



Devotional Thoughts :: Advent Readings 2019

Advent Readings 2019 - posted by TMK (), on: 2019/12/1 13:52

My wife and I started this morning. Quite good:

<https://www.gfa.ca/advent/>

Re: Advent Readings - posted by sermonindex (), on: 2019/12/1 18:53

Amen brother, I plan to post each daily because of travel today with the family I missed the first one but will do it here in this thread and we can post each additional one here!

A great advent thought to consider.

"A humble saviour conceived into the womb of a humble woman and born into a humble manger. Humility is the inclination to bow low before God. Humility doesn't seek greatness, or significance, or recognition. It seeks to only obey the One, the truly great One." - Bishop Todd Atkinson

Re: - posted by sermonindex (), on: 2019/12/1 18:54

First Sunday of Advent
Dec 1st

“But as for me, I would seek God,
And to God I would commit my cause”

He sets on high those who are lowly,
And those who mourn are lifted to safety.

So the poor have hope,
And injustice shuts her mouth.
“Job 5:8, 11, 16 (NKJV)

Scripture Readings:

Isaiah 2:1-5

The word that Isaiah son of Amoz saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem.

In days to come
the mountain of the Lord’s house
shall be established as the highest of the mountains,
and shall be raised above the hills;
all the nations shall stream to it.
Many peoples shall come and say,
“Come, let us go up to the mountain of the Lord,
to the house of the God of Jacob;
that he may teach us his ways
and that we may walk in his paths.”
For out of Zion shall go forth instruction,
and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem.
He shall judge between the nations,
and shall arbitrate for many peoples;
they shall beat their swords into ploughshares,

and their spears into pruning hooks;
nation shall not lift up sword against nation,
neither shall they learn war any more.

Judgement Pronounced on Arrogance

O house of Jacob,
come, let us walk
in the light of the Lord!

Prayers:

Thematic Prayer

God of justice and peace,
from the heavens you rain down mercy and kindness,
that all on earth may stand in awe and wonder
before your marvelous deeds.
Raise our heads in expectation,
that we may yearn for the coming day of the Lord
and stand without blame before your Son, Jesus Christ,
who lives and reigns for ever and ever. Amen.

Intercessory Prayer

We seek the mighty God
in the most unlikely places
as a child in a stable,
and in an empty tomb.
May God hear these prayers,
which come from the unlikely corners of our lives.

Prayers of the People, concluding with:

Give us ears to hear, O God,
and eyes to watch,
that we may know your presence in our midst
during this holy season of joy
as we anticipate the coming of Jesus Christ. Amen.

Scripture Prayer

Unexpected God,
your advent alarms us.
Wake us from drowsy worship,
from the sleep that neglects love,
and the sedative of misdirected frenzy.
Awaken us now to your coming,
and bend our angers into your peace. Amen.

Psalm 122

Song of Praise and Prayer for Jerusalem

A Song of Ascents. Of David.

I was glad when they said to me,
"Let us go to the house of the Lord!"
Our feet are standing
within your gates, O Jerusalem.

Jerusalemâ€™built as a city
â€™that is bound firmly together.
To it the tribes go up,
â€™the tribes of the Lord,
as was decreed for Israel,
â€™to give thanks to the name of the Lord.
For there the thrones for judgement were set up,
â€™the thrones of the house of David.

Pray for the peace of Jerusalem:
â€™May they prosper who love you.
Peace be within your walls,
â€™and security within your towers.â€™
For the sake of my relatives and friends
â€™I will say, â€™Peace be within you.â€™
For the sake of the house of the Lord our God,
â€™I will seek your good.

Romans 13:11â€™14

An Urgent Appeal

Besides this, you know what time it is, how it is now the moment for you to wake from sleep. For salvation is nearer to us now than when we became believers; the night is far gone, the day is near. Let us then lay aside the works of darkness and put on the armour of light; let us live honourably as in the day, not in revelling and drunkenness, not in debauchery and licentiousness, not in quarrelling and jealousy. Instead, put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to gratify its desires.

St. Matthew 24:36â€™44

The Necessity for Watchfulness

â€™But about that day and hour no one knows, neither the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. For as the days of Noah were, so will be the coming of the Son of Man. For as in those days before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day Noah entered the ark, and they knew nothing until the flood came and swept them all away, so too will be the coming of the Son of Man. Then two will be in the field; one will be taken and one will be left. Two women will be grinding meal together; one will be taken and one will be left. Keep awake therefore, for you do not know on what day your Lord is coming. But understand this: if the owner of the house had known in what part of the night the thief was coming, he would have stayed awake and would not have let his house be broken into. Therefore you also must be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an unexpected hour.

Re: - posted by sermonindex (), on: 2019/12/3 20:24

Monday Dec 2nd

Collect

Almighty God, give us grace to cast away the works of darkness, and put on the armour of light, now in the time of this mortal life in which your Son Jesus Christ came to visit us in great humility; that in the last day, when he shall come again in his glorious majesty to judge both the living and the dead, we may rise to the life immortal; through him who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.
(This Collect is to be repeated every day after the other Collects in Advent, until Christmas Eve.)

Psalm 1

The Two Ways

Happy are those
who do not follow the advice of the wicked,
or take the path that sinners tread,
or sit in the seat of scoffers;
but their delight is in the law of the Lord,
and on his law they meditate day and night.
They are like trees
planted by streams of water,
which yield their fruit in its season,
and their leaves do not wither.
In all that they do, they prosper.

The wicked are not so,
but are like chaff that the wind drives away.
Therefore the wicked will not stand in the judgement,
nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous;
for the Lord watches over the way of the righteous,
but the way of the wicked will perish.

Amos 2:6-16

Judgement on Israel

Thus says the Lord:
For three transgressions of Israel,
and for four, I will not revoke the punishment;
because they sell the righteous for silver,
and the needy for a pair of sandals
they who trample the head of the poor into the dust of the earth,
and push the afflicted out of the way;
father and son go in to the same girl,
so that my holy name is profaned;
they lay themselves down beside every altar
on garments taken in pledge;
and in the house of their God they drink
wine bought with fines they imposed.

Yet I destroyed the Amorite before them,
whose height was like the height of cedars,
and who was as strong as oaks;
I destroyed his fruit above,
and his roots beneath.
Also I brought you up out of the land of Egypt,
and led you for forty years in the wilderness,
to possess the land of the Amorite.
And I raised up some of your children to be prophets
and some of your youths to be nazirites.
Is it not indeed so, O people of Israel?
says the Lord.

But you made the nazirites drink wine,
and commanded the prophets,
saying, "You shall not prophesy."

So, I will press you down in your place,
just as a cart presses down
when it is full of sheaves.
Flight shall perish from the swift,

and the strong shall not retain their strength,
nor shall the mighty save their lives;
those who handle the bow shall not stand,
and those who are swift of foot shall not save themselves,
nor shall those who ride horses save their lives;
and those who are stout of heart among the mighty
shall flee away naked on that day,
says the Lord.

II Peter 1:1-11

Salutation

Simeon Peter, a servant and apostle of Jesus Christ,

To those who have received a faith as precious as ours through the righteousness of our God and Saviour Jesus Christ:

May grace and peace be yours in abundance in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord.

The Christian's Call and Election

His divine power has given us everything needed for life and godliness, through the knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness. Thus he has given us, through these things, his precious and very great promises, so that through them you may escape from the corruption that is in the world because of lust, and may become participants in the divine nature. For this very reason, you must make every effort to support your faith with goodness, and goodness with knowledge, and knowledge with self-control, and self-control with endurance, and endurance with godliness, and godliness with mutual affection, and mutual affection with love. For if these things are yours and are increasing among you, they keep you from being ineffective and unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. For anyone who lacks these things is shortsighted and blind, and is forgetful of the cleansing of past sins. Therefore, brothers and sisters, be all the more eager to confirm your call and election, for if you do this, you will never stumble. For in this way, entry into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ will be richly provided for you.

St. Matthew 21:1-11

Jesus' Triumphal Entry into Jerusalem

When they had come near Jerusalem and had reached Bethphage, at the Mount of Olives, Jesus sent two disciples, saying to them, "Go into the village ahead of you, and immediately you will find a donkey tied, and a colt with her; untie them and bring them to me. If anyone says anything to you, just say this, 'The Lord needs them.' And he will send them immediately." This took place to fulfil what had been spoken through the prophet, saying,

"Tell the daughter of Zion,
Look, your king is coming to you,
humble, and mounted on a donkey,
and on a colt, the foal of a donkey."

The disciples went and did as Jesus had directed them; they brought the donkey and the colt, and put their cloaks on them, and he sat on them. A very large crowd spread their cloaks on the road, and others cut branches from the trees and spread them on the road. The crowds that went ahead of him and that followed were shouting,

"Hosanna to the Son of David!
Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord!
Hosanna in the highest heaven!"

When he entered Jerusalem, the whole city was in turmoil, asking, "Who is this?" The crowds were saying, "This is the prophet Jesus from Nazareth in Galilee."

Re: - posted by sermonindex (), on: 2019/12/3 20:25

Tuesday Dec 3rd

Collect

Almighty God, give us grace to cast away the works of darkness, and put on the armour of light, now in the time of this mortal life in which your Son Jesus Christ came to visit us in great humility; that in the last day, when he shall come again in his glorious majesty to judge both the living and the dead, we may rise to the life immortal; through him who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.

(This Collect is to be repeated every day after the other Collects in Advent, until Christmas Eve.)

Psalm 5

Trust in God for Deliverance from Enemies

Give ear to my words, O Lord;
and give heed to my sighing.
Listen to the sound of my cry,
and my King and my God,
and for to you I pray.
O Lord, in the morning you hear my voice;
and in the morning I plead my case to you, and watch.

For you are not a God who delights in wickedness;
and evil will not sojourn with you.
The boastful will not stand before your eyes;
and you hate all evildoers.
You destroy those who speak lies;
and the Lord abhors the bloodthirsty and deceitful.

But I, through the abundance of your steadfast love,
and will enter your house,
I will bow down towards your holy temple
and in awe of you.
Lead me, O Lord, in your righteousness
and because of my enemies;
and make your way straight before me.

For there is no truth in their mouths;
and their hearts are destruction;
their throats are open graves;
and they flatter with their tongues.
Make them bear their guilt, O God;
and let them fall by their own counsels;
because of their many transgressions cast them out,
and for they have rebelled against you.

But let all who take refuge in you rejoice;
and let them ever sing for joy.
Spread your protection over them,
and so that those who love your name may exult in you.
For you bless the righteous, O Lord;
and you cover them with favour as with a shield.

Amos 3:1-11

Israel's Guilt and Punishment

Hear this word that the Lord has spoken against you, O people of Israel, against the whole family that I brought up out of the land of Egypt:

You only have I known
 if of all the families of the earth;
 therefore I will punish you
 for all your iniquities.

Do two walk together
 unless they have made an appointment?
 Does a lion roar in the forest,
 when it has no prey?
 Does a young lion cry out from its den,
 if it has caught nothing?
 Does a bird fall into a snare on the earth,
 when there is no trap for it?
 Does a snare spring up from the ground,
 when it has taken nothing?
 Is a trumpet blown in a city,
 and the people are not afraid?
 Does disaster befall a city,
 unless the Lord has done it?
 Surely the Lord God does nothing,
 without revealing his secret
 to his servants the prophets.
 The lion has roared;
 who will not fear?
 The Lord God has spoken;
 who can but prophesy?

Proclaim to the strongholds in Ashdod,
 and to the strongholds in the land of Egypt,
 and say, "Assemble yourselves on Mount Samaria,
 and see what great tumults are within it,
 and what oppressions are in its midst."TM
 They do not know how to do right, says the Lord,
 those who store up violence and robbery in their strongholds.
 Therefore, thus says the Lord God:
 An adversary shall surround the land,
 and strip you of your defence;
 and your strongholds shall be plundered.

II Peter 1:12-21

Therefore I intend to keep on reminding you of these things, though you know them already and are established in the truth that has come to you. I think it right, as long as I am in this body, to refresh your memory, since I know that my death will come soon, as indeed our Lord Jesus Christ has made clear to me. And I will make every effort so that after my departure you may be able at any time to recall these things.

Eyewitnesses of Christ's Glory

For we did not follow cleverly devised myths when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but we had been eyewitnesses of his majesty. For he received honour and glory from God the Father when that voice was conveyed to him by the Majestic Glory, saying, "This is my Son, my Beloved, with whom I am well pleased."TM We ourselves heard this voice come from heaven, while we were with him on the holy mountain.

So we have the prophetic message more fully confirmed. You will do well to be attentive to this as to a lamp shining in a

dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts. First of all you must understand this, that no prophecy of scripture is a matter of one's own interpretation, because no prophecy ever came by human will, but men and women moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God.

St. Matthew 21:1-11

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When they had come near Jerusalem and had reached Bethphage, at the Mount of Olives, Jesus sent two disciples, saying to them, "Go into the village ahead of you, and immediately you will find a donkey tied, and a colt with her; untie them and bring them to me. If anyone says anything to you, just say this, 'The Lord needs them.' And he will send them immediately." This took place to fulfil what had been spoken through the prophet, saying,

"Tell the daughter of Zion,
Look, your king is coming to you,
humble, and mounted on a donkey,
and on a colt, the foal of a donkey."

The disciples went and did as Jesus had directed them; they brought the donkey and the colt, and put their cloaks on them, and he sat on them. A very large crowd spread their cloaks on the road, and others cut branches from the trees and spread them on the road. The crowds that went ahead of him and that followed were shouting,

"Hosanna to the Son of David!
Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord!
Hosanna in the highest heaven!"

When he entered Jerusalem, the whole city was in turmoil, asking, "Who is this?" The crowds were saying, "This is the prophet Jesus from Nazareth in Galilee."

Re: - posted by sermonindex (), on: 2019/12/9 19:30

Wednesday, Dec 4th

Collect

Almighty God, give us grace to cast away the works of darkness, and put on the armour of light, now in the time of this mortal life in which your Son Jesus Christ came to visit us in great humility; that in the last day, when he shall come again in his glorious majesty to judge both the living and the dead, we may rise to the life immortal; through him who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.

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Psalms 119:1-24

The Glories of God's Law

Happy are those whose way is blameless,
who walk in the law of the Lord.
Happy are those who keep his decrees,
who seek him with their whole heart,
who also do no wrong,
but walk in his ways.
You have commanded your precepts
to be kept diligently.
O that my ways may be steadfast
in keeping your statutes!
Then I shall not be put to shame,
having my eyes fixed on all your commandments.
I will praise you with an upright heart,

When I learn your righteous ordinances.
I will observe your statutes;
do not utterly forsake me.

How can young people keep their way pure?
By guarding it according to your word.
With my whole heart I seek you;
do not let me stray from your commandments.
I treasure your word in my heart,
so that I may not sin against you.
Blessed are you, O Lord;
teach me your statutes.
With my lips I declare
all the ordinances of your mouth.
I delight in the way of your decrees
as much as in all riches.
I will meditate on your precepts,
and fix my eyes on your ways.
I will delight in your statutes;
I will not forget your word.

Deal bountifully with your servant,
so that I may live and observe your word.
Open my eyes, so that I may behold
wondrous things out of your law.
I live as an alien in the land;
do not hide your commandments from me.
My soul is consumed with longing
for your ordinances at all times.
You rebuke the insolent, accursed ones,
who wander from your commandments;
take away from me their scorn and contempt,
for I have kept your decrees.
Even though princes sit plotting against me,
your servant will meditate on your statutes.
Your decrees are my delight,
they are my counsellors.

Amos 3:12-4:5

Thus says the Lord: As the shepherd rescues from the mouth of the lion two legs, or a piece of an ear, so shall the people of Israel who live in Samaria be rescued, with the corner of a couch and part of a bed.

Hear, and testify against the house of Jacob,
says the Lord God, the God of hosts:
On the day I punish Israel for its transgressions,
I will punish the altars of Bethel,
and the horns of the altar shall be cut off
and fall to the ground.
I will tear down the winter house as well as the summer house;
and the houses of ivory shall perish,
and the great houses shall come to an end,
says the Lord.

Hear this word, you cows of Bashan
who are on Mount Samaria,
who oppress the poor, who crush the needy,
who say to their husbands, "Bring something to drink!"TM

The Lord God has sworn by his holiness:
 "The time is surely coming upon you,
 when they shall take you away with hooks,
 even the last of you with fishhooks.
 Through breaches in the wall you shall leave,
 each one straight ahead;
 and you shall be flung out into Harmon,
 "says the Lord.
 Come to Bethel and transgress;
 to Gilgal and multiply transgression;
 bring your sacrifices every morning,
 your tithes every three days;
 bring a thank-offering of leavened bread,
 and proclaim freewill-offerings, publish them;
 for so you love to do, O people of Israel!
 "says the Lord God.

II Peter 3:1-10

The Promise of the Lord's Coming

This is now, beloved, the second letter I am writing to you; in them I am trying to arouse your sincere intention by reminding you that you should remember the words spoken in the past by the holy prophets, and the commandment of the Lord and Saviour spoken through your apostles. First of all you must understand this, that in the last days scoffers will come, scoffing and indulging their own lusts and saying, "Where is the promise of his coming? For ever since our ancestors died, all things continue as they were from the beginning of creation!™ They deliberately ignore this fact, that by the word of God heavens existed long ago and an earth was formed out of water and by means of water, through which the world of that time was deluged with water and perished. But by the same word the present heavens and earth have been reserved for fire, being kept until the day of judgement and destruction of the godless.

