

**KAILUA CHRISTIAN CHURCH**  
**SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 30, 2025**  
**SERMON: Advent: The Beginning and End**  
**SCRIPTURE: ISAIAH 64:1-9; MATTHEW 24:36-44**  
**CHAPLAIN (2LT) JACKSON FEIOCK, USAR**

**Advent Candle Lighting (Hope) Scripture: Isaiah 64:1-9**

- 1** Oh, that you would rend the heavens and come down,  
that the mountains would tremble before you!
- 2** As when fire sets twigs ablaze  
and causes water to boil,  
come down to make your name known to your enemies  
and cause the nations to quake before you!
- 3** For when you did awesome things that we did not expect,  
you came down, and the mountains trembled before you.
- 4** Since ancient times no one has heard,  
no ear has perceived,  
no eye has seen any God besides you,  
who acts on behalf of those who wait for him.
- 5** You come to the help of those who gladly do right,  
who remember your ways.  
But when we continued to sin against them,  
you were angry.  
How then can we be saved?
- 6** All of us have become like one who is unclean,  
and all our righteous acts are like filthy rags;  
we all shrivel up like a leaf,  
and like the wind our sins sweep us away.
- 7** No one calls on your name  
or strives to lay hold of you;  
for you have hidden your face from us

and have given us over to**[b]** our sins.

**8** Yet you, LORD, are our Father.

We are the clay, you are the potter;  
we are all the work of your hand.

**9** Do not be angry beyond measure, LORD;  
do not remember our sins forever.

Oh, look on us, we pray,  
for we are all your people.

### **Scripture: Matthew 24:36-44**

**36** “But about that day or hour no one knows, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son,**[a]** but only the Father. **37** As it was in the days of Noah, so it will be at the coming of the Son of Man. **38** For in the days before the flood, people were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, up to the day Noah entered the ark; **39** and they knew nothing about what would happen until the flood came and took them all away. That is how it will be at the coming of the Son of Man. **40** Two men will be in the field; one will be taken and the other left. **41** Two women will be grinding with a hand mill; one will be taken and the other left.

**42** “Therefore keep watch, because you do not know on what day your Lord will come. **43** But understand this: If the owner of the house had known at what time of night the thief was coming, he would have kept watch and would not have let his house be broken into. **44** So you also must be ready, because the Son of Man will come at an hour when you do not expect him.

### **Sermon: Advent: The Beginning and End**

Just like the last time I was up here talking, the Gospel reading given is quite somber. However, it connects perfectly using themes of the end to connect to the greater narrative of Christ's accomplishments on Earth. On one hand, the Gospel of Matthew speaks to keeping your guard up for Christ's return. On the other hand, we celebrate Advent today, a season of hope when we recognize the birth of Christ and the sacrifice he'll make to save us all. Both uniquely give hope, but I wanted to speak first of this idea of hope people find out anxiously waiting for the world to end. Now I've been alive for 24 years and I want to guess I've heard that the world will end about 6-ish times. Even outside of my office on Fort Shafter, I can see a tower next to H1 that has a sign that exclaims “Jesus Coming Soon,” and since I've only been here a short amount of time, I can only imagine how long that's

been there. Finding the time of the end is so important to some. An event happens in the world, and the first thing out of someone's mouth is "this is a sign of the end times " Just recently, we had another date set for what man has coined the "rapture." Joshua Mhlakela is a name maybe some of you have seen around online as of late. It should be noted as well that Joshua is not a pastor, never received any formal training or theological teachings, and essentially made up a lot of what he had to say and then when his predictions didn't come to truth, he deflected all blame. Joshua claimed that he was given a vision by God that He would return on September 23rd and 24th (accounting for time zones). If any of you followed this closely on TikTok or other social media platforms, you would have seen people selling their possessions, giving away money, and in some cases making "where we went" manuals for non-believers who broke into their houses later. For those that fell into this trap from Joshua on a false prophecy, their lives were devastated when nothing came to fruition. But we sit here in our seats asking how this could have even happened to begin with. Why would a group of reasonable people throw their finances away for the idea of Christ's early return? Why are we so obsessed with the end of the World? The end, for some, provides an idea of overwhelming relief. For me it means I don't have to go into work anymore to sell sunglasses all day. But for some of you, maybe it means you don't need to worry about an upcoming payment. It could be the end of living with regret, sadness or anger. Maybe it's the idea of seeing a loved one again. Feelings of hopelessness. Perhaps it's living with a sense of dread. Or even the anxiety from all the messed up things in the world that we stand powerless to. There's so much injustice in the world and sometimes we are powerless to its evil. That's why I think this sort of theology and group mindsets have survived into our modern era, it's because it's so attractive and hard to beat. Since the Great Disappointment of 1844, the largest recorded mass gathering of people waiting on the return of Christ, these eschatological ideas have never faded, but still carry into our modern era. The same anxieties and fears of the 1800s are still evident in the 21st century. That's why I have so much sympathy for those who get involved in these groups, because they're no different than you and me. These people have the same problems that we do, and have found a very manipulative person who is assuring them in an extremely harmful way that God will take all of this pain away. But what if God can't take all of our fears and pains away? And when I say that, I mean He already has. Let's return to Advent.

Advent is most commonly defined in Christian theology as the period of waiting on the eventual birth of Christ. Waiting is going to be the key word here. Every year starting at the end of November, we start to revisit those passages in the Gospels about the miraculous birth of Christ. We all know the story of Christmas so I'll save time and skip the general details, but this point of waiting for Christ to be born in the Gospels is relatively short. Of the

four Gospels, Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, Matthew and Luke only take 2 chapters to tell the Christmas story. Mark and John don't even mention Christ's birth at all, but start right into His ministry. So out of the hundreds of chapters in the Bible we focus on those small sections for the 4-5 weeks that lead up to Christ. And the reason for that is because it's hope. Our wait is short, God is coming soon.

Now when these groups we were just talking about view hope, their value to that word is in waiting on Christ's return. They wait patiently and anxiously at every second of the day on the idea that their problems can be immediately solved. Those people might want you to know how they're waiting when they make social media posts or go into public to let everybody else know how they feel. But they wait, and wait, and wait. Part of our shared theology with all Christian denominations is that we believe in a Christ who ascended back into Heaven after his resurrection. Part of this belief too is that in His conquest of death, we no longer have to wait on our problems to be solved. I'm jumping quickly to the Old Testament, but when you did something wrong, something had to die. God's lesson in this was that the actions have real consequences, and for the Israelites, their consequence was to kill the best of their flocks and other animals, something really treasured. Hundreds of years later, God would do the same as a means for us to not worry about being unclean and unworthy of seeing Him, but to also live worry free, that even though we mess up, a God who loves us everyday and in all ways loves us beyond human comprehension.

So what if I told you now that we didn't live in the anxiety of things out of our control or that seem insurmountable? The wait is over, Christ has already come and fixed these problems 2000 years ago! Yes, the worry and fear you might have in your faith life is valid, but the lesson in the Gospel today is that these have been solved before we were even a thought to most people. What we choose to do today, tomorrow, and the rest of our lives defines who we are as people. We shouldn't live day to day wishing it might end as a way to resolve conflict, but rather anticipate the next day and the resolution it might bring to our lives. I did forget to mention that at the beginning of this too that Advent is separated into four themed weeks. Our week is hope. So as we continue into this week and the rest of Advent, let us have hope in Christ to let go and have reassurance that troubles always pass to create a better future.

Question: How can I have hope in God or other people this week?