerment we have in Christ.

**Do:** Take note over the next week of your feelings of insecurity, inadequacy, and powerlessness. Lift these up to God in prayer and discuss how the Gospel transforms these doubts with a Christian friend. Seek to discern where your gifts and passions may be intersecting with the world's needs and God's call to take redemptive risk.