But do not ignore this one fact, beloved, that with the Lord one day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like one day. The Lord is not slow about his promise, as some think of slowness, but is patient with you, not wanting any to perish, but all to come to repentance. But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, and then the heavens will pass away with a loud noise, and the elements will be dissolved with fire, and the earth and everything that is done on it will be disclosed.

St. Matthew 21:23-32

The Authority of Jesus Questioned

When he entered the temple, the chief priests and the elders of the people came to him as he was teaching, and said, "By what authority are you doing these things, and who gave you this authority?™ Jesus said to them, "I will also ask you one question; if you tell me the answer, then I will also tell you by what authority I do these things. Did the baptism of John come from heaven, or was it of human origin?™ And they argued with one another, "If we say, "From heaven," he will say to us, "Why then did you not believe him? But if we say, "Of human origin," we are afraid of the crowd; for all regard John as a prophet.™ So they answered Jesus, "We do not know.™ And he said to them, "Neither will I tell you by what authority I am doing these things.

The Parable of the Two Sons

"What do you think? A man had two sons; he went to the first and said, "Son, go and work in the vineyard today. He answered, "I will not"; but later he changed his mind and went. The father went to the second and said the same; and he answered, "I go, sir"; but he did not go. Which of the two did the will of his father?™ They said, "The first.™ Jesus said to them, "Truly I tell you, the tax-collectors and the prostitutes are going into the kingdom of God ahead of you. For John came to you in the way of righteousness and you did not believe him, but the tax-collectors and the prostitutes believed him; and even after you saw it, you did not change your minds and believe him.

Re: - posted by sermonindex (), on: 2019/12/9 19:30

Thursday, Dec 5th

Collect

Almighty God, give us grace to cast away the works of darkness, and put on the armour of light, now in the time of this mortal life in which your Son Jesus Christ came to visit us in great humility; that in the last day, when he shall come again in his glorious majesty to judge both the living and the dead, we may rise to the life immortal; through him who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.

(This Collect is to be repeated every day after the other Collects in Advent, until Christmas Eve.)

Psalm 18:1-19

Royal Thanksgiving for Victory

To the leader. A Psalm of David the servant of the Lord, who addressed the words of this song to the Lord on the day when the Lord delivered him from the hand of all his enemies, and from the hand of Saul. He said:

I love you, O Lord, my strength.
The Lord is my rock, my fortress, and my deliverer,
â€”my God, my rock in whom I take refuge,
â€”my shield, and the horn of my salvation, my stronghold.
I call upon the Lord, who is worthy to be praised;
â€”so I shall be saved from my enemies.

The cords of death encompassed me;
â€”the torrents of perdition assailed me;
the cords of Sheol entangled me;
â€”the snares of death confronted me.

In my distress I called upon the Lord;
â€”to my God I cried for help.
From his temple he heard my voice,
â€”and my cry to him reached his ears.

Then the earth reeled and rocked;
â€”the foundations also of the mountains trembled
â€”and quaked, because he was angry.
Smoke went up from his nostrils,
â€”and devouring fire from his mouth;
â€”glowing coals flamed forth from him.
He bowed the heavens, and came down;
â€”thick darkness was under his feet.
He rode on a cherub, and flew;
â€”he came swiftly upon the wings of the wind.
He made darkness his covering around him,
â€”his canopy thick clouds dark with water.
Out of the brightness before him
â€”there broke through his clouds
â€”hailstones and coals of fire.
The Lord also thundered in the heavens,
â€”and the Most High uttered his voice.
And he sent out his arrows, and scattered them;
â€”he flashed forth lightnings, and routed them.
Then the channels of the sea were seen,
â€”and the foundations of the world were laid bare
at your rebuke, O Lord,

at the blast of the breath of your nostrils.

He reached down from on high, he took me;
he drew me out of mighty waters.
He delivered me from my strong enemy,
and from those who hated me;
for they were too mighty for me.
They confronted me in the day of my calamity;
but the Lord was my support.
He brought me out into a broad place;
he delivered me, because he delighted in me.

Amos 4:6-13

Israel Rejects Correction

I gave you cleanness of teeth in all your cities,
and lack of bread in all your places,
yet you did not return to me,
says the Lord.

And I also withheld the rain from you
when there were still three months to the harvest;
I would send rain on one city,
and send no rain on another city;
one field would be rained upon,
and the field on which it did not rain withered;
so two or three towns wandered to one town
to drink water, and were not satisfied;
yet you did not return to me,
says the Lord.

I struck you with blight and mildew;
I laid waste your gardens and your vineyards;
the locust devoured your fig trees and your olive trees;
yet you did not return to me,
says the Lord.

I sent among you a pestilence after the manner of Egypt;
I killed your young men with the sword;
I carried away your horses;
and I made the stench of your camp go up into your nostrils;
yet you did not return to me,
says the Lord.

I overthrew some of you,
as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah,
and you were like a brand snatched from the fire;
yet you did not return to me,
says the Lord.

Therefore, thus I will do to you, O Israel;
because I will do this to you,
prepare to meet your God, O Israel!

For lo, the one who forms the mountains, creates the wind,
reveals his thoughts to mortals,
makes the morning darkness,

“and treads on the heights of the earth”
“the Lord, the God of hosts, is his name!

II Peter 3:11-18

Since all these things are to be dissolved in this way, what sort of people ought you to be in leading lives of holiness and godliness, waiting for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be set ablaze and dissolved, and the elements will melt with fire? But, in accordance with his promise, we wait for new heavens and a new earth, where righteousness is at home.

Final Exhortation and Doxology

Therefore, beloved, while you are waiting for these things, strive to be found by him at peace, without spot or blemish; and regard the patience of our Lord as salvation. So also our beloved brother Paul wrote to you according to the wisdom given to him, speaking of this as he does in all his letters. There are some things in them hard to understand, which the ignorant and unstable twist to their own destruction, as they do the other scriptures. You therefore, beloved, since you are forewarned, beware that you are not carried away with the error of the lawless and lose your own stability. But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him be the glory both now and to the day of eternity. Amen.

St. Matthew 21:33-46

The Parable of the Wicked Tenants

“Listen to another parable. There was a landowner who planted a vineyard, put a fence around it, dug a wine press in it, and built a watch-tower. Then he leased it to tenants and went to another country. When the harvest time had come, he sent his slaves to the tenants to collect his produce. But the tenants seized his slaves and beat one, killed another, and stoned another. Again he sent other slaves, more than the first; and they treated them in the same way. Finally he sent his son to them, saying, “They will respect my son.” But when the tenants saw the son, they said to themselves, “This is the heir; come, let us kill him and get his inheritance.” So they seized him, threw him out of the vineyard, and killed him. Now when the owner of the vineyard comes, what will he do to those tenants?”TM They said to him, “He will put those wretches to a miserable death, and lease the vineyard to other tenants who will give him the produce at the harvest time.”TM

Jesus said to them, “Have you never read in the scriptures:

“The stone that the builders rejected
“has become the cornerstone;
this was the Lord’s doing,
“and it is amazing in our eyes”?

Therefore I tell you, the kingdom of God will be taken away from you and given to a people that produces the fruits of the kingdom. The one who falls on this stone will be broken to pieces; and it will crush anyone on whom it falls.”TM

When the chief priests and the Pharisees heard his parables, they realized that he was speaking about them. They wanted to arrest him, but they feared the crowds, because they regarded him as a prophet.

Re: - posted by sermonindex (), on: 2019/12/9 19:31

Friday, Dec 6th

Collect

Almighty God, give us grace to cast away the works of darkness, and put on the armour of light, now in the time of this mortal life in which your Son Jesus Christ came to visit us in great humility; that in the last day, when he shall come again in his glorious majesty to judge both the living and the dead, we may rise to the life immortal; through him who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.

(This Collect is to be repeated every day after the other Collects in Advent, until Christmas Eve.)

Psalm 16

Song of Trust and Security in God

A Miktam of David.

Protect me, O God, for in you I take refuge.
I say to the Lord, "You are my Lord;
I have no good apart from you."

As for the holy ones in the land, they are the noble,
in whom is all my delight.

Those who choose another god multiply their sorrows;
their drink offerings of blood I will not pour out
or take their names upon my lips.

The Lord is my chosen portion and my cup;
you hold my lot.
The boundary lines have fallen for me in pleasant places;
I have a goodly heritage.

I bless the Lord who gives me counsel;
in the night also my heart instructs me.
I keep the Lord always before me;
because he is at my right hand, I shall not be moved.

Therefore my heart is glad, and my soul rejoices;
my body also rests secure.
For you do not give me up to Sheol,
or let your faithful one see the Pit.

You show me the path of life.
In your presence there is fullness of joy;
in your right hand are pleasures for evermore.

Amos 5:1-17

A Lament for Israel's Sin

Hear this word that I take up over you in lamentation, O house of Israel:

Fallen, no more to rise,
is maiden Israel;
forsaken on her land,
with no one to raise her up.

For thus says the Lord God:
The city that marched out a thousand
shall have a hundred left,
and that which marched out a hundred
shall have ten left.

For thus says the Lord to the house of Israel:
Seek me and live;
but do not seek Bethel,
and do not enter into Gilgal

for cross over to Beer-sheba;
for Gilgal shall surely go into exile,
and Bethel shall come to nothing.

Seek the Lord and live
for he will break out against the house of Joseph like fire,
and it will devour Bethel, with no one to quench it.
Ah, you that turn justice to wormwood,
and bring righteousness to the ground!

The one who made the Pleiades and Orion,
and turns deep darkness into the morning,
and darkens the day into night,
who calls for the waters of the sea,
and pours them out on the surface of the earth,
the Lord is his name,
who makes destruction flash out against the strong,
and so that destruction comes upon the fortress.

They hate the one who reproves in the gate,
and they abhor the one who speaks the truth.
Therefore, because you trample on the poor
and take from them levies of grain,
you have built houses of hewn stone,
and but you shall not live in them;
you have planted pleasant vineyards,
and but you shall not drink their wine.
For I know how many are your transgressions,
and how great are your sins
you who afflict the righteous, who take a bribe,
and push aside the needy in the gate.
Therefore the prudent will keep silent in such a time;
and for it is an evil time.

Seek good and not evil,
and that you may live;
and so the Lord, the God of hosts, will be with you,
and just as you have said.
Hate evil and love good,
and establish justice in the gate;
and it may be that the Lord, the God of hosts,
and will be gracious to the remnant of Joseph.

Therefore thus says the Lord, the God of hosts, the Lord:
In all the squares there shall be wailing;
and in all the streets they shall say, "Alas! alas!"
They shall call the farmers to mourning,
and those skilled in lamentation, to wailing;
and in all the vineyards there shall be wailing,
and for I will pass through the midst of you,
and says the Lord.

Jude 1:1-16

Salutation

Jude, a servant of Jesus Christ and brother of James,

To those who are called, who are beloved in God the Father and kept safe for Jesus Christ:

May mercy, peace, and love be yours in abundance.

Occasion of the Letter

Beloved, while eagerly preparing to write to you about the salvation we share, I find it necessary to write and appeal to you to contend for the faith that was once for all entrusted to the saints. For certain intruders have stolen in among you, people who long ago were designated for this condemnation as ungodly, who pervert the grace of our God into licentiousness and deny our only Master and Lord, Jesus Christ.

Judgement on False Teachers

Now I desire to remind you, though you are fully informed, that the Lord, who once for all saved a people out of the land of Egypt, afterwards destroyed those who did not believe. And the angels who did not keep their own position, but left their proper dwelling, he has kept in eternal chains in deepest darkness for the judgement of the great day. Likewise, Sodom and Gomorrah and the surrounding cities, which, in the same manner as they, indulged in sexual immorality and pursued unnatural lust, serve as an example by undergoing a punishment of eternal fire.

Yet in the same way these dreamers also defile the flesh, reject authority, and slander the glorious ones. But when the archangel Michael contended with the devil and disputed about the body of Moses, he did not dare to bring a condemnation of slander against him, but said, "The Lord rebuke you!" But these people slander whatever they do not understand, and they are destroyed by those things that, like irrational animals, they know by instinct. Woe to them! For they go the way of Cain, and abandon themselves to Balaam's error for the sake of gain, and perish in Korah's rebellion. These are blemishes on your love-feasts, while they feast with you without fear, feeding themselves. They are waters without clouds carried along by the winds; autumn trees without fruit, twice dead, uprooted; wild waves of the sea, casting up the foam of their own shame; wandering stars, for whom the deepest darkness has been reserved for ever.

It was also about these that Enoch, in the seventh generation from Adam, prophesied, saying, "See, the Lord is coming with tens of thousands of his holy ones, to execute judgement on all, and to convict everyone of all the deeds of ungodliness that they have committed in such an ungodly way, and of all the harsh things that ungodly sinners have spoken against him." These are grumblers and malcontents; they indulge their own lusts; they are bombastic in speech, flattering people to their own advantage.

St. Matthew 22:1-14

The Parable of the Wedding Banquet

Once more Jesus spoke to them in parables, saying: "The kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who gave a wedding banquet for his son. He sent his slaves to call those who had been invited to the wedding banquet, but they would not come. Again he sent other slaves, saying, 'Tell those who have been invited: Look, I have prepared my dinner, my oxen and my fat calves have been slaughtered, and everything is ready; come to the wedding banquet.' But they made light of it and went away, one to his farm, another to his business, while the rest seized his slaves, maltreated them, and killed them. The king was enraged. He sent his troops, destroyed those murderers, and burned their city. Then he said to his slaves, 'The wedding is ready, but those invited were not worthy. Go therefore into the main streets, and invite everyone you find to the wedding banquet.' Those slaves went out into the streets and gathered all whom they found, both good and bad; so the wedding hall was filled with guests.

"But when the king came in to see the guests, he noticed a man there who was not wearing a wedding robe, and he said to him, 'Friend, how did you get in here without a wedding robe?' And he was speechless. Then the king said to the attendants, 'Bind him hand and foot, and throw him into the outer darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.' For many are called, but few are chosen."

Re: - posted by sermonindex (), on: 2019/12/9 19:31

Saturday, Dec 7th

Collect

Almighty God, give us grace to cast away the works of darkness, and put on the armour of light, now in the time of this mortal life in which your Son Jesus Christ came to visit us in great humility; that in the last day, when he shall come again in his glorious majesty to judge both the living and the dead, we may rise to the life immortal; through him who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.

(This Collect is to be repeated every day after the other Collects in Advent, until Christmas Eve.)

Psalm 20

Prayer for Victory

To the leader. A Psalm of David.

The Lord answer you in the day of trouble!
â€fThe name of the God of Jacob protect you!
May he send you help from the sanctuary,
â€fand give you support from Zion.
May he remember all your offerings,
â€fand regard with favour your burnt sacrifices.â€fSelah

May he grant you your heartâ€™s desire,
â€fand fulfil all your plans.
May we shout for joy over your victory,
â€fand in the name of our God set up our banners.
May the Lord fulfil all your petitions.

Now I know that the Lord will help his anointed;
â€fhe will answer him from his holy heaven
â€fwith mighty victories by his right hand.
Some take pride in chariots, and some in horses,
â€fbut our pride is in the name of the Lord our God.
They will collapse and fall,
â€fbut we shall rise and stand upright.

Give victory to the king, O Lord;
â€fanswer us when we call.

Amos 5:18â€27

The Day of the Lord a Dark Day

Alas for you who desire the day of the Lord!
â€fWhy do you want the day of the Lord?
It is darkness, not light;
â€fas if someone fled from a lion,
â€fand was met by a bear;
or went into the house and rested a hand against the wall,
â€fand was bitten by a snake.
Is not the day of the Lord darkness, not light,
â€fand gloom with no brightness in it?

I hate, I despise your festivals,
â€fand I take no delight in your solemn assemblies.

Even though you offer me your burnt-offerings and grain offerings,
I will not accept them;
and the offerings of well-being of your fatted animals
I will not look upon.
Take away from me the noise of your songs;
I will not listen to the melody of your harps.
But let justice roll down like waters,
and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream.

Did you bring to me sacrifices and offerings the forty years in the wilderness, O house of Israel? You shall take up Sakkuth your king, and Kaiwan your star-god, your images that you made for yourselves; therefore I will take you into exile beyond Damascus, says the Lord, whose name is the God of hosts.

I Thessalonians 4:13-18

The Coming of the Lord

But we do not want you to be uninformed, brothers and sisters, about those who have died, so that you may not grieve as others do who have no hope. For since we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so, through Jesus, God will bring with him those who have died. For this we declare to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive, who are left until the coming of the Lord, will by no means precede those who have died. For the Lord himself, with a cry of command, with the archangel's call and with the sound of God's trumpet, will descend from heaven, and the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive, who are left, will be caught up in the clouds together with them to meet the Lord in the air; and so we will be with the Lord for ever. Therefore encourage one another with these words.

St. Luke 21:5-19

The Destruction of the Temple Foretold

When some were speaking about the temple, how it was adorned with beautiful stones and gifts dedicated to God, he said, "As for these things that you see, the days will come when not one stone will be left upon another; all will be thrown down."

Signs and Persecutions

They asked him, "Teacher, when will this be, and what will be the sign that this is about to take place?" And he said, "Beware that you are not led astray; for many will come in my name and say, 'I am he!' and, 'The time is near!' Do not go after them.

"When you hear of wars and insurrections, do not be terrified; for these things must take place first, but the end will not follow immediately." Then he said to them, "Nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom; there will be great earthquakes, and in various places famines and plagues; and there will be dreadful portents and great signs from heaven.

"But before all this occurs, they will arrest you and persecute you; they will hand you over to synagogues and prisons, and you will be brought before kings and governors because of my name. This will give you an opportunity to testify. So make up your minds not to prepare your defence in advance; for I will give you words and a wisdom that none of your opponents will be able to withstand or contradict. You will be betrayed even by parents and brothers, by relatives and friends; and they will put some of you to death. You will be hated by all because of my name. But not a hair of your head will perish. By your endurance you will gain your souls.

Re: - posted by sermonindex (), on: 2019/12/9 19:31

Second Sunday of Advent

“Thus says the Lord of hosts:

“Execute true justice,
Show mercy and compassion
Everyone to his brother.
”Zechariah 7:9 (NKJV)
Scripture Readings:

Isaiah 11:1-10

The Peaceful Kingdom

A shoot shall come out from the stock of Jesse,
“and a branch shall grow out of his roots.
The spirit of the Lord shall rest on him,
“the spirit of wisdom and understanding,
the spirit of counsel and might,
“the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord.
“His delight shall be in the fear of the Lord.

He shall not judge by what his eyes see,
“or decide by what his ears hear;
but with righteousness he shall judge the poor,
“and decide with equity for the meek of the earth;
he shall strike the earth with the rod of his mouth,
“and with the breath of his lips he shall kill the wicked.
Righteousness shall be the belt around his waist,
“and faithfulness the belt around his loins.

The wolf shall live with the lamb,
“the leopard shall lie down with the kid,
the calf and the lion and the fatling together,
“and a little child shall lead them.
The cow and the bear shall graze,
“their young shall lie down together;
“and the lion shall eat straw like the ox.
The nursing child shall play over the hole of the asp,
“and the weaned child shall put its hand on the adder’s den.
They will not hurt or destroy
“on all my holy mountain;
for the earth will be full of the knowledge of the Lord
“as the waters cover the sea.

Return of the Remnant of Israel and Judah

On that day the root of Jesse shall stand as a signal to the peoples; the nations shall inquire of him, and his dwelling shall be glorious.

Prayers:

Thematic Prayer
God of timeless grace,
you fill us with joyful expectation.
Make us ready for the message that prepares the way,

that with uprightness of heart and holy joy
we may eagerly await the kingdom of your Son, Jesus Christ,
who reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, now and for ever. Amen

Intercessory Prayer

God of hope,
you raised up John the baptizer
as a herald who calls us to conversion.
As we joyfully await the glorious coming of Christ,
we pray to you for the needs of the church and the world.

Prayers of the People, concluding with:

Hear our humble prayer
that we may serve you in holiness and faith
and give voice to your presence among us
until the day of the coming of your Son, Jesus Christ,
who lives and reigns for ever and ever. Amen.

Scripture Prayer

Labouring God,
with axe and winnowing fork
you clear a holy space
where hurt and destruction have no place,
and a little child holds sway.
Clear our lives of hatred and despair,
sow seeds of joy and peace,
that shoots of hope may spring forth
and we may live in harmony
with one another. Amen.

Psalm 72:1-7, 18-19

Prayer for Guidance and Support for the King

Of Solomon.

Give the king your justice, O God,
and your righteousness to a king's son.
May he judge your people with righteousness,
and your poor with justice.
May the mountains yield prosperity for the people,
and the hills, in righteousness.
May he defend the cause of the poor of the people,
and give deliverance to the needy,
and crush the oppressor.

May he live while the sun endures,
and as long as the moon, throughout all generations.
May he be like rain that falls on the mown grass,
like showers that water the earth.
In his days may righteousness flourish
and peace abound, until the moon is no more.

Blessed be the Lord, the God of Israel,
who alone does wondrous things.
Blessed be his glorious name for ever;
may his glory fill the whole earth.

Amen and Amen.

Romans 15:4-13

For whatever was written in former days was written for our instruction, so that by steadfastness and by the encouragement of the scriptures we might have hope. May the God of steadfastness and encouragement grant you to live in harmony with one another, in accordance with Christ Jesus, so that together you may with one voice glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

The Gospel for Jews and Gentiles Alike

Welcome one another, therefore, just as Christ has welcomed you, for the glory of God. For I tell you that Christ has become a servant of the circumcised on behalf of the truth of God in order that he might confirm the promises given to the patriarchs, and in order that the Gentiles might glorify God for his mercy. As it is written,

“Therefore I will confess you among the Gentiles,
and sing praises to your name”;

and again he says,

“Rejoice, O Gentiles, with his people”;

and again,

“Praise the Lord, all you Gentiles,
and let all the peoples praise him”;

and again Isaiah says,

“The root of Jesse shall come,
the one who rises to rule the Gentiles;
in him the Gentiles shall hope.”

May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.

St. Matthew 3:1-12

The Proclamation of John the Baptist

In those days John the Baptist appeared in the wilderness of Judea, proclaiming, “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near.” This is the one of whom the prophet Isaiah spoke when he said,

“The voice of one crying out in the wilderness:
“Prepare the way of the Lord,
make his paths straight.”

Now John wore clothing of camel’s hair with a leather belt around his waist, and his food was locusts and wild honey. Then the people of Jerusalem and all Judea were going out to him, and all the region along the Jordan, and they were baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins.

But when he saw many Pharisees and Sadducees coming for baptism, he said to them, “You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Bear fruit worthy of repentance. Do not presume to say to yourselves, ‘We have Abraham as our ancestor’; for I tell you, God is able from these stones to raise up children to Abraham. Even now the axe is lying at the root of the trees; every tree therefore that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire.

“I baptize you with water for repentance, but one who is more powerful than I is coming after me; I am not worthy to c

array his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. His winnowingâ€fork is in his hand, and he will clear his threshingâ€floor and will gather his wheat into the granary; but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire.â€™

Re: - posted by sermonindex (), on: 2019/12/9 19:32

Monday, Dec 9th

Collect

Merciful God, who sent your messengers the prophets to preach repentance and prepare the way for our salvation: Give us grace to heed their warnings and forsake our sins, that we may greet with joy the coming of Jesus Christ our Redeemer; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.

Conclude with

Almighty God, give us grace to cast away the works of darkness, and put on the armour of light, now in the time of this mortal life in which your Son Jesus Christ came to visit us in great humility; that in the last day, when he shall come again in his glorious majesty to judge both the living and the dead, we may rise to the life immortal; through him who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.

Psalm 25

Prayer for Guidance and for Deliverance

Of David.

To you, O Lord, I lift up my soul.
O my God, in you I trust;
â€do not let me be put to shame;
â€do not let my enemies exult over me.
Do not let those who wait for you be put to shame;
â€let them be ashamed who are wantonly treacherous.

Make me to know your ways, O Lord;
â€teach me your paths.
Lead me in your truth, and teach me,
â€for you are the God of my salvation;
â€for you I wait all day long.

Be mindful of your mercy, O Lord, and of your steadfast love,
â€for they have been from of old.
Do not remember the sins of my youth or my transgressions;
â€according to your steadfast love remember me,
â€for your goodnessâ€™ sake, O Lord!

Good and upright is the Lord;
â€therefore he instructs sinners in the way.
He leads the humble in what is right,
â€and teaches the humble his way.
All the paths of the Lord are steadfast love and faithfulness,
â€for those who keep his covenant and his decrees.

For your nameâ€™s sake, O Lord,
â€pardon my guilt, for it is great.
Who are they that fear the Lord?
â€He will teach them the way that they should choose.

They will abide in prosperity,

and their children shall possess the land.
The friendship of the Lord is for those who fear him,
and he makes his covenant known to them.
My eyes are ever towards the Lord,
for he will pluck my feet out of the net.

Turn to me and be gracious to me,
for I am lonely and afflicted.
Relieve the troubles of my heart,
and bring me out of my distress.
Consider my affliction and my trouble,
and forgive all my sins.

Consider how many are my foes,
and with what violent hatred they hate me.
O guard my life, and deliver me;
do not let me be put to shame, for I take refuge in you.
May integrity and uprightness preserve me,
for I wait for you.

Redeem Israel, O God,
out of all its troubles.

Amos 7:1-9

Locusts, Fire, and a Plumb Line

This is what the Lord God showed me: he was forming locusts at the time the latter growth began to sprout (it was the latter growth after the king's mowings). When they had finished eating the grass of the land, I said,

O Lord God, forgive, I beg you!
How can Jacob stand?
He is so small!
The Lord relented concerning this;
It shall not be, said the Lord.

This is what the Lord God showed me: the Lord God was calling for a shower of fire, and it devoured the great deep and was eating up the land. Then I said,

O Lord God, cease, I beg you!
How can Jacob stand?
He is so small!
The Lord relented concerning this;
This also shall not be, said the Lord God.

This is what he showed me: the Lord was standing beside a wall built with a plumb line, with a plumb line in his hand. And the Lord said to me, Amos, what do you see? And I said, A plumb line. Then the Lord said,

See, I am setting a plumb line
in the midst of my people Israel;
I will never again pass them by;
the high places of Isaac shall be made desolate,
and the sanctuaries of Israel shall be laid waste,
and I will rise against the house of Jeroboam with the sword.

Revelation 1:1-8

Introduction and Salutation

The revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave him to show his servants what must soon take place; he made it known by sending his angel to his servant John, who testified to the word of God and to the testimony of Jesus Christ, even to all that he saw.

Blessed is the one who reads aloud the words of the prophecy, and blessed are those who hear and who keep what is written in it; for the time is near.

John to the seven churches that are in Asia:

Grace to you and peace from him who is and who was and who is to come, and from the seven spirits who are before his throne, and from Jesus Christ, the faithful witness, the firstborn of the dead, and the ruler of the kings of the earth.

To him who loves us and freed us from our sins by his blood, and made us to be a kingdom, priests serving his God and Father, to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.

Look! He is coming with the clouds;
every eye will see him,
even those who pierced him;
and on his account all the tribes of the earth will wail.

So it is to be. Amen.

"I am the Alpha and the Omega," says the Lord God, who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty.

St. Matthew 22:23-33

The Question about the Resurrection

The same day some Sadducees came to him, saying there is no resurrection; and they asked him a question, saying, "Teacher, Moses said, 'If a man dies childless, his brother shall marry the widow, and raise up children for his brother.' Now there were seven brothers among us; the first married, and died childless, leaving the widow to his brother. The second did the same, so also the third, down to the seventh. Last of all, the woman herself died. In the resurrection, then, whose wife of the seven will she be? For all of them had married her."

Jesus answered them, "You are wrong, because you know neither the scriptures nor the power of God. For in the resurrection they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are like angels in heaven. And as for the resurrection of the dead, have you not read what was said to you by God, 'I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob'? He is God not of the dead, but of the living." And when the crowd heard it, they were astounded at his teaching.

Re: - posted by sermonindex (), on: 2019/12/10 6:38

Tuesday, Dec 10th

Collect

Merciful God, who sent your messengers the prophets to preach repentance and prepare the way for our salvation: Give us grace to heed their warnings and forsake our sins, that we may greet with joy the coming of Jesus Christ our Redeemer; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.

Conclude with

Almighty God, give us grace to cast away the works of darkness, and put on the armour of light, now in the time of this mortal life in which your Son Jesus Christ came to visit us in great humility; that in the last day, when he shall come again in his glorious majesty to judge both the living and the dead, we may rise to the life immortal; through him who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.

Psalm 26

Plea for Justice and Declaration of Righteousness

Of David.

Vindicate me, O Lord,
for I have walked in my integrity,
and I have trusted in the Lord without wavering.
Prove me, O Lord, and try me;
test my heart and mind.
For your steadfast love is before my eyes,
and I walk in faithfulness to you.

I do not sit with the worthless,
nor do I consort with hypocrites;
I hate the company of evildoers,
and will not sit with the wicked.

I wash my hands in innocence,
and go around your altar, O Lord,
singing aloud a song of thanksgiving,
and telling all your wondrous deeds.

O Lord, I love the house in which you dwell,
and the place where your glory abides.
Do not sweep me away with sinners,
nor my life with the bloodthirsty,
those in whose hands are evil devices,
and whose right hands are full of bribes.

But as for me, I walk in my integrity;
redeem me, and be gracious to me.
My foot stands on level ground;
in the great congregation I will bless the Lord.

Amos 7:10-17

Amaziah Complains to the King

Then Amaziah, the priest of Bethel, sent to King Jeroboam of Israel, saying, "Amos has conspired against you in the very centre of the house of Israel; the land is not able to bear all his words. For thus Amos has said,

"Jeroboam shall die by the sword,
and Israel must go into exile
away from his land."

And Amaziah said to Amos, "O seer, go, flee away to the land of Judah, earn your bread there, and prophesy there; but never again prophesy at Bethel, for it is the king's sanctuary, and it is a temple of the kingdom."

Then Amos answered Amaziah, "I am no prophet, nor a prophet's son; but I am a herdsman, and a dresser of sycamore trees, and the Lord took me from following the flock, and the Lord said to me, "Go, prophesy to my people Israel."

"Now therefore hear the word of the Lord.
You say, "Do not prophesy against Israel,
and do not preach against the house of Isaac."
Therefore, thus says the Lord:

“Your wife shall become a prostitute in the city,
and your sons and your daughters shall fall by the sword,
and your land shall be parcelled out by line;
you yourself shall die in an unclean land,
and Israel shall surely go into exile away from its land.”

Revelation 1:9-16

A Vision of Christ

I, John, your brother who share with you in Jesus the persecution and the kingdom and the patient endurance, was on the island called Patmos because of the word of God and the testimony of Jesus. I was in the spirit on the Lord’s day, and I heard behind me a loud voice like a trumpet saying, “Write in a book what you see and send it to the seven churches, to Ephesus, to Smyrna, to Pergamum, to Thyatira, to Sardis, to Philadelphia, and to Laodicea.”

Then I turned to see whose voice it was that spoke to me, and on turning I saw seven golden lampstands, and in the midst of the lampstands I saw one like the Son of Man, clothed with a long robe and with a golden sash across his chest. His head and his hair were white as white wool, white as snow; his eyes were like a flame of fire, his feet were like burnished bronze, refined as in a furnace, and his voice was like the sound of many waters. In his right hand he held seven stars, and from his mouth came a sharp, two-edged sword, and his face was like the sun shining with full force.

St. Matthew 22:34-46

The Greatest Commandment

When the Pharisees heard that he had silenced the Sadducees, they gathered together, and one of them, a lawyer, asked him a question to test him. “Teacher, which commandment in the law is the greatest?” He said to him, “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the greatest and first commandment. And a second is like it: You shall love your neighbour as yourself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.”

The Question about David’s Son

Now while the Pharisees were gathered together, Jesus asked them this question: “What do you think of the Messiah? Whose son is he?” They said to him, “The son of David.” He said to them, “How is it then that David by the Spirit calls him Lord, saying,

“The Lord said to my Lord,
“Sit at my right hand,
“until I put your enemies under your feet?”

If David thus calls him Lord, how can he be his son? No one was able to give him an answer, nor from that day did anyone dare to ask him any more questions.

Re: - posted by sermonindex (), on: 2019/12/11 8:55

Wednesday, Dec 11th

Collect

Merciful God, who sent your messengers the prophets to preach repentance and prepare the way for our salvation: Give us grace to heed their warnings and forsake our sins, that we may greet with joy the coming of Jesus Christ our Redeemer; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.

Conclude with

Almighty God, give us grace to cast away the works of darkness, and put on the armour of light, now in the time of this mortal life in which your Son Jesus Christ came to visit us in great humility; that in the last day, when he shall come again

n in his glorious majesty to judge both the living and the dead, we may rise to the life immortal; through him who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.

Psalm 38

A Penitent Sufferer's Plea for Healing

A Psalm of David, for the memorial offering.

O Lord, do not rebuke me in your anger,
and discipline me in your wrath.
For your arrows have sunk into me,
and your hand has come down on me.

There is no soundness in my flesh
and because of your indignation;
there is no health in my bones
and because of my sin.
For my iniquities have gone over my head;
and they weigh like a burden too heavy for me.

My wounds grow foul and fester
and because of my foolishness;
I am utterly bowed down and prostrate;
and all day long I go around mourning.
For my loins are filled with burning,
and there is no soundness in my flesh.
I am utterly spent and crushed;
and I groan because of the tumult of my heart.

O Lord, all my longing is known to you;
and my sighing is not hidden from you.
My heart throbs, my strength fails me;
and as for the light of my eyes it also has gone from me.
My friends and companions stand aloof from my affliction,
and my neighbours stand far off.

Those who seek my life lay their snares;
and those who seek to hurt me speak of ruin,
and meditate treachery all day long.

But I am like the deaf, I do not hear;
and like the mute, who cannot speak.
Truly, I am like one who does not hear,
and in whose mouth is no retort.

But it is for you, O Lord, that I wait;
and it is you, O Lord my God, who will answer.
For I pray, "Only do not let them rejoice over me,
and those who boast against me when my foot slips."

For I am ready to fall,
and my pain is ever with me.
I confess my iniquity;
and I am sorry for my sin.
Those who are my foes without cause are mighty,
and many are those who hate me wrongfully.
Those who render me evil for good

are my adversaries because I follow after good.

Do not forsake me, O Lord;
O my God, do not be far from me;
make haste to help me,
O Lord, my salvation.

Amos 8:1-14

The Basket of Fruit

This is what the Lord God showed me—a basket of summer fruit. He said, “Amos, what do you see?” And I said, “A basket of summer fruit.” Then the Lord said to me,

“The end has come upon my people Israel;
I will never again pass them by.
The songs of the temple shall become wailings on that day,”
says the Lord God;
“the dead bodies shall be many,
cast out in every place. Be silent!”

Hear this, you that trample on the needy,
and bring to ruin the poor of the land,
saying, “When will the new moon be over
so that we may sell grain;
and the sabbath,
so that we may offer wheat for sale?
We will make the ephah small and the shekel great,
and practise deceit with false balances,
buying the poor for silver
and the needy for a pair of sandals,
and selling the sweepings of the wheat.”

The Lord has sworn by the pride of Jacob:
Surely I will never forget any of their deeds.
Shall not the land tremble on this account,
and everyone mourn who lives in it,
and all of it rise like the Nile,
and be tossed about and sink again, like the Nile of Egypt?

On that day, says the Lord God,
I will make the sun go down at noon,
and darken the earth in broad daylight.
I will turn your feasts into mourning,
and all your songs into lamentation;
I will bring sackcloth on all loins,
and baldness on every head;
I will make it like the mourning for an only son,
and the end of it like a bitter day.

The time is surely coming, says the Lord God,
when I will send a famine on the land;
not a famine of bread, or a thirst for water,
but of hearing the words of the Lord.
They shall wander from sea to sea,
and from north to east;
they shall run to and fro, seeking the word of the Lord,
but they shall not find it.

In that day the beautiful young women and the young men shall faint for thirst.
Those who swear by Ashimah of Samaria,
and say, 'As your god lives, O Dan',
and, 'As the way of Beer-sheba lives'
they shall fall, and never rise again.

Revelation 1:17-2:7

When I saw him, I fell at his feet as though dead. But he placed his right hand on me, saying, 'Do not be afraid; I am the first and the last, and the living one. I was dead, and see, I am alive for ever and ever; and I have the keys of Death and of Hades. Now write what you have seen, what is, and what is to take place after this. As for the mystery of the seven stars that you saw in my right hand, and the seven golden lampstands: the seven stars are the angels of the seven churches, and the seven lampstands are the seven churches.

The Message to Ephesus

'To the angel of the church in Ephesus write: These are the words of him who holds the seven stars in his right hand, who walks among the seven golden lampstands:

'I know your works, your toil and your patient endurance. I know that you cannot tolerate evildoers; you have tested those who claim to be apostles but are not, and have found them to be false. I also know that you are enduring patiently and bearing up for the sake of my name, and that you have not grown weary. But I have this against you, that you have abandoned the love you had at first. Remember then from what you have fallen; repent, and do the works you did at first. If not, I will come to you and remove your lampstand from its place, unless you repent. Yet this is to your credit: you hate the works of the Nicolaitans, which I also hate. Let anyone who has an ear listen to what the Spirit is saying to the churches. To everyone who conquers, I will give permission to eat from the tree of life that is in the paradise of God.

St. Matthew 23:1-12

Jesus Denounces Scribes and Pharisees

Then Jesus said to the crowds and to his disciples, 'The scribes and the Pharisees sit on Moses' seat; therefore, do whatever they teach you and follow it; but do not do as they do, for they do not practise what they teach. They tie up heavy burdens, hard to bear, and lay them on the shoulders of others; but they themselves are unwilling to lift a finger to move them. They do all their deeds to be seen by others; for they make their phylacteries broad and their fringes long. They love to have the place of honour at banquets and the best seats in the synagogues, and to be greeted with respect in the market-places, and to have people call them rabbi. But you are not to be called rabbi, for you have one teacher, and you are all students. And call no one your father on earth, for you have one Father—the one in heaven. Nor are you to be called instructors, for you have one instructor, the Messiah. The greatest among you will be your servant. All who exalt themselves will be humbled, and all who humble themselves will be exalted.

Re: - posted by sermonindex (), on: 2019/12/12 6:29

Thursday, Dec 12th

Collect

Merciful God, who sent your messengers the prophets to preach repentance and prepare the way for our salvation: Give us grace to heed their warnings and forsake our sins, that we may greet with joy the coming of Jesus Christ our Redeemer; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.

Conclude with

Almighty God, give us grace to cast away the works of darkness, and put on the armour of light, now in the time of this mortal life in which your Son Jesus Christ came to visit us in great humility; that in the last day, when he shall come again in his glorious majesty to judge both the living and the dead, we may rise to the life immortal; through him who lives and

d reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.

Psalm 37:1-17

Exhortation to Patience and Trust

Of David.

Do not fret because of the wicked;
do not be envious of wrongdoers,
for they will soon fade like the grass,
and wither like the green herb.

Trust in the Lord, and do good;
so you will live in the land, and enjoy security.
Take delight in the Lord,
and he will give you the desires of your heart.

Commit your way to the Lord;
trust in him, and he will act.
He will make your vindication shine like the light,
and the justice of your cause like the noonday.

Be still before the Lord, and wait patiently for him;
do not fret over those who prosper in their way,
over those who carry out evil devices.

Refrain from anger, and forsake wrath.
Do not fret—it leads only to evil.
For the wicked shall be cut off,
but those who wait for the Lord shall inherit the land.

Yet a little while, and the wicked will be no more;
though you look diligently for their place, they will not be there.
But the meek shall inherit the land,
and delight in abundant prosperity.

The wicked plot against the righteous,
and gnash their teeth at them;
but the Lord laughs at the wicked,
for he sees that their day is coming.

The wicked draw the sword and bend their bows
to bring down the poor and needy,
to kill those who walk uprightly;
their sword shall enter their own heart,
and their bows shall be broken.

Better is a little that the righteous person has
than the abundance of many wicked.
For the arms of the wicked shall be broken,
but the Lord upholds the righteous.

Amos 9:1-10

The Destruction of Israel

I saw the Lord standing beside the altar, and he said:

Strike the capitals until the thresholds shake,
 and shatter them on the heads of all the people;
 and those who are left I will kill with the sword;
 not one of them shall flee away,
 not one of them shall escape.

Though they dig into Sheol,
 from there shall my hand take them;
 though they climb up to heaven,
 from there I will bring them down.
 Though they hide themselves on the top of Carmel,
 from there I will search out and take them;
 and though they hide from my sight at the bottom of the sea,
 there I will command the sea's serpent, and it shall bite them.
 And though they go into captivity in front of their enemies,
 there I will command the sword, and it shall kill them;
 and I will fix my eyes on them
 for harm and not for good.

The Lord, God of hosts,
 he who touches the earth and it melts,
 and all who live in it mourn,
 and all of it rises like the Nile,
 and sinks again, like the Nile of Egypt;
 who builds his upper chambers in the heavens,
 and founds his vault upon the earth;
 who calls for the waters of the sea,
 and pours them out upon the surface of the earth
 the Lord is his name.

Are you not like the Ethiopians to me,
 O people of Israel? says the Lord.
 Did I not bring Israel up from the land of Egypt,
 and the Philistines from Caphtor and the Arameans from Kir?
 The eyes of the Lord God are upon the sinful kingdom,
 and I will destroy it from the face of the earth
 except that I will not utterly destroy the house of Jacob,
 says the Lord.

For lo, I will command,
 and shake the house of Israel among all the nations
 as one shakes with a sieve,
 but no pebble shall fall to the ground.
 All the sinners of my people shall die by the sword,
 who say, "Evil shall not overtake or meet us."
 says the Lord.

Revelation 2:8-17

The Message to Smyrna

"And to the angel of the church in Smyrna write: These are the words of the first and the last, who was dead and came to life:

"I know your affliction and your poverty, even though you are rich. I know the slander on the part of those who say that they are Jews and are not, but are a synagogue of Satan. Do not fear what you are about to suffer. Beware, the devil is about to throw some of you into prison so that you may be tested, and for ten days you will have affliction. Be faithful until death, and I will give you the crown of life. Let anyone who has an ear listen to what the Spirit is saying to the churches.

Whoever conquers will not be harmed by the second death.

The Message to Pergamum

And to the angel of the church in Pergamum write: These are the words of him who has the sharp two-edged sword:

I know where you are living, where Satan's throne is. Yet you are holding fast to my name, and you did not deny your faith in me even in the days of Antipas my witness, my faithful one, who was killed among you, where Satan lives. But I have a few things against you: you have some there who hold to the teaching of Balaam, who taught Balak to put a stumbling block before the people of Israel, so that they would eat food sacrificed to idols and practise fornication. So you also have some who hold to the teaching of the Nicolaitans. Repent then. If not, I will come to you soon and make war against them with the sword of my mouth. Let anyone who has an ear listen to what the Spirit is saying to the churches. To everyone who conquers I will give some of the hidden manna, and I will give a white stone, and on the white stone is written a new name that no one knows except the one who receives it.

St. Matthew 23:13-26

But woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you lock people out of the kingdom of heaven. For you do not go in yourselves, and when others are going in, you stop them. Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you cross sea and land to make a single convert, and you make the new convert twice as much a child of hell as yourselves.

Woe to you, blind guides, who say, "Whoever swears by the sanctuary is bound by nothing, but whoever swears by the gold of the sanctuary is bound by the oath." You blind fools! For which is greater, the gold or the sanctuary that has made the gold sacred? And you say, "Whoever swears by the altar is bound by nothing, but whoever swears by the gift that is on the altar is bound by the oath." How blind you are! For which is greater, the gift or the altar that makes the gift sacred? So whoever swears by the altar, swears by it and by everything on it; and whoever swears by the sanctuary, swears by it and by the one who dwells in it; and whoever swears by heaven, swears by the throne of God and by the one who is seated upon it.

Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you tithe mint, dill, and cummin, and have neglected the weightier matters of the law: justice and mercy and faith. It is these you ought to have practised without neglecting the others. You blind guides! You strain out a gnat but swallow a camel!

Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you clean the outside of the cup and of the plate, but inside they are full of greed and self-indulgence. You blind Pharisee! First clean the inside of the cup, so that the outside also may become clean.

Re: - posted by sermonindex (), on: 2019/12/13 9:38

Friday, Dec 13th

Collect

Merciful God, who sent your messengers the prophets to preach repentance and prepare the way for our salvation: Give us grace to heed their warnings and forsake our sins, that we may greet with joy the coming of Jesus Christ our Redeemer; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.

Conclude with

Almighty God, give us grace to cast away the works of darkness, and put on the armour of light, now in the time of this mortal life in which your Son Jesus Christ came to visit us in great humility; that in the last day, when he shall come again in his glorious majesty to judge both the living and the dead, we may rise to the life immortal; through him who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.

Psalm 31

Prayer and Praise for Deliverance from Enemies

In you, O Lord, I seek refuge;
â€do not let me ever be put to shame;
â€in your righteousness deliver me.
Incline your ear to me;
â€rescue me speedily.
Be a rock of refuge for me,
â€a strong fortress to save me.

You are indeed my rock and my fortress;
â€for your nameâ€™s sake lead me and guide me,
take me out of the net that is hidden for me,
â€for you are my refuge.
Into your hand I commit my spirit;
â€you have redeemed me, O Lord, faithful God.

You hate those who pay regard to worthless idols,
â€but I trust in the Lord.
I will exult and rejoice in your steadfast love,
â€because you have seen my affliction;
â€you have taken heed of my adversities,
and have not delivered me into the hand of the enemy;
â€you have set my feet in a broad place.

Be gracious to me, O Lord, for I am in distress;
â€my eye wastes away from grief,
â€my soul and body also.
For my life is spent with sorrow,
â€and my years with sighing;
my strength fails because of my misery,
â€and my bones waste away.

I am the scorn of all my adversaries,
â€a horror to my neighbours,
an object of dread to my acquaintances;
â€those who see me in the street flee from me.
I have passed out of mind like one who is dead;
â€I have become like a broken vessel.
For I hear the whispering of manyâ€™
â€terror all around!â€™
as they scheme together against me,
â€as they plot to take my life.

But I trust in you, O Lord;
â€I say, â€You are my God.â€™
My times are in your hand;
â€deliver me from the hand of my enemies and persecutors.
Let your face shine upon your servant;
â€save me in your steadfast love.
Do not let me be put to shame, O Lord,
â€for I call on you;
let the wicked be put to shame;
â€let them go dumbfounded to Sheol.
Let the lying lips be stilled
â€that speak insolently against the righteous
â€with pride and contempt.

O how abundant is your goodness
â€that you have laid up for those who fear you,

and accomplished for those who take refuge in you,
in the sight of everyone!
In the shelter of your presence you hide them
from human plots;
you hold them safe under your shelter
from contentious tongues.

Blessed be the Lord,
for he has wondrously shown his steadfast love to me
when I was beset as a city under siege.
I had said in my alarm,
"I am driven far from your sight."
But you heard my supplications
when I cried out to you for help.

Love the Lord, all you his saints.
The Lord preserves the faithful,
but abundantly repays the one who acts haughtily.
Be strong, and let your heart take courage,
all you who wait for the Lord.

Haggai 1:1-15

The Command to Rebuild the Temple

In the second year of King Darius, in the sixth month, on the first day of the month, the word of the Lord came by the prophet Haggai to Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel, governor of Judah, and to Joshua son of Jehozadak, the high priest: Thus says the Lord of hosts: These people say the time has not yet come to rebuild the Lord's house. Then the word of the Lord came by the prophet Haggai, saying: Is it a time for you yourselves to live in your panelled houses, while this house lies in ruins? Now therefore, thus says the Lord of hosts: Consider how you have fared. You have sown much, and harvested little; you eat, but you never have enough; you drink, but you never have your fill; you clothe yourselves, but no one is warm; and you that earn wages earn wages to put them into a bag with holes.

Thus says the Lord of hosts: Consider how you have fared. Go up to the hills and bring wood and build the house, so that I may take pleasure in it and be honoured, says the Lord. You have looked for much, and, lo, it came to little; and when you brought it home, I blew it away. Why? says the Lord of hosts. Because my house lies in ruins, while all of you hurry off to your own houses. Therefore the heavens above you have withheld the dew, and the earth has withheld its produce. And I have called for a drought on the land and the hills, on the grain, the new wine, the oil, on what the soil produces, on human beings and animals, and on all their labours.

Then Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel, and Joshua son of Jehozadak, the high priest, with all the remnant of the people, obeyed the voice of the Lord their God, and the words of the prophet Haggai, as the Lord their God had sent him; and the people feared the Lord. Then Haggai, the messenger of the Lord, spoke to the people with the Lord's message, saying, I am with you, says the Lord. And the Lord stirred up the spirit of Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel, governor of Judah, and the spirit of Joshua son of Jehozadak, the high priest, and the spirit of all the remnant of the people; and they came and worked on the house of the Lord of hosts, their God, on the twenty-fourth day of the month, in the sixth month.

Revelation 2:18-29

The Message to Thyatira

And to the angel of the church in Thyatira write: These are the words of the Son of God, who has eyes like a flame of fire, and whose feet are like burnished bronze:

I know your works—your love, faith, service, and patient endurance. I know that your last works are greater than the first. But I have this against you: you tolerate that woman Jezebel, who calls herself a prophet and is teaching and beguiling my servants to practise fornication and to eat food sacrificed to idols. I gave her time to repent, but she refuses to repent of her fornication. Beware, I am throwing her on a bed, and those who commit adultery with her I am throwing into the sea.

great distress, unless they repent of her doings; and I will strike her children dead. And all the churches will know that I am the one who searches minds and hearts, and I will give to each of you as your works deserve. But to the rest of you in Thyatira, who do not hold this teaching, who have not learned what some call "the deep things of Satan", to you I say, I do not lay on you any other burden; only hold fast to what you have until I come. To everyone who conquers and continues to do my works to the end,

I will give authority over the nations;
to rule them with an iron rod,
"as when clay pots are shattered"

even as I also received authority from my Father. To the one who conquers I will also give the morning star. Let anyone who has an ear listen to what the Spirit is saying to the churches.

St. Matthew 23:27-39

"Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you are like whitewashed tombs, which on the outside look beautiful, but inside they are full of the bones of the dead and of all kinds of filth. So you also on the outside look righteous to others, but inside you are full of hypocrisy and lawlessness.

"Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you build the tombs of the prophets and decorate the graves of the righteous, and you say, 'If we had lived in the days of our ancestors, we would not have taken part with them in shedding the blood of the prophets.' Thus you testify against yourselves that you are descendants of those who murdered the prophets. Fill up, then, the measure of your ancestors. You snakes, you brood of vipers! How can you escape being sentenced to hell? Therefore I send you prophets, sages, and scribes, some of whom you will kill and crucify, and some you will flog in your synagogues and pursue from town to town, so that upon you may come all the righteous blood shed on earth, from the blood of righteous Abel to the blood of Zechariah son of Barachiah, whom you murdered between the sanctuary and the altar. Truly I tell you, all this will come upon this generation.

The Lament over Jerusalem

"Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the city that kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to it! How often have I desired to gather your children together as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, and you were not willing! See, your house is left to you, desolate. For I tell you, you will not see me again until you say, 'Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord.'"

Re: - posted by sermonindex (), on: 2019/12/14 8:55

Saturday, Dec 14th

Collect

Merciful God, who sent your messengers the prophets to preach repentance and prepare the way for our salvation: Give us grace to heed their warnings and forsake our sins, that we may greet with joy the coming of Jesus Christ our Redeemer; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.

Conclude with

Almighty God, give us grace to cast away the works of darkness, and put on the armour of light, now in the time of this mortal life in which your Son Jesus Christ came to visit us in great humility; that in the last day, when he shall come again in his glorious majesty to judge both the living and the dead, we may rise to the life immortal; through him who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.

Psalm 30

Thanksgiving for Recovery from Grave Illness

A Psalm. A Song at the dedication of the temple. Of David.

I will extol you, O Lord, for you have drawn me up,
 and did not let my foes rejoice over me.
 O Lord my God, I cried to you for help,
 and you have healed me.
 O Lord, you brought up my soul from Sheol,
 and restored me to life from among those gone down to the Pit.

Sing praises to the Lord, O you his faithful ones,
 and give thanks to his holy name.
 For his anger is but for a moment;
 and his favour is for a lifetime.
 Weeping may linger for the night,
 but joy comes with the morning.

As for me, I said in my prosperity,
 and I shall never be moved.
 By your favour, O Lord,
 and you had established me as a strong mountain;
 you hid your face;
 and I was dismayed.

To you, O Lord, I cried,
 and to the Lord I made supplication:
 What profit is there in my death,
 and if I go down to the Pit?
 Will the dust praise you?
 and Will it tell of your faithfulness?
 Hear, O Lord, and be gracious to me!
 and O Lord, be my helper!

You have turned my mourning into dancing;
 and you have taken off my sackcloth
 and clothed me with joy,
 so that my soul may praise you and not be silent.
 and O Lord my God, I will give thanks to you for ever.

Haggai 2:1-19

The Future Glory of the Temple

In the second year of King Darius, in the seventh month, on the twenty-first day of the month, the word of the Lord came by the prophet Haggai, saying: Speak now to Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel, governor of Judah, and to Joshua son of Jehozadak, the high priest, and to the remnant of the people, and say, Who is left among you that saw this house in its former glory? How does it look to you now? Is it not in your sight as nothing? Yet now take courage, O Zerubbabel, says the Lord; take courage, O Joshua, son of Jehozadak, the high priest; take courage, all you people of the land, says the Lord; work, for I am with you, says the Lord of hosts, according to the promise that I made you when you came out of Egypt. My spirit abides among you; do not fear. For thus says the Lord of hosts: Once again, in a little while, I will shake the heavens and the earth and the sea and the dry land; and I will shake all the nations, so that the treasure of all nations shall come, and I will fill this house with splendour, says the Lord of hosts. The silver is mine, and the gold is mine, says the Lord of hosts. The latter splendour of this house shall be greater than the former, says the Lord of hosts; and in this place I will give prosperity, says the Lord of hosts.

A Rebuke and a Promise

On the twenty-fourth day of the ninth month, in the second year of Darius, the word of the Lord came by the prophet Haggai, saying: Thus says the Lord of hosts: Ask the priests for a ruling: If one carries consecrated meat in the fold of one's garment, and with the fold touches bread, or stew, or wine, or oil, or any kind of food, does it become holy? The priests answered, No. Then Haggai said, If one who is unclean by contact with a dead body touches any of these

, does it become unclean?â€™™ The priests answered, â€™Yes, it becomes unclean.â€™™ Haggai then said, So is it with this people, and with this nation before me, says the Lord; and so with every work of their hands; and what they offer there is unclean. But now, consider what will come to pass from this day on. Before a stone was placed upon a stone in the Lordâ€™™s temple, how did you fare? When one came to a heap of twenty measures, there were but ten; when one came to the wine vat to draw fifty measures, there were but twenty. I struck you and all the products of your toil with blight and mildew and hail; yet you did not return to me, says the Lord. Consider from this day on, from the twenty-fourth day of the ninth month. Since the day that the foundation of the Lordâ€™™s temple was laid, consider: Is there any seed left in the barn? Do the vine, the fig tree, the pomegranate, and the olive tree still yield nothing? From this day on I will bless you.

Revelation 3:1â€™6

The Message to Sardis

â€™And to the angel of the church in Sardis write: These are the words of him who has the seven spirits of God and the seven stars:

â€™I know your works; you have a name for being alive, but you are dead. Wake up, and strengthen what remains and is at the point of death, for I have not found your works perfect in the sight of my God. Remember then what you received and heard; obey it, and repent. If you do not wake up, I will come like a thief, and you will not know at what hour I will come to you. Yet you have still a few people in Sardis who have not soiled their clothes; they will walk with me, dressed in white, for they are worthy. If you conquer, you will be clothed like them in white robes, and I will not blot your name out of the book of life; I will confess your name before my Father and before his angels. Let anyone who has an ear listen to what the Spirit is saying to the churches.

St. Matthew 24:1â€™14

The Destruction of the Temple Foretold

As Jesus came out of the temple and was going away, his disciples came to point out to him the buildings of the temple. Then he asked them, â€™You see all these, do you not? Truly I tell you, not one stone will be left here upon another; all will be thrown down.â€™™

Signs of the End of the Age

When he was sitting on the Mount of Olives, the disciples came to him privately, saying, â€™Tell us, when will this be, and what will be the sign of your coming and of the end of the age?â€™™ Jesus answered them, â€™Beware that no one leads you astray. For many will come in my name, saying, â€™I am the Messiah!â€™ and they will lead many astray. And you will hear of wars and rumours of wars; see that you are not alarmed; for this must take place, but the end is not yet. For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom, and there will be famines and earthquakes in various places: all this is but the beginning of the birth pangs.

Persecutions Foretold

â€™Then they will hand you over to be tortured and will put you to death, and you will be hated by all nations because of my name. Then many will fall away, and they will betray one another and hate one another. And many false prophets will arise and lead many astray. And because of the increase of lawlessness, the love of many will grow cold. But anyone who endures to the end will be saved. And this good news of the kingdom will be proclaimed throughout the world, as a testimony to all the nations; and then the end will come.

Re: - posted by sermonindex (), on: 2019/12/15 19:45

Third Sunday of Advent

If you extend your soul to the hungry
And satisfy the afflicted soul,
Then your light shall dawn in the darkness,
And your darkness shall be as the noonday.

â€”Isaiah 58:10 (NKJV)

Scripture Readings:

Isaiah 35:1â€”10

The Return of the Redeemed to Zion

The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad,
â€”the desert shall rejoice and blossom;
like the crocus it shall blossom abundantly,
â€”and rejoice with joy and singing.
The glory of Lebanon shall be given to it,
â€”the majesty of Carmel and Sharon.
They shall see the glory of the Lord,
â€”the majesty of our God.

Strengthen the weak hands,
â€”and make firm the feeble knees.
Say to those who are of a fearful heart,
â€”â€”Be strong, do not fear!
Here is your God.
â€”He will come with vengeance,
with terrible recompense.
â€”He will come and save you.â€”™

Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened,
â€”and the ears of the deaf unstopped;
then the lame shall leap like a deer,
â€”and the tongue of the speechless sing for joy.
For waters shall break forth in the wilderness,
â€”and streams in the desert;
the burning sand shall become a pool,
â€”and the thirsty ground springs of water;
the haunt of jackals shall become a swamp,
â€”the grass shall become reeds and rushes.

A highway shall be there,
â€”and it shall be called the Holy Way;
the unclean shall not travel on it,
â€”but it shall be for Godâ€”™s people;
â€”no traveller, not even fools, shall go astray.
No lion shall be there,
â€”nor shall any ravenous beast come up on it;
they shall not be found there,
â€”but the redeemed shall walk there.
And the ransomed of the Lord shall return,
â€”and come to Zion with singing;
everlasting joy shall be upon their heads;
â€”they shall obtain joy and gladness,
â€”and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

Prayers:

Thematic Prayer
God of hope,
you call us home from the exile of selfish oppression
to the freedom of justice,
the balm of healing,

and the joy of sharing.

Make us strong to join you in your holy work,
as friends of strangers and victims,
companions of those whom others shun,
and as the happiness of those whose hearts are broken.
We make our prayer through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.

Intercessory Prayer

Brothers and sisters,
as we joyfully await the glorious coming of the Christ,
let us pray for the needs of the church, our community, and the world.

Prayers of the People, concluding with:

God of joy and exultation,
you strengthen what is weak;
you enrich the poor
and give hope to those who live in fear.
Look upon our needs this day.
Make us grateful for the good news of salvation
and keep us faithful in your service until the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ,
who lives for ever and ever. Amen.

Scripture Prayer

O God of Isaiah and John the Baptist,
through all such faithful ones
you proclaim the unfolding of future joy
and renewed life.
Strengthen our hearts to believe your advent promise
that one day we will walk in the holy way of Christ,
where sorrow and sighing will be no more
and the journey of God's people will be joy. Amen.

Psalm 146:5-10

Happy are those whose help is the God of Jacob,
whose hope is in the Lord their God,
who made heaven and earth,
the sea, and all that is in them;
who keeps faith for ever;
who executes justice for the oppressed;
who gives food to the hungry.

The Lord sets the prisoners free;
the Lord opens the eyes of the blind.
The Lord lifts up those who are bowed down;
the Lord loves the righteous.
The Lord watches over the strangers;
he upholds the orphan and the widow,
but the way of the wicked he brings to ruin.

The Lord will reign for ever,
your God, O Zion, for all generations.
Praise the Lord!

James 5:7-10

Patience in Suffering

Be patient, therefore, beloved, until the coming of the Lord. The farmer waits for the precious crop from the earth, being patient with it until it receives the early and the late rains. You also must be patient. Strengthen your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is near. Beloved, do not grumble against one another, so that you may not be judged. See, the Judge is standing at the doors! As an example of suffering and patience, beloved, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord.

St. Matthew 11:2-11

Messengers from John the Baptist

When John heard in prison what the Messiah was doing, he sent word by his disciples and said to him, "Are you the one who is to come, or are we to wait for another?" Jesus answered them, "Go and tell John what you hear and see: the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the poor have good news brought to them. And blessed is anyone who takes no offence at me."

Jesus Praises John the Baptist

As they went away, Jesus began to speak to the crowds about John: "What did you go out into the wilderness to look at? A reed shaken by the wind? What then did you go out to see? Someone dressed in soft robes? Look, those who wear soft robes are in royal palaces. What then did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet. This is the one about whom it is written,

"See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you,
who will prepare your way before you."

Truly I tell you, among those born of women no one has arisen greater than John the Baptist; yet the least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he.

Re: - posted by sermonindex (), on: 2019/12/16 6:20

Monday, Dec 16th

Collect

Stir up your power, O Lord, and with great might come among us; and, because we are sorely hindered by our sins, let your bountiful grace and mercy speedily help and deliver us; through Jesus Christ our Lord, to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit, be honour and glory, now and for ever. Amen.

Conclude with

Almighty God, give us grace to cast away the works of darkness, and put on the armour of light, now in the time of this mortal life in which your Son Jesus Christ came to visit us in great humility; that in the last day, when he shall come again in his glorious majesty to judge both the living and the dead, we may rise to the life immortal; through him who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.

Psalm 41

Assurance of God's Help and a Plea for Healing

Happy are those who consider the poor;
the Lord delivers them in the day of trouble.
The Lord protects them and keeps them alive;
they are called happy in the land.
You do not give them up to the will of their enemies.

The Lord sustains them on their sickbed;
â€f in their illness you heal all their infirmities.

As for me, I said, â€O Lord, be gracious to me;
â€f heal me, for I have sinned against you.â€™
My enemies wonder in malice
â€f when I will die, and my name perish.
And when they come to see me, they utter empty words,
â€f while their hearts gather mischief;
â€f when they go out, they tell it abroad.
All who hate me whisper together about me;
â€f they imagine the worst for me.

They think that a deadly thing has fastened on me,
â€f that I will not rise again from where I lie.
Even my bosom friend in whom I trusted,
â€f who ate of my bread, has lifted the heel against me.
But you, O Lord, be gracious to me,
â€f and raise me up, that I may repay them.

By this I know that you are pleased with me;
â€f because my enemy has not triumphed over me.
But you have upheld me because of my integrity,
â€f and set me in your presence for ever.

Blessed be the Lord, the God of Israel,
â€f from everlasting to everlasting.
Amen and Amen.

Zechariah 1:7â€17

First Vision: The Horsemen

On the twentyâ€fourth day of the eleventh month, the month of Shebat, in the second year of Darius, the word of the Lord came to the prophet Zechariah son of Berechiah son of Iddo; and Zechariah said, In the night I saw a man riding on a red horse! He was standing among the myrtle trees in the glen; and behind him were red, sorrel, and white horses. Then I said, â€What are these, my lord?â€™ The angel who talked with me said to me, â€I will show you what they are.â€™ So the man who was standing among the myrtle trees answered, â€They are those whom the Lord has sent to patrol the earth.â€™ Then they spoke to the angel of the Lord who was standing among the myrtle trees, â€We have patrolled the earth, and lo, the whole earth remains at peace.â€™ Then the angel of the Lord said, â€O Lord of hosts, how long will you withhold mercy from Jerusalem and the cities of Judah, with which you have been angry these seventy years?â€™ Then the Lord replied with gracious and comforting words to the angel who talked with me. So the angel who talked with me said to me, Proclaim this message: Thus says the Lord of hosts; I am very jealous for Jerusalem and for Zion. And I am extremely angry with the nations that are at ease; for while I was only a little angry, they made the disaster worse. Therefore, thus says the Lord, I have returned to Jerusalem with compassion; my house shall be built in it, says the Lord of hosts, and the measuring line shall be stretched out over Jerusalem. Proclaim further: Thus says the Lord of hosts: My cities shall again overflow with prosperity; the Lord will again comfort Zion and again choose Jerusalem.

Revelation 3:7â€13

The Message to Philadelphia

â€And to the angel of the church in Philadelphia write:

These are the words of the holy one, the true one,
â€f who has the key of David,
â€f who opens and no one will shut,
â€f who shuts and no one opens:

“I know your works. Look, I have set before you an open door, which no one is able to shut. I know that you have but little power, and yet you have kept my word and have not denied my name. I will make those of the synagogue of Satan who say that they are Jews and are not, but are lying—I will make them come and bow down before your feet, and they will learn that I have loved you. Because you have kept my word of patient endurance, I will keep you from the hour of trial that is coming on the whole world to test the inhabitants of the earth. I am coming soon; hold fast to what you have, so that no one may seize your crown. If you conquer, I will make you a pillar in the temple of my God; you will never go out of it. I will write on you the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, the new Jerusalem that comes down from my God out of heaven, and my own new name. Let anyone who has an ear listen to what the Spirit is saying to the churches.

St. Matthew 24:15-31

The Desolating Sacrilege

“So when you see the desolating sacrilege standing in the holy place, as was spoken of by the prophet Daniel (let the reader understand), then those in Judea must flee to the mountains; someone on the housetop must not go down to take what is in the house; someone in the field must not turn back to get a coat. Woe to those who are pregnant and to those who are nursing infants in those days! Pray that your flight may not be in winter or on a sabbath. For at that time there will be great suffering, such as has not been from the beginning of the world until now, no, and never will be. And if those days had not been cut short, no one would be saved; but for the sake of the elect those days will be cut short. Then if anyone says to you, “Look! Here is the Messiah!” or “There he is!” do not believe it. For false messiahs and false prophets will appear and produce great signs and omens, to lead astray, if possible, even the elect. Take note, I have told you beforehand. So, if they say to you, “Look! He is in the wilderness,” do not go out. If they say, “Look! He is in the inner rooms,” do not believe it. For as the lightning comes from the east and flashes as far as the west, so will be the coming of the Son of Man. Wherever the corpse is, there the vultures will gather.

The Coming of the Son of Man

“Immediately after the suffering of those days

the sun will be darkened,
and the moon will not give its light;
the stars will fall from heaven,
and the powers of heaven will be shaken.

Then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in heaven, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. And he will send out his angels with a loud trumpet call, and they will gather his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.

Re: - posted by sermonindex (), on: 2019/12/17 9:17

Tuesday, Dec 17th

Collect

Stir up your power, O Lord, and with great might come among us; and, because we are sorely hindered by our sins, let your bountiful grace and mercy speedily help and deliver us; through Jesus Christ our Lord, to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit, be honour and glory, now and for ever. Amen.

Conclude with

Almighty God, give us grace to cast away the works of darkness, and put on the armour of light, now in the time of this mortal life in which your Son Jesus Christ came to visit us in great humility; that in the last day, when he shall come again in his glorious majesty to judge both the living and the dead, we may rise to the life immortal; through him who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.

Psalm 45

Ode for a Royal Wedding

To the leader: according to Lilies. Of the Korahites. A Maskil. A love song.

My heart overflows with a goodly theme;
â€fI address my verses to the king;
â€fmy tongue is like the pen of a ready scribe.

You are the most handsome of men;
â€fgrace is poured upon your lips;
â€ftherefore God has blessed you for ever.
Gird your sword on your thigh, O mighty one,
â€fin your glory and majesty.

In your majesty ride on victoriously
â€ffor the cause of truth and to defend the right;
â€flet your right hand teach you dread deeds.
Your arrows are sharp
â€fin the heart of the kingâ€™s enemies;
â€fthe peoples fall under you.

Your throne, O God, endures for ever and ever.
â€fYour royal sceptre is a sceptre of equity;
â€fyou love righteousness and hate wickedness.
Therefore God, your God, has anointed you
â€fwith the oil of gladness beyond your companions;
â€fyour robes are all fragrant with myrrh and aloes and cassia.
From ivory palaces stringed instruments make you glad;
â€fdaughters of kings are among your ladies of honour;
â€fat your right hand stands the queen in gold of Ophir.

Hear, O daughter, consider and incline your ear;
â€fforget your people and your fatherâ€™s house,
â€fand the king will desire your beauty.
Since he is your lord, bow to him;
â€fthe people of Tyre will seek your favour with gifts,
â€fthe richest of the people with all kinds of wealth.

The princess is decked in her chamber with goldâ€™woven robes;
â€fin manyâ€™coloured robes she is led to the king;
â€fbehind her the virgins, her companions, follow.
With joy and gladness they are led along
â€fas they enter the palace of the king.

In the place of ancestors you, O king, shall have sons;
â€fyou will make them princes in all the earth.
I will cause your name to be celebrated in all generations;
â€ftherefore the peoples will praise you for ever and ever.

Zechariah 2:1â€™13

Third Vision: The Man with a Measuring Line

I looked up and saw a man with a measuring line in his hand. Then I asked, â€Where are you going?â€™ He answered me, â€To measure Jerusalem, to see what is its width and what is its length.â€™ Then the angel who talked with me came forward, and another angel came forward to meet him, and said to him, â€Run, say to that young man: Jerusalem shall be inhabited like villages without walls, because of the multitude of people and animals in it. For I will be a wall of fire

all round it, says the Lord, and I will be the glory within it.â€™™

Interlude: An Appeal to the Exiles

Up, up! Flee from the land of the north, says the Lord; for I have spread you abroad like the four winds of heaven, says the Lord. Up! Escape to Zion, you that live with daughter Babylon. For thus said the Lord of hosts (after his glory sent me) regarding the nations that plundered you: Truly, one who touches you touches the apple of my eye. See now, I am going to raise my hand against them, and they shall become plunder for their own slaves. Then you will know that the Lord of hosts has sent me. Sing and rejoice, O daughter Zion! For lo, I will come and dwell in your midst, says the Lord. Many nations shall join themselves to the Lord on that day, and shall be my people; and I will dwell in your midst. And you shall know that the Lord of hosts has sent me to you. The Lord will inherit Judah as his portion in the holy land, and will again choose Jerusalem.

Be silent, all people, before the Lord; for he has roused himself from his holy dwelling.

Revelation 3:14â€™22

The Message to Laodicea

â€™And to the angel of the church in Laodicea write: The words of the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the origin of Godâ€™™s creation:

â€™I know your works; you are neither cold nor hot. I wish that you were either cold or hot. So, because you are lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I am about to spit you out of my mouth. For you say, â€™I am rich, I have prospered, and I need nothing.â€™ You do not realize that you are wretched, pitiable, poor, blind, and naked. Therefore I counsel you to buy from me gold refined by fire so that you may be rich; and white robes to clothe you and to keep the shame of your nakedness from being seen; and salve to anoint your eyes so that you may see. I reprove and discipline those whom I love. Be earnest, therefore, and repent. Listen! I am standing at the door, knocking; if you hear my voice and open the door, I will come in to you and eat with you, and you with me. To the one who conquers I will give a place with me on my throne, just as I myself conquered and sat down with my Father on his throne. Let anyone who has an ear listen to what the Spirit is saying to the churches.â€™™

St. Matthew 24:32â€™44

The Lesson of the Fig Tree

â€™From the fig tree learn its lesson: as soon as its branch becomes tender and puts forth its leaves, you know that summer is near. So also, when you see all these things, you know that he is near, at the very gates. Truly I tell you, this generation will not pass away until all these things have taken place. Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away.

The Necessity for Watchfulness

â€™But about that day and hour no one knows, neither the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. For as the days of Noah were, so will be the coming of the Son of Man. For as in those days before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day Noah entered the ark, and they knew nothing until the flood came and swept them all away, so too will be the coming of the Son of Man. Then two will be in the field; one will be taken and one will be left. Two women will be grinding meal together; one will be taken and one will be left. Keep awake therefore, for you do not know on what day your Lord is coming. But understand this: if the owner of the house had known in what part of the night the thief was coming, he would have stayed awake and would not have let his house be broken into. Therefore you also must be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an unexpected hour.

Re: - posted by sermonindex (), on: 2019/12/19 7:50

Wednesday, Dec 18th

Collect

Stir up your power, O Lord, and with great might come among us; and, because we are sorely hindered by our sins, let your bountiful grace and mercy speedily help and deliver us; through Jesus Christ our Lord, to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit, be honour and glory, now and for ever. Amen.

Conclude with

Almighty God, give us grace to cast away the works of darkness, and put on the armour of light, now in the time of this mortal life in which your Son Jesus Christ came to visit us in great humility; that in the last day, when he shall come again in his glorious majesty to judge both the living and the dead, we may rise to the life immortal; through him who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.

Psalm 119:49-72

Remember your word to your servant,
in which you have made me hope.
This is my comfort in my distress,
that your promise gives me life.
The arrogant utterly deride me,
but I do not turn away from your law.
When I think of your ordinances from of old,
I take comfort, O Lord.
Hot indignation seizes me because of the wicked,
those who forsake your law.
Your statutes have been my songs
wherever I make my home.
I remember your name in the night, O Lord,
and keep your law.
This blessing has fallen to me,
for I have kept your precepts.

The Lord is my portion;
I promise to keep your words.
I implore your favour with all my heart;
be gracious to me according to your promise.
When I think of your ways,
I turn my feet to your decrees;
I hurry and do not delay
to keep your commandments.
Though the cords of the wicked ensnare me,
I do not forget your law.
At midnight I rise to praise you,
because of your righteous ordinances.
I am a companion of all who fear you,
of those who keep your precepts.
The earth, O Lord, is full of your steadfast love;
teach me your statutes.

You have dealt well with your servant,
O Lord, according to your word.
Teach me good judgement and knowledge,
for I believe in your commandments.
Before I was humbled I went astray,

"but now I keep your word.
 You are good and do good;
 "teach me your statutes.
 The arrogant smear me with lies,
 "but with my whole heart I keep your precepts.
 Their hearts are fat and gross,
 "but I delight in your law.
 It is good for me that I was humbled,
 "so that I might learn your statutes.
 The law of your mouth is better to me
 "than thousands of gold and silver pieces.

Zechariah 3:1-10

Fourth Vision: Joshua and Satan

Then he showed me the high priest Joshua standing before the angel of the Lord, and Satan standing at his right hand to
 accuse him. And the Lord said to Satan, "The Lord rebuke you, O Satan! The Lord who has chosen Jerusalem rebu
 ke you! Is not this man a brand plucked from the fire?" Now Joshua was dressed in filthy clothes as he stood before
 the angel. The angel said to those who were standing before him, "Take off his filthy clothes." And to him he said,
 "See, I have taken your guilt away from you, and I will clothe you in festal apparel." And I said, "Let them put a c
 lean turban on his head." So they put a clean turban on his head and clothed him in the apparel; and the angel of th
 e Lord was standing by.

Then the angel of the Lord assured Joshua, saying "Thus says the Lord of hosts: If you will walk in my ways and keep
 my requirements, then you shall rule my house and have charge of my courts, and I will give you the right of access amo
 ng those who are standing here. Now listen, Joshua, high priest, you and your colleagues who sit before you! For they a
 re an omen of things to come: I am going to bring my servant the Branch. For on the stone that I have set before Joshua
 , on a single stone with seven facets, I will engrave its inscription, says the Lord of hosts, and I will remove the guilt of thi
 s land in a single day. On that day, says the Lord of hosts, you shall invite each other to come under your vine and fig tre
 e."

Revelation 4:1-8

The Heavenly Worship

After this I looked, and there in heaven a door stood open! And the first voice, which I had heard speaking to me like a tr
 umpet, said, "Come up here, and I will show you what must take place after this." At once I was in the spirit, and t
 here in heaven stood a throne, with one seated on the throne! And the one seated there looks like jasper and cornelian,
 and around the throne is a rainbow that looks like an emerald. Around the throne are twenty-four thrones, and seated
 on the thrones are twenty-four elders, dressed in white robes, with golden crowns on their heads. Coming from the thr
 one are flashes of lightning, and rumblings and peals of thunder, and in front of the throne burn seven flaming torches, w
 hich are the seven spirits of God; and in front of the throne there is something like a sea of glass, like crystal.

Around the throne, and on each side of the throne, are four living creatures, full of eyes in front and behind: the first livin
 g creature like a lion, the second living creature like an ox, the third living creature with a face like a human face, and the
 fourth living creature like a flying eagle. And the four living creatures, each of them with six wings, are full of eyes all aro
 und and inside. Day and night without ceasing they sing,

"Holy, holy, holy,
 the Lord God the Almighty,
 "who was and is and is to come."

St. Matthew 24:45-51

The Faithful or the Unfaithful Slave

Who then is the faithful and wise slave, whom his master has put in charge of his household, to give the other slaves the

ir allowance of food at the proper time? Blessed is that slave whom his master will find at work when he arrives. Truly I tell you, he will put that one in charge of all his possessions. But if that wicked slave says to himself, "My master is delayed," and he begins to beat his fellow slaves, and eats and drinks with drunkards, the master of that slave will come on a day when he does not expect him and at an hour that he does not know. He will cut him in pieces and put him with the hypocrites, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

Re: - posted by sermonindex (), on: 2019/12/19 7:51

Thursday, Dec 19th

Collect

Stir up your power, O Lord, and with great might come among us; and, because we are sorely hindered by our sins, let your bountiful grace and mercy speedily help and deliver us; through Jesus Christ our Lord, to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit, be honour and glory, now and for ever. Amen.

Conclude with

Almighty God, give us grace to cast away the works of darkness, and put on the armour of light, now in the time of this mortal life in which your Son Jesus Christ came to visit us in great humility; that in the last day, when he shall come again in his glorious majesty to judge both the living and the dead, we may rise to the life immortal; through him who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.

Psalm 50

The Acceptable Sacrifice

A Psalm of Asaph.

The mighty one, God the Lord,
speaks and summons the earth
from the rising of the sun to its setting.
Out of Zion, the perfection of beauty,
God shines forth.

Our God comes and does not keep silence,
before him is a devouring fire,
and a mighty tempest all around him.
He calls to the heavens above
and to the earth, that he may judge his people:
"Gather to me my faithful ones,
who made a covenant with me by sacrifice!"
The heavens declare his righteousness,
for God himself is judge. Selah

"Hear, O my people, and I will speak,
O Israel, I will testify against you.
I am God, your God.
Not for your sacrifices do I rebuke you;
your burnt offerings are continually before me.
I will not accept a bull from your house,
or goats from your folds.
For every wild animal of the forest is mine,
the cattle on a thousand hills.
I know all the birds of the air,
and all that moves in the field is mine.

"If I were hungry, I would not tell you,

"for the world and all that is in it is mine.
 Do I eat the flesh of bulls,
 "for drink the blood of goats?
 Offer to God a sacrifice of thanksgiving,
 "and pay your vows to the Most High.
 Call on me in the day of trouble;
 "I will deliver you, and you shall glorify me."™

But to the wicked God says:
 "What right have you to recite my statutes,
 "for take my covenant on your lips?
 For you hate discipline,
 "and you cast my words behind you.
 You make friends with a thief when you see one,
 "and you keep company with adulterers.

"You give your mouth free rein for evil,
 "and your tongue frames deceit.
 You sit and speak against your kin;
 "you slander your own mother's child.
 These things you have done and I have been silent;
 "you thought that I was one just like yourself.
 But now I rebuke you, and lay the charge before you.

"Mark this, then, you who forget God,
 "for I will tear you apart, and there will be no one to deliver.
 Those who bring thanksgiving as their sacrifice honour me;
 "to those who go the right way
 "I will show the salvation of God."™

Zechariah 4:1-14

Fifth Vision: The Lampstand and Olive Trees

The angel who talked with me came again, and wakened me, as one is wakened from sleep. He said to me, "What do you see?"™ And I said, "I see a lampstand all of gold, with a bowl on the top of it; there are seven lamps on it, with seven even lips on each of the lamps that are on the top of it. And by it there are two olive trees, one on the right of the bowl and the other on its left."™ I said to the angel who talked with me, "What are these, my lord?"™ Then the angel who talked with me answered me, "Do you not know what these are?"™ I said, "No, my lord."™ He said to me, "This is the word of the Lord to Zerubbabel: Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, says the Lord of hosts. What are you, O great mountain? Before Zerubbabel you shall become a plain; and he shall bring out the top stone amid shouts of 'Grace, grace to it!'"™

Moreover, the word of the Lord came to me, saying, "The hands of Zerubbabel have laid the foundation of this house; his hands shall also complete it. Then you will know that the Lord of hosts has sent me to you. For whoever has despised the day of small things shall rejoice, and shall see the plummet in the hand of Zerubbabel.

"These seven are the eyes of the Lord, which range through the whole earth."™ Then I said to him, "What are these two olive trees on the right and the left of the lampstand?"™ And a second time I said to him, "What are these two branches of the olive trees, which pour out the oil through the two golden pipes?"™ He said to me, "Do you not know what these are?"™ I said, "No, my lord."™ Then he said, "These are the two anointed ones who stand by the Lord of the whole earth."™

Revelation 4:9-5:5

And whenever the living creatures give glory and honour and thanks to the one who is seated on the throne, who lives forever and ever, the twenty-four elders fall before the one who is seated on the throne and worship the one who lives forever and ever; they cast their crowns before the throne, singing,

“You are worthy, our Lord and God,
to receive glory and honour and power,
for you created all things,
and by your will they existed and were created.”

The Scroll and the Lamb

Then I saw in the right hand of the one seated on the throne a scroll written on the inside and on the back, sealed with seven seals; and I saw a mighty angel proclaiming with a loud voice, “Who is worthy to open the scroll and break its seals?” And no one in heaven or on earth or under the earth was able to open the scroll or to look into it. And I began to weep bitterly because no one was found worthy to open the scroll or to look into it. Then one of the elders said to me, “Do not weep. See, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has conquered, so that he can open the scroll and its seven seals.”

St. Matthew 25:1-13

The Parable of the Ten Bridesmaids

“Then the kingdom of heaven will be like this. Ten bridesmaids took their lamps and went to meet the bridegroom. Five of them were foolish, and five were wise. When the foolish took their lamps, they took no oil with them; but the wise took flasks of oil with their lamps. As the bridegroom was delayed, all of them became drowsy and slept. But at midnight there was a shout, “Look! Here is the bridegroom! Come out to meet him.” Then all those bridesmaids got up and trimmed their lamps. The foolish said to the wise, “Give us some of your oil, for our lamps are going out.” But the wise replied, “No! there will not be enough for you and for us; you had better go to the dealers and buy some for yourselves.” And while they went to buy it, the bridegroom came, and those who were ready went with him into the wedding banquet; and the door was shut. Later the other bridesmaids came also, saying, “Lord, lord, open to us.” But he replied, “Truly I tell you, I do not know you.” Keep awake therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour.

Re: - posted by sermonindex (), on: 2019/12/21 13:05

Friday, Dec 20th

Collect

Stir up your power, O Lord, and with great might come among us; and, because we are sorely hindered by our sins, let your bountiful grace and mercy speedily help and deliver us; through Jesus Christ our Lord, to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit, be honour and glory, now and for ever. Amen.

Conclude with

Almighty God, give us grace to cast away the works of darkness, and put on the armour of light, now in the time of this mortal life in which your Son Jesus Christ came to visit us in great humility; that in the last day, when he shall come again in his glorious majesty to judge both the living and the dead, we may rise to the life immortal; through him who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.

Psalm 40

Thanksgiving for Deliverance and Prayer for Help

To the leader. Of David. A Psalm.

I waited patiently for the Lord;
he inclined to me and heard my cry.
He drew me up from the desolate pit,
out of the miry bog,
and set my feet upon a rock,
making my steps secure.

He put a new song in my mouth,
â€”a song of praise to our God.
Many will see and fear,
â€”and put their trust in the Lord.

Happy are those who make
â€”the Lord their trust,
who do not turn to the proud,
â€”to those who go astray after false gods.
You have multiplied, O Lord my God,
â€”your wondrous deeds and your thoughts towards us;
â€”none can compare with you.
Were I to proclaim and tell of them,
â€”they would be more than can be counted.

Sacrifice and offering you do not desire,
â€”but you have given me an open ear.
Burntâ€”offering and sinâ€”offering
â€”you have not required.
Then I said, â€”Here I am;
â€”in the scroll of the book it is written of me.
I delight to do your will, O my God;
â€”your law is within my heart.â€”™

I have told the glad news of deliverance
â€”in the great congregation;
see, I have not restrained my lips,
â€”as you know, O Lord.
I have not hidden your saving help within my heart,
â€”I have spoken of your faithfulness and your salvation;
I have not concealed your steadfast love and your faithfulness
â€”from the great congregation.

Do not, O Lord, withhold
â€”your mercy from me;
let your steadfast love and your faithfulness
â€”keep me safe for ever.
For evils have encompassed me
â€”without number;
my iniquities have overtaken me,
â€”until I cannot see;
they are more than the hairs of my head,
â€”and my heart fails me.

Be pleased, O Lord, to deliver me;
â€”O Lord, make haste to help me.
Let all those be put to shame and confusion
â€”who seek to snatch away my life;
let those be turned back and brought to dishonour
â€”who desire my hurt.
Let those be appalled because of their shame
â€”who say to me, â€”Aha, Aha!â€”™

But may all who seek you
â€”rejoice and be glad in you;
may those who love your salvation
â€”say continually, â€”Great is the Lord!â€”™
As for me, I am poor and needy,

â€but the Lord takes thought for me.
You are my help and my deliverer;
â€do not delay, O my God.

Zechariah 7:8â€8:8

Punishment for Rejecting Godâ€™s Demands

The word of the Lord came to Zechariah, saying: Thus says the Lord of hosts: Render true judgements, show kindness and mercy to one another; do not oppress the widow, the orphan, the alien, or the poor; and do not devise evil in your hearts against one another. But they refused to listen, and turned a stubborn shoulder, and stopped their ears in order not to hear. They made their hearts adamant in order not to hear the law and the words that the Lord of hosts had sent by his spirit through the former prophets. Therefore great wrath came from the Lord of hosts. Just as, when I called, they would not hear, so, when they called, I would not hear, says the Lord of hosts, and I scattered them with a whirlwind among all the nations that they had not known. Thus the land they left was desolate, so that no one went to and fro, and a pleasant land was made desolate.

Godâ€™s Promises to Zion

The word of the Lord of hosts came to me, saying: Thus says the Lord of hosts: I am jealous for Zion with great jealousy, and I am jealous for her with great wrath. Thus says the Lord: I will return to Zion, and will dwell in the midst of Jerusalem; Jerusalem shall be called the faithful city, and the mountain of the Lord of hosts shall be called the holy mountain. Thus says the Lord of hosts: Old men and old women shall again sit in the streets of Jerusalem, each with staff in hand because of their great age. And the streets of the city shall be full of boys and girls playing in its streets. Thus says the Lord of hosts: Even though it seems impossible to the remnant of this people in these days, should it also seem impossible to me, says the Lord of hosts? Thus says the Lord of hosts: I will save my people from the east country and from the west country; and I will bring them to live in Jerusalem. They shall be my people and I will be their God, in faithfulness and in righteousness.

Revelation 5:6â€14

Then I saw between the throne and the four living creatures and among the elders a Lamb standing as if it had been slaughtered, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven spirits of God sent out into all the earth. He went and took the scroll from the right hand of the one who was seated on the throne. When he had taken the scroll, the four living creatures and the twentyâ€four elders fell before the Lamb, each holding a harp and golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints. They sing a new song:

â€You are worthy to take the scroll
â€and to open its seals,
for you were slaughtered and by your blood you ransomed for God
â€saints from every tribe and language and people and nation;
you have made them to be a kingdom and priests serving our God,
â€and they will reign on earth.â€™

Then I looked, and I heard the voice of many angels surrounding the throne and the living creatures and the elders; they numbered myriads of myriads and thousands of thousands, singing with full voice,

â€Worthy is the Lamb that was slaughtered
to receive power and wealth and wisdom and might
and honour and glory and blessing!â€™

Then I heard every creature in heaven and on earth and under the earth and in the sea, and all that is in them, singing,

â€To the one seated on the throne and to the Lamb
be blessing and honour and glory and might
for ever and ever!â€™

And the four living creatures said, â€Amen!â€™ And the elders fell down and worshipped.

St. Matthew 25:14-30

The Parable of the Talents

For it is as if a man, going on a journey, summoned his slaves and entrusted his property to them; to one he gave five talents, to another two, to another one, to each according to his ability. Then he went away. The one who had received the five talents went off at once and traded with them, and made five more talents. In the same way, the one who had the two talents made two more talents. But the one who had received the one talent went off and dug a hole in the ground and hid his master's money. After a long time the master of those slaves came and settled accounts with them. Then the one who had received the five talents came forward, bringing five more talents, saying, "Master, you handed over to me five talents; see, I have made five more talents." His master said to him, "Well done, good and trustworthy slave; you have been trustworthy in a few things, I will put you in charge of many things; enter into the joy of your master." And the one with the two talents also came forward, saying, "Master, you handed over to me two talents; see, I have made two more talents." His master said to him, "Well done, good and trustworthy slave; you have been trustworthy in a few things, I will put you in charge of many things; enter into the joy of your master." Then the one who had received the one talent also came forward, saying, "Master, I knew that you were a harsh man, reaping where you did not sow, and gathering where you did not scatter seed; so I was afraid, and I went and hid your talent in the ground. Here you have what is yours." But his master replied, "You wicked and lazy slave! You knew, did you, that I reap where I did not sow, and gather where I did not scatter? Then you ought to have invested my money with the bankers, and on my return I would have received what was my own with interest. So take the talent from him, and give it to the one with the ten talents. For to all those who have, more will be given, and they will have an abundance; but from those who have nothing, even what they have will be taken away. As for this worthless slave, throw him into the outer darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth."

Re: - posted by sermonindex (), on: 2019/12/21 13:05

Saturday, Dec 21st

Collect

Stir up your power, O Lord, and with great might come among us; and, because we are sorely hindered by our sins, let your bountiful grace and mercy speedily help and deliver us; through Jesus Christ our Lord, to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit, be honour and glory, now and for ever. Amen.

Conclude with

Almighty God, give us grace to cast away the works of darkness, and put on the armour of light, now in the time of this mortal life in which your Son Jesus Christ came to visit us in great humility; that in the last day, when he shall come again in his glorious majesty to judge both the living and the dead, we may rise to the life immortal; through him who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.

Psalm 55

Complaint about a Friend's Treachery

To the leader: with stringed instruments. A Maskil of David.

Give ear to my prayer, O God;
do not hide yourself from my supplication.
Attend to me, and answer me;
I am troubled in my complaint.
I am distraught by the noise of the enemy,
because of the clamour of the wicked.
For they bring trouble upon me,
and in anger they cherish enmity against me.

My heart is in anguish within me,

â€fthe terrors of death have fallen upon me.
Fear and trembling come upon me,
â€fand horror overwhelms me.
And I say, â€O that I had wings like a dove!
â€fI would fly away and be at rest;
truly, I would flee far away;
â€fI would lodge in the wilderness;â€fSelah
I would hurry to find a shelter for myself
â€ffrom the raging wind and tempest.â€™™

Confuse, O Lord, confound their speech;
â€ffor I see violence and strife in the city.
Day and night they go around it
â€fon its walls,
and iniquity and trouble are within it;
â€fruin is in its midst;
oppression and fraud
â€fdo not depart from its marketâ€™place.

It is not enemies who taunt meâ€™
â€fI could bear that;
it is not adversaries who deal insolently with meâ€™
â€fI could hide from them.
But it is you, my equal,
â€fmy companion, my familiar friend,
with whom I kept pleasant company;
â€fwe walked in the house of God with the throng.
Let death come upon them;
â€flet them go down alive to Sheol;
â€ffor evil is in their homes and in their hearts.

But I call upon God,
â€fand the Lord will save me.
Evening and morning and at noon
â€fI utter my complaint and moan,
â€fand he will hear my voice.
He will redeem me unharmed
â€ffrom the battle that I wage,
â€ffor many are arrayed against me.
God, who is enthroned from of old,â€fSelah
â€fwill hear, and will humble themâ€™
because they do not change,
â€fand do not fear God.

My companion laid hands on a friend
â€fand violated a covenant with me
with speech smoother than butter,
â€fbut with a heart set on war;
with words that were softer than oil,
â€fbut in fact were drawn swords.

Cast your burden on the Lord,
â€fand he will sustain you;
he will never permit
â€fthe righteous to be moved.

But you, O God, will cast them down
â€finto the lowest pit;

the bloodthirsty and treacherous
shall not live out half their days.
But I will trust in you.

Zechariah 8:9-17

Thus says the Lord of hosts: Let your hands be strong, you that have recently been hearing these words from the mouths of the prophets who were present when the foundation was laid for the rebuilding of the temple, the house of the Lord of hosts. For before those days there were no wages for people or for animals, nor was there any safety from the foe for those who went out or came in, and I set them all against one another. But now I will not deal with the remnant of this people as in the former days, says the Lord of hosts. For there shall be a sowing of peace; the vine shall yield its fruit, the ground shall give its produce, and the skies shall give their dew; and I will cause the remnant of this people to possess all these things. Just as you have been a cursing among the nations, O house of Judah and house of Israel, so I will save you and you shall be a blessing. Do not be afraid, but let your hands be strong.

For thus says the Lord of hosts: Just as I purposed to bring disaster upon you, when your ancestors provoked me to wrath, and I did not relent, says the Lord of hosts, so again I have purposed in these days to do good to Jerusalem and to the house of Judah; do not be afraid. These are the things that you shall do: Speak the truth to one another, render in your gates judgements that are true and make for peace, do not devise evil in your hearts against one another, and love no false oath; for all these are things that I hate, says the Lord.

Revelation 6:1-17

The Seven Seals

Then I saw the Lamb open one of the seven seals, and I heard one of the four living creatures call out, as with a voice of thunder, "Come!" I looked, and there was a white horse! Its rider had a bow; a crown was given to him, and he came out conquering and to conquer.

When he opened the second seal, I heard the second living creature call out, "Come!" And out came another horse, bright red; its rider was permitted to take peace from the earth, so that people would slaughter one another; and he was given a great sword.

When he opened the third seal, I heard the third living creature call out, "Come!" I looked, and there was a black horse! Its rider held a pair of scales in his hand, and I heard what seemed to be a voice in the midst of the four living creatures saying, "A quart of wheat for a day's pay, and three quarts of barley for a day's pay, but do not damage the olive oil and the wine!"

When he opened the fourth seal, I heard the voice of the fourth living creature call out, "Come!" I looked and there was a pale green horse! Its rider's name was Death, and Hades followed with him; they were given authority over a fourth of the earth, to kill with sword, famine, and pestilence, and by the wild animals of the earth.

When he opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of those who had been slaughtered for the word of God and for the testimony they had given; they cried out with a loud voice, "Sovereign Lord, holy and true, how long will it be before you judge and avenge our blood on the inhabitants of the earth?" They were each given a white robe and told to rest a little longer, until the number would be complete both of their fellow-servants and of their brothers and sisters, who were soon to be killed as they themselves had been killed.

When he opened the sixth seal, I looked, and there came a great earthquake; the sun became black as sackcloth, the full moon became like blood, and the stars of the sky fell to the earth as the fig tree drops its winter fruit when shaken by a gale. The sky vanished like a scroll rolling itself up, and every mountain and island was removed from its place. Then the kings of the earth and the magnates and the generals and the rich and the powerful, and everyone, slave and free, hid in the caves and among the rocks of the mountains, calling to the mountains and rocks, "Fall on us and hide us from the face of the one seated on the throne and from the wrath of the Lamb; for the great day of their wrath has come, and who is able to stand?"

St. Matthew 25:31-46

The Judgement of the Nations

“When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, then he will sit on the throne of his glory. All the nations will be gathered before him, and he will separate people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats, and he will put the sheep at his right hand and the goats at the left. Then the king will say to those at his right hand, ‘Come, you that are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world; for I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you gave me clothing, I was sick and you took care of me, I was in prison and you visited me.’ Then the righteous will answer him, ‘Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry and gave you food, or thirsty and gave you something to drink? And when was it that we saw you a stranger and welcomed you, or naked and gave you clothing? And when was it that we saw you sick or in prison and visited you?’ And the king will answer them, ‘Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me.’ Then he will say to those at his left hand, ‘You that are accursed, depart from me into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels; for I was hungry and you gave me no food, I was thirsty and you gave me nothing to drink, I was a stranger and you did not welcome me, naked and you did not give me clothing, sick and in prison and you did not visit me.’ Then they also will answer, ‘Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and did not take care of you?’ Then he will answer them, ‘Truly I tell you, just as you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to me.’ And these will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life.”

Re: - posted by sermonindex (), on: 2019/12/22 19:33

Fourth Sunday of Advent, Dec 22

How beautiful upon the mountains
Are the feet of him who brings good news,
Who proclaims peace,
Who brings glad tidings of good things,
Who proclaims salvation,
Who says to Zion,
“Your God reigns!”
—Isaiah 52:7 (NKJV)
Scripture Readings:

Isaiah 7:10-16

Isaiah Gives Ahaz the Sign of Immanuel

Again the Lord spoke to Ahaz, saying, Ask a sign of the Lord your God; let it be deep as Sheol or high as heaven. But Ahaz said, I will not ask, and I will not put the Lord to the test. Then Isaiah said: “Hear then, O house of David! Is it too little for you to weary mortals, that you weary my God also? Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign. Look, the young woman is with child and shall bear a son, and shall name him Immanuel. He shall eat curds and honey by the time he knows how to refuse the evil and choose the good. For before the child knows how to refuse the evil and choose the good, the land before whose two kings you are in dread will be deserted.

Psalms 80:1-7, 17-19

Prayer for Israel's Restoration

To the leader: on Lilies, a Covenant. Of Asaph. A Psalm.

Give ear, O Shepherd of Israel,
who lead Joseph like a flock!
You who are enthroned upon the cherubim, shine forth
before Ephraim and Benjamin and Manasseh.
Stir up your might,
and come to save us!

Restore us, O God;
let your face shine, that we may be saved.

O Lord God of hosts,
how long will you be angry with your people's prayers?
You have fed them with the bread of tears,
and given them tears to drink in full measure.
You make us the scorn of our neighbours;
our enemies laugh among themselves.

Restore us, O God of hosts;
let your face shine, that we may be saved.

But let your hand be upon the one at your right hand,
the one whom you made strong for yourself.
Then we will never turn back from you;
give us life, and we will call on your name.

Restore us, O Lord God of hosts;
let your face shine, that we may be saved.

Prayers:

Thematic Prayer

O God of Elizabeth and Mary,
you visited your servants with news of the world's redemption
in the coming of the Saviour.
Make our hearts leap with joy,
and fill our mouths with songs of praise,
that we may announce glad tidings of peace,
and welcome the Christ in our midst. Amen.

Intercessory Prayer

Brothers and sisters,
as we joyfully await the glorious coming of the Christ,
let us pray for the needs of the church, our community, and the world.

Prayers of the People, concluding with:

God of promise,
you have given us a sign of your love
through the gift of Jesus Christ, our Saviour,
who was promised from ages past.
We believe as Joseph did
the message of your presence
whispered by an angel,
and offer our prayers for your world,
confident of your care and mercy for all creation. Amen.

Scripture Prayer

Shepherd of Israel,
may Jesus, Emmanuel and son of Mary,
be more than just a dream in our hearts.
With the apostles, prophets, and saints,
save us, restore us,
and lead us in the way of grace and peace,
that we may bear your promise into the world. Amen.

Romans 1:1-7

Salutation

Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, set apart for the gospel of God, which he promised beforehand through his prophets in the holy scriptures, the gospel concerning his Son, who was descended from David according to the flesh and was declared to be Son of God with power according to the spirit of holiness by resurrection from the dead, Jesus Christ our Lord, through whom we have received grace and apostleship to bring about the obedience of faith among all the Gentiles for the sake of his name, including yourselves who are called to belong to Jesus Christ,

To all God's beloved in Rome, who are called to be saints:

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

St. Matthew 1:18-25

The Birth of Jesus the Messiah

Now the birth of Jesus the Messiah took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been engaged to Joseph, but before they lived together, she was found to be with child from the Holy Spirit. Her husband Joseph, being a righteous man and unwilling to expose her to public disgrace, planned to dismiss her quietly. But just when he had resolved to do this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, "Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife, for the child conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. She will bear a son, and you are to name him Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins." All this took place to fulfil what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet:

"Look, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son,
and they shall name him Emmanuel",

which means, "God is with us." When Joseph awoke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him; he took her as his wife, but had no marital relations with her until she had borne a son; and he named him Jesus.

Re: - posted by sermonindex (), on: 2019/12/23 16:17

Monday, Dec 23

Collect

Purify our conscience, Almighty God, by your daily visitation, that your Son Jesus Christ, at his coming, may find in us a mansion prepared for himself; who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.

Conclude with

Almighty God, give us grace to cast away the works of darkness, and put on the armour of light, now in the time of this mortal life in which your Son Jesus Christ came to visit us in great humility; that in the last day, when he shall come again in his glorious majesty to judge both the living and the dead, we may rise to the life immortal; through him who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.

Psalms 61

Assurance of God's Protection

To the leader: with stringed instruments. Of David.

Hear my cry, O God;
listen to my prayer.
From the end of the earth I call to you,

When my heart is faint.

Lead me to the rock
that is higher than I;
for you are my refuge,
a strong tower against the enemy.

Let me abide in your tent for ever,
find refuge under the shelter of your wings. Selah
For you, O God, have heard my vows;
you have given me the heritage of those who fear your name.

Prolong the life of the king;
may his years endure to all generations!
May he be enthroned for ever before God;
appoint steadfast love and faithfulness to watch over him!

So I will always sing praises to your name,
as I pay my vows day after day.

Zephaniah 3:14-20

A Song of Joy

Sing aloud, O daughter Zion;
shout, O Israel!
Rejoice and exult with all your heart,
O daughter Jerusalem!
The Lord has taken away the judgements against you,
he has turned away your enemies.
The king of Israel, the Lord, is in your midst;
you shall fear disaster no more.
On that day it shall be said to Jerusalem:
Do not fear, O Zion;
do not let your hands grow weak.
The Lord, your God, is in your midst,
a warrior who gives victory;
he will rejoice over you with gladness,
he will renew you in his love;
he will exult over you with loud singing
as on a day of festival.
I will remove disaster from you,
so that you will not bear reproach for it.
I will deal with all your oppressors
at that time.
And I will save the lame
and gather the outcast,
and I will change their shame into praise
and renown in all the earth.
At that time I will bring you home,
at the time when I gather you;
for I will make you renowned and praised
among all the peoples of the earth,
when I restore your fortunes
before your eyes, says the Lord.

Titus 1:1-16

Salutation

Paul, a servant of God and an apostle of Jesus Christ, for the sake of the faith of God's elect and the knowledge of the truth that is in accordance with godliness, in the hope of eternal life that God, who never lies, promised before the ages began—in due time he revealed his word through the proclamation with which I have been entrusted by the command of God our Saviour,

To Titus, my loyal child in the faith we share:

Grace and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Saviour.

Titus in Crete

I left you behind in Crete for this reason, that you should put in order what remained to be done, and should appoint elders in every town, as I directed you: someone who is blameless, married only once, whose children are believers, not accused of debauchery and not rebellious. For a bishop, as God's steward, must be blameless; he must not be arrogant or quick-tempered or addicted to wine or violent or greedy for gain; but he must be hospitable, a lover of goodness, prudent, upright, devout, and self-controlled. He must have a firm grasp of the word that is trustworthy in accordance with the teaching, so that he may be able both to preach with sound doctrine and to refute those who contradict it.

There are also many rebellious people, idle talkers and deceivers, especially those of the circumcision; they must be silenced, since they are upsetting whole families by teaching for sordid gain what it is not right to teach. It was one of them, their very own prophet, who said,

“Cretans are always liars, vicious brutes, lazy gluttons.”

That testimony is true. For this reason rebuke them sharply, so that they may become sound in the faith, not paying attention to Jewish myths or to commandments of those who reject the truth. To the pure all things are pure, but to the corrupt and unbelieving nothing is pure. Their very minds and consciences are corrupted. They profess to know God, but they deny him by their actions. They are detestable, disobedient, unfit for any good work.

St. Luke 1:1-25

Dedication to Theophilus

Since many have undertaken to set down an orderly account of the events that have been fulfilled among us, just as they were handed on to us by those who from the beginning were eyewitnesses and servants of the word, I too decided, after investigating everything carefully from the very first, to write an orderly account for you, most excellent Theophilus, so that you may know the truth concerning the things about which you have been instructed.

The Birth of John the Baptist Foretold

In the days of King Herod of Judea, there was a priest named Zechariah, who belonged to the priestly order of Abijah. His wife was a descendant of Aaron, and her name was Elizabeth. Both of them were righteous before God, living blamelessly according to all the commandments and regulations of the Lord. But they had no children, because Elizabeth was barren, and both were getting on in years.

Once when he was serving as priest before God and his section was on duty, he was chosen by lot, according to the custom of the priesthood, to enter the sanctuary of the Lord and offer incense. Now at the time of the incense-offering, the whole assembly of the people was praying outside. Then there appeared to him an angel of the Lord, standing at the right side of the altar of incense. When Zechariah saw him, he was terrified; and fear overwhelmed him. But the angel said to him, “Do not be afraid, Zechariah, for your prayer has been heard. Your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you will name him John. You will have joy and gladness, and many will rejoice at his birth, for he will be great in the sight of the Lord. He must never drink wine or strong drink; even before his birth he will be filled with the Holy Spirit. He will turn many of the people of Israel to the Lord their God. With the spirit and power of Elijah he will go before him, to turn the hearts of parents to their children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the righteous, to make ready a people prepared for the Lord.” Zechariah said to the angel, “How will I know that this is so? For I am an old man, and my wife is getting on in years.” The angel replied, “I am Gabriel. I stand in the presence of God, and I have been sent to speak to

o you and to bring you this good news. But now, because you did not believe my words, which will be fulfilled in their time, you will become mute, unable to speak, until the day these things occur.â€™™

Meanwhile, the people were waiting for Zechariah, and wondered at his delay in the sanctuary. When he did come out, he could not speak to them, and they realized that he had seen a vision in the sanctuary. He kept motioning to them and remained unable to speak. When his time of service was ended, he went to his home.

After those days his wife Elizabeth conceived, and for five months she remained in seclusion. She said, â€™This is what the Lord has done for me when he looked favourably on me and took away the disgrace I have endured among my people.â€™™

Re: - posted by sermonindex (), on: 2019/12/24 8:26

Tuesday, Dec 24th

Collect

Purify our conscience, Almighty God, by your daily visitation, that your Son Jesus Christ, at his coming, may find in us a mansion prepared for himself; who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.

Conclude with

Almighty God, give us grace to cast away the works of darkness, and put on the armour of light, now in the time of this mortal life in which your Son Jesus Christ came to visit us in great humility; that in the last day, when he shall come again in his glorious majesty to judge both the living and the dead, we may rise to the life immortal; through him who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.

Psalm 45

Ode for a Royal Wedding

To the leader: according to Lilies. Of the Korahites. A Maskil. A love song.

My heart overflows with a goodly theme;
â€™I address my verses to the king;
â€™my tongue is like the pen of a ready scribe.

You are the most handsome of men;
grace is poured upon your lips;
therefore God has blessed you for ever.
Gird your sword on your thigh, O mighty one,
â€™in your glory and majesty.

In your majesty ride on victoriously
for the cause of truth and to defend the right;
â€™let your right hand teach you dread deeds.
Your arrows are sharp
â€™in the heart of the kingâ€™s enemies;
â€™the peoples fall under you.

Your throne, O God, endures for ever and ever.
â€™Your royal sceptre is a sceptre of equity;
â€™you love righteousness and hate wickedness.
Therefore God, your God, has anointed you
â€™with the oil of gladness beyond your companions;
â€™your robes are all fragrant with myrrh and aloes and cassia.
From ivory palaces stringed instruments make you glad;

â€fdaughters of kings are among your ladies of honour;
â€fat your right hand stands the queen in gold of Ophir.

Hear, O daughter, consider and incline your ear;
â€fforget your people and your fatherâ€™s house,
â€fand the king will desire your beauty.
Since he is your lord, bow to him;
â€fthe people of Tyre will seek your favour with gifts,
â€fthe richest of the people with all kinds of wealth.

The princess is decked in her chamber with goldâ€™woven robes;
â€fin manyâ€™coloured robes she is led to the king;
â€fbehind her the virgins, her companions, follow.
With joy and gladness they are led along
â€fas they enter the palace of the king.

In the place of ancestors you, O king, shall have sons;
â€fyou will make them princes in all the earth.
I will cause your name to be celebrated in all generations;
â€ftherefore the peoples will praise you for ever and ever.

Isaiah 59:1â€15a

Injustice and Oppression to Be Punished

See, the Lordâ€™s hand is not too short to save,
â€fnor his ear too dull to hear.
Rather, your iniquities have been barriers
â€fbetween you and your God,
and your sins have hidden his face from you
â€fso that he does not hear.
For your hands are defiled with blood,
â€fand your fingers with iniquity;
your lips have spoken lies,
â€fyour tongue mutters wickedness.
No one brings suit justly,
â€fno one goes to law honestly;
they rely on empty pleas, they speak lies,
â€fconceiving mischief and begetting iniquity.
They hatch addersâ€™ eggs,
â€fand weave the spiderâ€™s web;
whoever eats their eggs dies,
â€fand the crushed egg hatches out a viper.
Their webs cannot serve as clothing;
â€fthey cannot cover themselves with what they make.
Their works are works of iniquity,
â€fand deeds of violence are in their hands.
Their feet run to evil,
â€fand they rush to shed innocent blood;
their thoughts are thoughts of iniquity,
â€fdesolation and destruction are in their highways.
The way of peace they do not know,
â€fand there is no justice in their paths.
Their roads they have made crooked;
â€fno one who walks in them knows peace.

Therefore justice is far from us,
â€fand righteousness does not reach us;

we wait for light, and lo! there is darkness;
 and for brightness, but we walk in gloom.
 We grope like the blind along a wall,
 groping like those who have no eyes;
 we stumble at noon as in the twilight,
 among the vigorous as though we were dead.
 We all growl like bears;
 like doves we moan mournfully.
 We wait for justice, but there is none;
 for salvation, but it is far from us.
 For our transgressions before you are many,
 and our sins testify against us.
 Our transgressions indeed are with us,
 and we know our iniquities:
 transgressing, and denying the Lord,
 and turning away from following our God,
 talking oppression and revolt,
 conceiving lying words and uttering them from the heart.
 Justice is turned back,
 and righteousness stands at a distance;
 for truth stumbles in the public square,
 and uprightness cannot enter.
 Truth is lacking,
 and whoever turns from evil is despoiled.

Galatians 3:23-4:7

Now before faith came, we were imprisoned and guarded under the law until faith would be revealed. Therefore the law was our disciplinarian until Christ came, so that we might be justified by faith. But now that faith has come, we are no longer subject to a disciplinarian, for in Christ Jesus you are all children of God through faith. As many of you as were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. There is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave or free, there is no longer male and female; for all of you are one in Christ Jesus. And if you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham's offspring, heirs according to the promise.

My point is this: heirs, as long as they are minors, are no better than slaves, though they are the owners of all the property; but they remain under guardians and trustees until the date set by the father. So with us; while we were minors, we were enslaved to the elemental spirits of the world. But when the fullness of time had come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under the law, in order to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as children. And because you are children, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, "Abba! Father!" So you are no longer a slave but a child, and if a child then also an heir, through God.

St. Matthew 1:18-25

The Birth of Jesus the Messiah

Now the birth of Jesus the Messiah took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been engaged to Joseph, but before they lived together, she was found to be with child from the Holy Spirit. Her husband Joseph, being a righteous man and unwilling to expose her to public disgrace, planned to dismiss her quietly. But just when he had resolved to do this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, "Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife, for the child conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. She will bear a son, and you are to name him Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins." All this took place to fulfil what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet:

"Look, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son,
 and they shall name him Emmanuel",

which means, "God is with us." When Joseph awoke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him; he took her as his wife, but had no marital relations with her until she had borne a son; and he named him Jesus.

Re: - posted by sermonindex (), on: 2019/12/25 18:10

Christmas Morn

Scripture Readings:

Isaiah 62:6-12

Upon your walls, O Jerusalem,
I have posted sentinels;
all day and all night
they shall never be silent.
You who remind the Lord,
I take no rest,
and give him no rest
until he establishes Jerusalem
and makes it renowned throughout the earth.
The Lord has sworn by his right hand
and by his mighty arm:
I will not again give your grain
to be food for your enemies,
and foreigners shall not drink the wine
for which you have laboured;
but those who garner it shall eat it
and praise the Lord,
and those who gather it shall drink it
in my holy courts.

Go through, go through the gates,
I prepare the way for the people;
build up, build up the highway,
I clear it of stones,
I lift up an ensign over the peoples.
The Lord has proclaimed
to the end of the earth:
Say to daughter Zion,
I see, your salvation comes;
his reward is with him,
and his recompense before him.
They shall be called, The Holy People,
The Redeemed of the Lord;
and you shall be called, Sought Out,
A City Not Forsaken.

Prayers:

Thematic Prayer

O Holy One,
heavenly angels spoke to earthly shepherds
and eternity entered time in the child of Bethlehem.
Through the telling of the Christmas story,
let our temporal lives be caught up in the eternal
in that same child,
that we might join shepherds and all the heavenly host
in praising the coming of Jesus Christ, our Saviour. Amen.

Intercessory Prayer

God of incarnation,

your angel host announces
that peace has been born among us,
embodied in fragile flesh.
With confidence in the power of that miracle,
we bring before you our prayers for the church and the world.

Prayers of the People, concluding with:

By your grace, transform our prayers from words to deeds,
that we may live as a holy people
in the dawn of your peace,
redeemed from all that divides us. Amen.

Scripture Prayer
Christ, our God,
whom humble shepherds worshipped at a manger,
you are holy and most high, merciful and mighty.
Startle us to wakefulness,
that we may rejoice in your new and glorious dawn,
and, in your holy name,
act to mend this suffering world. Amen.

Psalm 97

The Glory of God's Reign

The Lord is king! Let the earth rejoice;
let the many coastlands be glad!
Clouds and thick darkness are all around him;
righteousness and justice are the foundation of his throne.
Fire goes before him,
and consumes his adversaries on every side.
His lightnings light up the world;
the earth sees and trembles.
The mountains melt like wax before the Lord,
before the Lord of all the earth.

The heavens proclaim his righteousness;
and all the peoples behold his glory.
All worshippers of images are put to shame,
those who make their boast in worthless idols;
all gods bow down before him.
Zion hears and is glad,
and the towns of Judah rejoice,
because of your judgements, O God.
For you, O Lord, are most high over all the earth;
you are exalted far above all gods.

The Lord loves those who hate evil;
he guards the lives of his faithful;
he rescues them from the hand of the wicked.
Light dawns for the righteous,
and joy for the upright in heart.
Rejoice in the Lord, O you righteous,
and give thanks to his holy name!

Titus 3:4-7

But when the goodness and loving-kindness of God our Saviour appeared, he saved us, not because of any works of righteousness that we had done, but according to his mercy, through the water of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit. This Spirit he poured out on us richly through Jesus Christ our Saviour, so that, having been justified by his grace, we might become heirs according to the hope of eternal life.

St. Luke 2:1-7, 8-20

The Shepherds and the Angels

In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid; for see, I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: to you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, who is the Messiah, the Lord. This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger." And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying,

"Glory to God in the highest heaven,
and on earth peace among those whom he favours!"

When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us." So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger. When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child; and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them. But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

Re: - posted by sermonindex (), on: 2019/12/25 18:10

Christmas Middy

Scripture Readings:

Isaiah 52:7-10

How beautiful upon the mountains
are the feet of the messenger who announces peace,
who brings good news,
who announces salvation,
who says to Zion, "Your God reigns."
Listen! Your sentinels lift up their voices,
together they sing for joy;
for in plain sight they see
the return of the Lord to Zion.
Break forth together into singing,
you ruins of Jerusalem;
for the Lord has comforted his people,
he has redeemed Jerusalem.
The Lord has bared his holy arm
before the eyes of all the nations;
and all the ends of the earth shall see
the salvation of our God.

Psalm 98

Praise the Judge of the World

A Psalm.

O sing to the Lord a new song,
â€for he has done marvellous things.
His right hand and his holy arm
â€fhave gained him victory.
The Lord has made known his victory;
â€fhe has revealed his vindication in the sight of the nations.
He has remembered his steadfast love and faithfulness
â€fto the house of Israel.
All the ends of the earth have seen
â€fthe victory of our God.

Make a joyful noise to the Lord, all the earth;
â€fbreak forth into joyous song and sing praises.
Sing praises to the Lord with the lyre,
â€fwith the lyre and the sound of melody.
With trumpets and the sound of the horn
â€fmake a joyful noise before the King, the Lord.

Let the sea roar, and all that fills it;
â€fthe world and those who live in it.
Let the floods clap their hands;
â€flet the hills sing together for joy
at the presence of the Lord, for he is coming
â€fto judge the earth.
He will judge the world with righteousness,
â€fand the peoples with equity.

Prayers:

Thematic Prayer
O Holy One,
heavenly angels spoke to earthly shepherds
and eternity entered time in the child of Bethlehem.
Through the telling of the Christmas story,
let our temporal lives be caught up in the eternal
in that same child,
that we might join shepherds and all the heavenly host
in praising the coming of Jesus Christ, our Saviour. Amen.

Intercessory Prayer
May our gracious God,
whose light shines in the darkness of our lives,
the One who formed creation,
now hear the prayers we offer this day for all people.

Prayers of the People, concluding with:

Splendor of eternal glory,
grant that we may be faithful witnesses
to the light that dawns this morning ,
proclaiming Christ's word of peace and salvation
in acts of justice and mercy. Amen.

Scripture Prayer

God,
you spoke and your Word became flesh,
breathing a new song of joy and praise
into the world.
Grant that we may bear the good news of your salvation,
proclaiming your promise of peace
to the ends of the earth. Amen.

Hebrews 1:1-4, (5-12)

God Has Spoken by His Son

Long ago God spoke to our ancestors in many and various ways by the prophets, but in these last days he has spoken to us by a Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, through whom he also created the worlds. He is the reflection of God's glory and the exact imprint of God's very being, and he sustains all things by his powerful word. When he had made purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high, having become as much superior to angels as the name he has inherited is more excellent than theirs.

The Son Is Superior to Angels

St. John 1:1-14

The Word Became Flesh

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.

There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light. The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world.

He was in the world, and the world came into being through him; yet the world did not know him. He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him. But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God.

And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth.