



**Sunday Readings for
August–January 1 2022
Revised Common Lectionary
Year C**



CHRIST CHURCH, DARTMOUTH
A People United in Justice and Love

Resources have been taken from the following:

McCausland's Order of Divine Service: The Christian Year 2022, Liturgical Year C (Editor: Edward Simonton OGS, Mary Reynolds, hymn selection) (ABC Publishing: Anglican Book Centre, 2022)

Online Lectionary, Anglican Church of Canada: <https://lectionary.anglican.ca/>
ALTERNATIVE COLLECTS FOR YEARS A, B & C OF THE REVISED COMMON LECTIONARY AND SEASONAL PRAYERS OVER THE GIFTS AND AFTER COMMUNION Prepared by the Liturgy Task Force, Faith, Worship, and Ministry Committee Of the General Synod of the Anglican Church of Canada: <https://www.anglican.ca/wp-content/uploads/Alternative-RCL-Collects-Final-2019.pdf>

A LITURGICAL PSALTER GENERAL SYNOD 2016 EDITION The Psalter of The Book of Alternative Services Emended for Contemporary Liturgical Use:

<https://www.anglican.ca/wpcontent/uploads/GS2016-Liturgical-Psalter-2016-05-04.pdf>

Resources for Season of Creation taken from: <https://seasonofcreation.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/06/SOC-2022-Celebration-Guide-Final-English.pdf>

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11th Sunday after Pentecost, Sunday, August 21st, 2022

Readings: JEREMIAH 1:4-10; PSALM 71:1-6; HEBREWS 12:18-29; LUKE 13:10-17

Collect

Living God,
you formed us in the womb
and appointed us to be prophets to the nations:
stretch out your hand to cure our infirmity and dispel our fear,
so that we may know the freedom of serving you in Christ
and proclaim the wonders you have done. Amen.
Revised Common Lectionary Prayers (2002) alt.

First Reading: JEREMIAH 1:4-10

The lectionary now begins eight semicontinuous selections from the book of Jeremiah. The prophet Jeremiah, the son of a priest, was active from 627 to 587 bce. The book appears to have been compiled after 560 bce from the memoirs of his secretary Baruch, collections of Jeremiah's oracles against Judah, and oracles from other prophets against foreign nations. The biographical narratives and the speeches are not recorded in chronological order. Because Jeremiah was rejected and even persecuted by his hearers, Christians have seen in him a Christ figure who proclaimed the word of God. The first selection is Jeremiah 1:4-10, the call of Jeremiah while still a boy to proclaim the word of God, which is both "to destroy and to plant," what Lutherans call "law and gospel." The Lord is described anthropomorphically: the Lord touches Jeremiah's mouth. Christians have used this passage to describe the complexity of the word of proclamation and to speak positively of the ministry of children. Some Christians have seen in the reference to the womb as a proscription against abortion, although other Christians judge this passage as only poetic intensification.

Now the word of the Lord came to me saying, "Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, and before you were born I consecrated you; I appointed you a prophet to the nations." Then I said, "Ah, Lord God! Truly I do not know how to speak, for I am only a boy." But the Lord said to me, "Do not say, 'I am only a boy'; for you shall go to all to whom I send you, and you shall speak whatever I command you, Do not be afraid of them, for I am with you to deliver you, says the Lord." Then the Lord put out his hand and touched my mouth; and the Lord said to me, "Now I have put my words in your mouth. See, today I appoint you over nations and over kingdoms, to pluck up and to pull down, to destroy and to overthrow, to build and to plant."

Psalm 71:1-6

Having heard God's call to Jeremiah, and to all of us, we respond by singing Psalm 71:1-6. This praise of God who is rock, fortress, rescuer, and hope, fits well with Jeremiah 1, especially thanks to its reference to God's care from our mother's womb.

In you, O Lord, have I taken refuge; let me never be ashamed.

In your righteousness, deliver me and set me free; incline your ear to me and save me.

Be my strong rock, a castle to keep me safe; you are my crag and my stronghold.

Deliver me, my God, from the hand of the wicked, from the clutches of the evildoer and the oppressor.

For you are my hope, O Lord God, my confidence since I was young.

I have been sustained by you ever since I was born; from my mother's womb you have been my strength; my praise shall be always of you.

Second Reading: HEBREWS 12:18-29

This selection from Hebrews presents a complex picture of Christian worship. Here on earth the church is caught up to the heavenly city of God. Thanks to Christ the mediator, worshipers are not to fear the "blazing fire" of the Exodus; yet God is still "a consuming fire."

You have not come to something that can be touched, a blazing fire, and darkness, and gloom, and a tempest, and the sound of a trumpet, and a voice whose words made the hearers beg that not another word be spoken to them. (For they could not endure the order that was given, "If even an animal touches the mountain, it shall be stoned to death." Indeed, so terrifying was the sight that Moses said, "I tremble with fear.") But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to innumerable angels in festal gathering, and to the assembly of the firstborn who are enrolled in heaven, and to God the judge of all, and to the spirits of the righteous made perfect, and to Jesus, the mediator of a new covenant, and to the sprinkled blood that speaks a better word than the blood of Abel. See that you do not refuse the one who is speaking; for if they did not escape when they refused the one who warned them on earth, how much less will we escape if we reject the one who warns from heaven! At that time his voice shook the earth; but now he has promised, "Yet once more I will shake not only the earth but also the heaven." This phrase, "Yet once more," indicates the removal of what is shaken - that is, created things - so that what cannot be shaken may remain. Therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, let us give thanks, by which we offer to God an acceptable worship with reverence and awe; for indeed our God is a consuming fire.

Gospel: LUKE 13:10-17

Perhaps, like countless old women throughout time, this woman had osteoporosis. But we all know about the condition of being bowed down by age, infirmity, or distress. In Christ we can stand upright. The sabbath controversy presents us with not only the question of how is God truly honored, but also the picture of Christ who replaces the sabbath, the one who sets us free.

Now he was teaching in one of the synagogues on the sabbath. And just then there appeared a woman with a spirit that had crippled her for eighteen years. She was bent over and was quite unable to stand up straight. When Jesus saw her, he called her over and said, "Woman, you are set free from your ailment." When he laid his hands on her, immediately she stood up straight and began praising God. But the leader of the synagogue, indignant because Jesus had cured on the sabbath, kept saying to the crowd, "There are six days on which work ought to be done; come on those days and be cured, and not on the sabbath day." But the Lord answered him and said, "You hypocrites! Does not each of you on the sabbath untie his ox or his donkey from the manger, and lead it away to give it water? And ought not this woman, a daughter of Abraham whom Satan bound for eighteen long years, be set free from this bondage on the sabbath day?" When he said this, all his opponents were put to shame; and the entire crowd was rejoicing at all the wonderful things that he was doing.

Prayer over the Gifts

God of glory,
receive all we offer this day as a symbol of our love,
and increase in us that true and perfect gift.
We ask this in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord.

Prayer After Communion

Living God,
increase in us the healing power of your love.
Guide and direct us
that we may please you in all things,
for the sake of Jesus Christ our Lord.

12th Sunday after Pentecost, Sunday, August 28th, 2022

Readings: JEREMIAH 2:4-13; PSALM 81:1, 10-16; HEBREWS 13:1-8, 15-16; LUKE 14:1, 7-14

Collect

God of power and justice,
like Jeremiah you weep over those who wander from you
and who enter into chaos and destruction.
By your tears and through your mercy,
teach us your ways and write them on our hearts,
so that we may follow faithful the path you show us. Amen.
Revised Common Lectionary Prayers (2002) alt.

First Reading: JEREMIAH 2:4-13

The second semicontinuous reading of Jeremiah 2:4-13, is the first of Jeremiah's oracles, conveying God's judgment on the people, even the priests, for their transgressions and apostasy. The oracle imagines that God is accusing the people of Jacob and Israel in the court of

the heavenly council. Baal is the primary male deity of the Canaanites. Cyprus signifies the west, Kedar the east. The passage has metaphors from economics: worth, worthlessness, profit. In an example of poetic excellence, Jeremiah proclaims that God is the fountain of living water, but the people have chosen instead cracked cisterns. Christians have seen in passages like this a stark depiction of the human refusal to live faithful to God's call, a condemnation of the human practice of valuing what is worthless.

Hear the word of the Lord, O house of Jacob, and all the families of the house of Israel. Thus says the Lord: What wrong did your ancestors find in me that they went far from me, and went after worthless things, and became worthless themselves? They did not say, "Where is the Lord who brought us up from the land of Egypt, who led us in the wilderness, in a land of deserts and pits, in a land of drought and deep darkness, in a land that no one passes through, where no one lives?" I brought you into a plentiful land to eat its fruits and its good things. But when you entered you defiled my land, and made my heritage an abomination. The priests did not say, "Where is the Lord?" Those who handle the law did not know me; the rulers transgressed against me; the prophets prophesied by Baal, and went after things that do not profit. Therefore once more I accuse you, says the Lord, and I accuse your children's children. Cross to the coasts of Cyprus and look, send to Kedar and examine with care; see if there has ever been such a thing. Has a nation changed its gods, even though they are no gods? But my people have changed their glory for something that does not profit. Be appalled, O heavens, at this, be shocked, be utterly desolate, says the Lord, for my people have committed two evils: they have forsaken me, the fountain of living water, and dug out cisterns for themselves, cracked cisterns that can hold no water.

Psalm 81:1, 10-16

*Having heard Jeremiah's call, we respond by joining in **Psalm 81:1, 10-16**. In also these verses, God condemns the people, and us, for our faithlessness. Christians have seen in "the finest of the wheat" (v. 16) a symbolic picture of holy communion. The phrase "honey from the rock" is a striking poetic image of God's providing for us wonders from the Rock, who for us is Christ.*

Sing with joy to God our strength and raise a loud shout to the God of Jacob.

I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt and said, "Open your mouth wide, and I will fill it."

And yet my people did not hear my voice, and Israel would not obey me.

So I gave them over to the stubbornness of their hearts, to follow their own devices.

Oh, that my people would listen to me! that Israel would walk in my ways!

I should soon subdue their enemies and turn my hand against their foes.

Those who hate the Lord would cringe before him, and their punishment would last for ever.

But Israel would I feed with the finest wheat and satisfy him with honey from the rock.

Second Reading: HEBREWS 13:1-8, 15-16

This, the lectionary's last semi-continuous selection from the book of Hebrews is a collection of directives to the church, many of which are countercultural. Those with faith are now a community of care. The beliefs that God will never leave us and that Jesus Christ is always the same contrast with the temple and its sacrifices, which pass away. Although close congruence of the second reading and the gospel during post-Pentecost is not intended, on this Sunday the call for hospitality to strangers and for sharing with others fits well with the gospel reading.

Let mutual love continue. Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for by doing that some have entertained angels without knowing it. Remember those who are in prison, as though you were in prison with them; those who are being tortured, as though you yourselves were being tortured. Let marriage be held in honour by all, and let the marriage bed be kept undefiled; for God will judge fornicators and adulterers. Keep your lives free from the love of money, and be content with what you have; for he has said, "I will never leave you or forsake you." So we can say with confidence, "The Lord is my helper; I will not be afraid. What can anyone do to me?" Remember your leaders, those who spoke the word of God to you; consider the outcome of their way of life, and imitate their faith. Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever. Through him, then, let us continually offer a sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of lips that confess his name. Do not neglect to do good and to share what you have, for such sacrifices are pleasing to God.

Gospel: LUKE 14:1, 7-14

Christ's call is to countercultural behavior: the society is hierarchical, but the church is to enact a surprising acceptance of the poor, to give to others with no expectation of return. Jesus is the model, who gave himself all the way to death, and who was indeed repaid in his resurrection.

On one occasion when Jesus was going to the house of a leader of the Pharisees to eat a meal on the sabbath, they were watching him closely. When he noticed how the guests chose the places of honour, he told them a parable. "When you are invited by someone to a wedding banquet, do not sit down at the place of honour, in case someone more distinguished than you has been invited by your host; and the host who invited both of you may come and say to you, 'Give this person your place,' and then in disgrace you would start to take the lowest place. But when you are invited, go and sit down at the lowest place, so that when your host comes, he may say to you, 'Friend, move up higher'; then you will be honoured in the presence of all who sit at the table with you. For all who exalt themselves will be humbled, and those who humble themselves will be exalted." He said also to the one who had invited him, "When you give a luncheon or a dinner, do not invite your friends or your brothers or your relatives or rich neighbours, in case they may

invite you in return, and you would be repaid. But when you give a banquet, invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, and the blind. And you will be blessed, because they cannot repay you, for you will be repaid at the resurrection of the righteous."

Prayer over the Gifts

Merciful God,
receive all we offer you this day.
Give us grace to love one another
that your love may be made perfect in us.
We ask this in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord.

Prayer After Communion

Almighty God,
you renew us at your table with the bread of life.
May your holy food strengthen us in love
and help us to serve you in each other.
We ask this in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord.

Season of Creation One Sunday September 4th 2022

Readings: Jeremiah 18:1-11, Psalm 139: 1-6, 13-18, Philemon 1-21, Luke 14:25-33

Collect

Creator of all,
stir in us the passion to share the living water
of the gospel as we also protect and share the waters
of your creation to nourish all creatures;
this we ask through Jesus Christ who lives and reigns
with you and the Holy Spirit, now and always. Amen.

First Reading: Jeremiah 18:1-11

This is the word that came to Jeremiah from the Lord: "Go down to the potter's house, and there I will give you my message." So I went down to the potter's house, and I saw him working at the wheel. But the pot he was shaping from the clay was marred in his hands; so the potter formed it into another pot, shaping it as seemed best to him.

Then the word of the Lord came to me. He said, "Can I not do with you, Israel, as this potter does?" declares the Lord. "Like clay in the hand of the potter, so are you in my hand, Israel. If at any time I announce that a nation or kingdom is to be uprooted, torn down and destroyed, and if that nation I warned repents of its evil, then I will relent and not inflict on it the disaster I had planned. And if at another time I announce that a nation or kingdom is to be built up and planted, and if it does evil in my sight and does not obey me, then I will reconsider the good I had intended to do for it.

“Now therefore say to the people of Judah and those living in Jerusalem, ‘This is what the Lord says: Look! I am preparing a disaster for you and devising a plan against you. So turn from your evil ways, each one of you, and reform your ways and your actions.’

PSALM 139: 1-6, 13-18

Lord, you have searched me out and known me;
you know my sitting down and my rising up;
you discern my thoughts from afar.

**You trace my journeys and my resting-places
and are acquainted with all my ways.**

Indeed, there is not a word on my lips,
but you, O Lord, know it altogether.

**You press upon me behind and before
and lay your hand upon me.**

Such knowledge is too wonderful for me;
it is so high that I cannot attain to it.

**Where can I go then from your Spirit?
where can I flee from your presence?**

I will thank you because I am marvellously made;
your works are wonderful, and I know it well.

**My body was not hidden from you,
while I was being made in secret
and woven in the depths of the earth.**

Your eyes beheld my limbs, yet unfinished in the womb;
all of them were written in your book;
they were fashioned day by day,
when as yet there was none of them.

**How deep I find your thoughts, O God!
how great is the sum of them!**

If I were to count them, they would be more in number
than the sand;
to count them all, my life span would need to

be like yours.

**Oh, that you would slay the wicked, O God!
You that thirst for blood, depart from me.**

They speak spitefully against you;
your enemies take your name in vain.

**Do I not hate those, O Lord, who hate you?
and do I not loathe those who rise up against you?**

I hate them with a perfect hatred;
they have become my own enemies.

**Search me out, O God, and know my heart;
try me and know my restless thoughts.**

Look well whether there be any wickedness in me
and lead me in the way that is everlasting.

Second Reading Philemon 1-21

Paul, a prisoner of Christ Jesus, and Timothy our brother,
To Philemon our dear friend and fellow worker— also to Apphia our sister and Archippus our fellow soldier—and to the church that meets in your home:

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

I always thank my God as I remember you in my prayers, because I hear about your love for all his holy people and your faith in the Lord Jesus. I pray that your partnership with us in the faith may be effective in deepening your understanding of every good thing we share for the sake of Christ. Your love has given me great joy and encouragement, because you, brother, have refreshed the hearts of the Lord's people.

Therefore, although in Christ I could be bold and order you to do what you ought to do, yet I prefer to appeal to you on the basis of love. It is as none other than Paul—an old man and now also a prisoner of Christ Jesus— that I appeal to you for my son Onesimus, who became my son while I was in chains. Formerly he was useless to you, but now he has become useful both to you and to me.

I am sending him—who is my very heart—back to you. I would have liked to keep him with me so that he could take your place in helping me while I am in chains for the gospel. But I did not want to do anything without your consent, so that any favor you do would not seem

forced but would be voluntary. Perhaps the reason he was separated from you for a little while was that you might have him back forever— no longer as a slave, but better than a slave, as a dear brother. He is very dear to me but even dearer to you, both as a fellow man and as a brother in the Lord.

So if you consider me a partner, welcome him as you would welcome me. If he has done you any wrong or owes you anything, charge it to me. I, Paul, am writing this with my own hand. I will pay it back—not to mention that you owe me your very self. I do wish, brother, that I may have some benefit from you in the Lord; refresh my heart in Christ. Confident of your obedience, I write to you, knowing that you will do even more than I ask.

And one thing more: Prepare a guest room for me, because I hope to be restored to you in answer to your prayers.

Epaphras, my fellow prisoner in Christ Jesus, sends you greetings. And so do Mark, Aristarchus, Demas and Luke, my fellow workers.

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit.

Gospel: Luke 14:25-33

Now large crowds were travelling with him; and he turned and said to them, ‘Whoever comes to me and does not hate father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters, yes, and even life itself, cannot be my disciple. Whoever does not carry the cross and follow me cannot be my disciple. For which of you, intending to build a tower, does not first sit down and estimate the cost, to see whether he has enough to complete it? Otherwise, when he has laid a foundation and is not able to finish, all who see it will begin to ridicule him, saying, “This fellow began to build and was not able to finish.” Or what king, going out to wage war against another king, will not sit down first and consider whether he is able with ten thousand to oppose the one who comes against him with twenty thousand? If he cannot, then, while the other is still far away, he sends a delegation and asks for the terms of peace. So therefore, none of you can become my disciple if you do not give up all your possessions.

Prayer over the Gifts

Spring of life and Source of goodness,
receive all we offer you this day,
and bring us to the living water,
Jesus Christ, your Son our Lord. **Amen.**

Prayer After Communion

God of our pilgrimage,
we have found the living water.
Refresh and sustain us
as we go forth on our journey,
in the name of Jesus Christ the Lord. **Amen.**

Season of Creation Two Sunday, September 11th, 2022

Readings: Jeremiah 4:11-22, 22-28, Psalm 14, 1 Timothy 1:12-17, Luke 15:1-10

Collect

Creator, we pray that you would help us
touch the earth gently. Turn us from our ways of
commodifying the earth and consuming its riches without thought;
this we ask through Jesus Christ who lives and reigns with
you and the Holy Spirit, now and forever. Amen.

First Reading: Jeremiah 4:11-22, 22-28

At that time it will be said to this people and to Jerusalem: A hot wind comes from me
out of the bare heights in the desert towards my poor people, not to winnow or
cleanse— a wind too strong for that. Now it is I who speak in judgement against
them.

‘For my people are foolish,
they do not know me;
they are stupid children,
they have no understanding.
They are skilled in doing evil,
but do not know how to do good.’

I looked on the earth, and lo, it was waste and void;
and to the heavens, and they had no light.
I looked on the mountains, and lo, they were quaking,
and all the hills moved to and fro.
I looked, and lo, there was no one at all,
and all the birds of the air had fled.
I looked, and lo, the fruitful land was a desert,
and all its cities were laid in ruins
before the Lord, before his fierce anger.

For thus says the Lord: The whole land shall be a desolation; yet I will not make a full end.

Because of this the earth shall mourn,
and the heavens above grow black;
for I have spoken, I have purposed;
I have not relented nor will I turn back.

Psalm 14

The fool has said in his heart, “There is no God.”
All are corrupt and commit abominable acts;
there is none who does any good.

**The Lord looks down from heaven upon us all,
to see if there is any who is wise,
if there is one who seeks after God.**

Every one has proved faithless;
all alike have turned bad;
there is none who does good; no, not one.

**Have they no knowledge, all those evildoers
who eat up my people like bread
and do not call upon the Lord?**

See how they tremble with fear,
because God is in the company of the righteous.

**Their aim is to confound the plans of the afflicted,
but the Lord is their refuge.**

Oh, that Israel’s deliverance would come out of Zion!
when the Lord restores the fortunes of his people,
Jacob will rejoice and Israel be glad.

Second Reading: 1 Timothy 1:12-17

I am grateful to Christ Jesus our Lord, who has strengthened me, because he judged me faithful and appointed me to his service, even though I was formerly a blasphemer, a persecutor, and a man of violence. But I received mercy because I had acted ignorantly in unbelief, and the grace of our Lord overflowed for me with the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus. The saying is sure and worthy of full acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners—of whom I am the foremost. But for that very reason I received mercy, so that in me, as the foremost, Jesus Christ might display the utmost patience,

making me an example to those who would come to believe in him for eternal life. To the King of the ages, immortal, invisible, the only God, be honour and glory for ever and ever. Amen.

Prayer over the Gifts

Merciful God,
in Adam's fall we were born to death;
in the new Adam we are reborn to life.
Receive all we offer you this day
and may we share a taste of your eternal kingdom.
We ask this in the name of Jesus Christ the Lord. Amen.

Prayer After Communion

Almighty and eternal God,
may we who have received this eucharist
worship you in all we do,
and proclaim the glory of your majesty.
We ask this in the name of Jesus Christ the Lord. Amen.

Season of Creation Three Sunday, September 18th, 2022

Readings Jeremiah 8:18-9:1, Psalm 79:1-9, 1 Timothy 2:1-7, Luke 16: 1-13

Collect

Liberating, life-giving God,
help us to know that we and the world
you have created are truly the work of your hands.
Give us knowledge and wisdom to care for your handiwork
now and for future generations; this we ask through Jesus Christ
who lives and reigns with you
and the Holy Spirit, now and always. Amen.

First Reading: Jeremiah 8:18-9:1

My joy is gone, grief is upon me,
my heart is sick.
Hark, the cry of my poor people
from far and wide in the land:
'Is the Lord not in Zion?
Is her King not in her?'
(‘Why have they provoked me to anger with their images,
with their foreign idols?’)
'The harvest is past, the summer is ended,

and we are not saved.’
For the hurt of my poor people I am hurt,
I mourn, and dismay has taken hold of me.

Is there no balm in Gilead?
Is there no physician there?
Why then has the health of my poor people
not been restored?
O that my head were a spring of water,
and my eyes a fountain of tears,
so that I might weep day and night
for the slain of my poor people!

Psalm 79:1-9

O God, the heathen have come into your inheritance;
they have profaned your holy temple;
they have made Jerusalem a heap of rubble.

**They have given the bodies of your servants as food for
the birds of the air,
and the flesh of your faithful ones to the beasts
of the field.**

They have shed their blood like water on every side
of Jerusalem,
and there was no one to bury them.

**We have become a reproach to our neighbours,
an object of scorn and derision to those around us.**

How long will you be angry, O Lord?
will your fury blaze like fire for ever?

**Pour out your wrath upon the heathen who have not
known you
and upon the kingdoms that have not called upon
your name.**

For they have devoured Jacob
and made his dwelling a ruin.

**Remember not our past sins;
let your compassion be swift to meet us;**

for we have been brought very low.

Help us, O God our Saviour, for the glory of your name;
deliver us and forgive us our sins, for your name's sake.

Second Reading: 1 Timothy 2:1-7

First of all, then, I urge that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings should be made for everyone, for kings and all who are in high positions, so that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and dignity. This is right and is acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour, who desires everyone to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth. For there is one God; there is also one mediator between God and humankind, Christ Jesus, himself human, who gave himself a ransom for all—this was attested at the right time. For this I was appointed a herald and an apostle (I am telling the truth, I am not lying), a teacher of the Gentiles in faith and truth.

Gospel: Luke 16: 1-13

Then Jesus said to the disciples, 'There was a rich man who had a manager, and charges were brought to him that this man was squandering his property. So he summoned him and said to him, "What is this that I hear about you? Give me an account of your management, because you cannot be my manager any longer." Then the manager said to himself, "What will I do, now that my master is taking the position away from me? I am not strong enough to dig, and I am ashamed to beg. I have decided what to do so that, when I am dismissed as manager, people may welcome me into their homes." So, summoning his master's debtors one by one, he asked the first, "How much do you owe my master?" He answered, "A hundred jugs of olive oil." He said to him, "Take your bill, sit down quickly, and make it fifty." Then he asked another, "And how much do you owe?" He replied, "A hundred containers of wheat." He said to him, "Take your bill and make it eighty." And his master commended the dishonest manager because he had acted shrewdly; for the children of this age are more shrewd in dealing with their own generation than are the children of light. And I tell you, make friends for yourselves by means of dishonest wealth so that when it is gone, they may welcome you into the eternal homes.

'Whoever is faithful in a very little is faithful also in much; and whoever is dishonest in a very little is dishonest also in much. If then you have not been faithful with the dishonest wealth, who will entrust to you the true riches? And if you have not been faithful with what belongs to another, who will give you what is your own? No slave can serve two masters; for a slave will either hate the one and love the other, or be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and wealth.'

Prayer over the Gifts

Eternal God,
you have made our Saviour Jesus Christ
the head of all creation.
Receive all we offer you this day
and renew us in his risen life,
in the name of Jesus Christ the Lord. Amen.

Prayer After Communion

Loving God,
may we who have received this eucharist
live in the unity of your Holy Spirit,
that we may show forth his gifts to all the world.
We ask this in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Season of Creation Four Sunday, September 25th, 2022

Readings Jeremiah 32:1-3a, 6-15, Psalm 91:1-6, 14-16, 1 Timothy 6:6-19, Luke 16: 19-31

Collect

Loving God, we thank you for the gift of life
in all its diversity and beauty; renew us in
discipleship and in love for the earth,
this we ask through Jesus Christ
who lives and reigns with you
and the Holy Spirit, forever and ever. Amen.

First Reading: Jeremiah 32:1-3a, 6-15

The word that came to Jeremiah from the Lord in the tenth year of King Zedekiah of Judah, which was the eighteenth year of Nebuchadrezzar. At that time the army of the king of Babylon was besieging Jerusalem, and the prophet Jeremiah was confined in the court of the guard that was in the palace of the king of Judah, where King Zedekiah of Judah had confined him. Zedekiah had said, 'Why do you prophesy and say: Thus says the Lord: I am going to give this city into the hand of the king of Babylon, and he shall take it;

Jeremiah said, The word of the Lord came to me: Hanamel son of your uncle Shallum is going to come to you and say, 'Buy my field that is at Anathoth, for the right of redemption by purchase is yours.' Then my cousin Hanamel came to me in the court of the guard, in accordance with the word of the Lord, and said to me, 'Buy my field that is at Anathoth in

the land of Benjamin, for the right of possession and redemption is yours; buy it for yourself.' Then I knew that this was the word of the Lord.

And I bought the field at Anathoth from my cousin Hanamel, and weighed out the money to him, seventeen shekels of silver. I signed the deed, sealed it, got witnesses, and weighed the money on scales. Then I took the sealed deed of purchase, containing the terms and conditions, and the open copy; and I gave the deed of purchase to Baruch son of Neriah son of Mahseiah, in the presence of my cousin Hanamel, in the presence of the witnesses who signed the deed of purchase, and in the presence of all the Judeans who were sitting in the court of the guard. In their presence I charged Baruch, saying, Thus says the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel: Take these deeds, both this sealed deed of purchase and this open deed, and put them in an earthenware jar, in order that they may last for a long time. For thus says the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel: Houses and fields and vineyards shall again be bought in this land.

Psalm 91:1-6, 14-16

He who dwells in the shelter of the Most High,
abides under the shadow of the Almighty.

**He shall say to the Lord,
“You are my refuge and my stronghold,
my God in whom I put my trust.”**

He shall deliver you from the snare of the hunter
and from the deadly pestilence.

**He shall cover you with his pinions,
and you shall find refuge under his wings;
his faithfulness shall be a shield and buckler.**

You shall not be afraid of any terror by night,
nor of the arrow that flies by day;

**Of the plague that stalks in the darkness,
nor of the sickness that lays waste at mid-day.**

Because he is bound to me in love,
therefore will I deliver him;
I will protect him, because he knows my name.

**He shall call upon me, and I will answer him;
I am with him in trouble;
I will rescue him and bring him to honour.**

With long life will I satisfy him,
and show him my salvation.

Second Reading: 1 Timothy 6:6-19

Of course, there is great gain in godliness combined with contentment; for we brought nothing into the world, so that we can take nothing out of it; but if we have food and clothing, we will be content with these. But those who want to be rich fall into temptation and are trapped by many senseless and harmful desires that plunge people into ruin and destruction. For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil, and in their eagerness to be rich some have wandered away from the faith and pierced themselves with many pains.

But as for you, man of God, shun all this; pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, endurance, gentleness. Fight the good fight of the faith; take hold of the eternal life, to which you were called and for which you made the good confession in the presence of many witnesses. In the presence of God, who gives life to all things, and of Christ Jesus, who in his testimony before Pontius Pilate made the good confession, I charge you to keep the commandment without spot or blame until the manifestation of our Lord Jesus Christ, which he will bring about at the right time—he who is the blessed and only Sovereign, the King of kings and Lord of lords. It is he alone who has immortality and dwells in unapproachable light, whom no one has ever seen or can see; to him be honour and eternal dominion. Amen.

As for those who in the present age are rich, command them not to be haughty, or to set their hopes on the uncertainty of riches, but rather on God who richly provides us with everything for our enjoyment. They are to do good, to be rich in good works, generous, and ready to share, thus storing up for themselves the treasure of a good foundation for the future, so that they may take hold of the life that really is life.

Gospel: Luke 16: 19-31

There was a rich man who was dressed in purple and fine linen and who feasted sumptuously every day. And at his gate lay a poor man named Lazarus, covered with sores, who longed to satisfy his hunger with what fell from the rich man's table; even the dogs would come and lick his sores. The poor man died and was carried away by the angels to be with Abraham. The rich man also died and was buried. In Hades, where he was being tormented, he looked up and saw Abraham far away with Lazarus by his side. He called out, "Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus to dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue; for I am in agony in these flames." But Abraham said, "Child, remember that during your lifetime you received your good things, and Lazarus in like manner evil things; but now he is comforted here, and you are in agony. Besides all this, between you and us a great chasm has been fixed, so that those who might want to pass

from here to you cannot do so, and no one can cross from there to us.” He said, “Then, father, I beg you to send him to my father’s house— for I have five brothers—that he may warn them, so that they will not also come into this place of torment.” Abraham replied, “They have Moses and the prophets; they should listen to them.” He said, “No, father Abraham; but if someone goes to them from the dead, they will repent.” He said to him, “If they do not listen to Moses and the prophets, neither will they be convinced even if someone rises from the dead.””

Prayer over the Gifts

Holy God, gracious and merciful,
you bring forth food from the earth
and nourish your whole creation.
Turn our hearts toward those
who hunger in any way,
so that all may know your care;
and prepare us now to feast on the bread of life,
Jesus Christ, our Saviour and Lord. **Amen.**
Evangelical Lutheran Worship (2006) alt.

Prayer After Communion

Eternal God, heavenly Father,
you have graciously accepted us as living members
of your Son our Savior Jesus Christ,
and you have fed us with spiritual food
in the Sacrament of his Body and Blood.
Send us now into the world in peace,
and grant us strength and courage
to love and serve you
with gladness and singleness of heart;
through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**
The Episcopal Church, Book of Common Prayer

Saint Francis of Assisi Day: Sunday, October 2nd, 2022

Readings: Galatians 6:14-18 ; PSALM 148, 2 TIMOTHY 1:1-14; LUKE 17:5-10

Collect

Grant us, Almighty God,
after the example of your holy servant Francis,
to do what you would have us do,
and always to desire what is pleasing in your sight,
that cleansed by your love,

enlightened by your truth,
and kindled with the fire of your Holy Spirit,
we may follow in the footsteps of your beloved Son
and make our way to you, O God most High;
through Jesus Christ our Lord,
who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever. Amen.

First Reading: Galatians 6:14-18

May I never boast of anything except the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by which the world has been crucified to me and I to the world. For neither circumcision nor uncircumcision is anything, but a new creation is everything! As for those who will follow this rule—peace be upon them, and mercy, and upon the Israel of God. From now on, let no one make trouble for me, for I carry the marks of Jesus branded on my body. May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit, brothers and sisters. Amen.

PSALM 148

Hallelujah! Praise the Lord from the heavens; praise him in the heights.

Praise him, all you angels of his; praise him, all his host.

Praise him, sun and moon; praise him, all you shining stars.

Praise him, heaven of heavens, and you waters above the heavens.

Let them praise the name of the Lord; for he commanded, and they were created.

He made them stand fast for ever and ever; *he gave them a law which shall not pass away.

Praise the Lord from the earth, you sea-monsters and all deeps;

Fire and hail, snow and fog, tempestuous wind, doing his will;

Mountains and all hills, fruit trees and all cedars;

Wild beasts and all cattle, creeping things and wingèd birds;

Kings of the earth and all peoples, princes and all rulers of the world;

Young men and maidens, old and young together.

Let them praise the name of the Lord, for his name only is exalted, his splendour is over earth and heaven.

He has raised up strength for his people and praise for all his loyal servants, the children of Israel, a people who are near him. Hallelujah!

Second Reading: 2 TIMOTHY 1:1-14

Although the second readings do not always cohere with the gospel and first reading, today's selection from 2 Timothy certainly does. Timothy's faith is praised, and vv. 9-14 is a summary of the faith in Christ's resurrection which constitutes the Christian hope.

Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, for the sake of the promise of life that is in Christ Jesus, To Timothy, my beloved child: Grace, mercy, and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord. I am grateful to God - whom I worship with a clear conscience, as my ancestors did - when I remember you constantly in my prayers night and day. Recalling your tears, I long to see you so that I may be filled with joy. I am reminded of your sincere faith, a faith that lived first in your grandmother Lois and your mother Eunice and now, I am sure, lives in you. For this reason I remind you to rekindle the gift of God that is within you through the laying on of my hands; for God did not give us a spirit of cowardice, but rather a spirit of power and of love and of self-discipline. Do not be ashamed, then, of the testimony about our Lord or of me his prisoner, but join with me in suffering for the gospel, relying on the power of God, who saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works but according to his own purpose and grace. This grace was given to us in Christ Jesus before the ages began, but it has now been revealed through the appearing of our Saviour Christ Jesus, who abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel. For this gospel I was appointed a herald and an apostle and a teacher, and for this reason I suffer as I do. But I am not ashamed, for I know the one in whom I have put my trust, and I am sure that he is able to guard until that day what I have entrusted to him. Hold to the standard of sound teaching that you have heard from me, in the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus. Guard the good treasure entrusted to you, with the help of the Holy Spirit living in us.

Gospel: Matthew 11:25-30

At that time Jesus said, "I thank you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you have hidden these things from the wise and the intelligent and have revealed them to infants; yes, Father, for such was your gracious will. All things have been handed over to me by my Father, and no one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son and anyone to whom the Son chooses to reveal him.

"Come to me, all you who are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light."

Prayer over the Gifts

Loving God,
join our offering to the sacrifice of your only Son,
that our service may be stamped with his humility
and bear the image of his obedience;
through the same Jesus Christ our Lord.

Prayer After Communion

God of all goodness,
who gave to your servant Francis
a will to be the servant of all,
grant us in our service of your gospel
to hold back nothing of ourselves for ourselves,
that Christ may receive the whole of our lives
into the habitations of light and glory;
through the same Jesus Christ our Lord.

Harvest Thanksgiving Sunday, October 9th, 2022

Readings: Deuteronomy 26:1-11, Psalm 100, Philippians 4:4-9, John 6:25-35

Collect

Creator of the fruitful earth,
you made us stewards of all things.
Give us grateful hearts for all your goodness,
and steadfast wills to use your bounty well,
that the whole human family,
today and in generations to come,
may with us give thanks for the riches of your creation.
We ask this in the name of Jesus Christ the Lord.

First Reading: Deuteronomy 26:1-11

When you have come into the land that the Lord your God is giving you as an inheritance to possess and you possess it and settle in it, you shall take some of the first of all the fruit of the ground, which you harvest from the land that the Lord your God is giving you, and you shall put it in a basket and go to the place that the Lord your God will choose as a dwelling for his name. You shall go to the priest who is in office at that time and say to him, 'Today I declare to the Lord your God that I have come into the land that the Lord swore to our ancestors to give us.' When the priest takes the basket from your hand and sets it down before the altar of the Lord your God, you shall make this response before the Lord your God: 'A wandering Aramean was my ancestor; he went down into Egypt and lived there as an alien, few in number, and there he became a great nation, mighty and populous. When the Egyptians treated us harshly and afflicted us, by imposing

hard labor on us, we cried to the Lord, the God of our ancestors; the Lord heard our voice and saw our affliction, our toil, and our oppression. The Lord brought us out of Egypt with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm, with a terrifying display of power, and with signs and wonders; and he brought us into this place and gave us this land, a land flowing with milk and honey. So now I bring the first of the fruit of the ground that you, O Lord, have given me.' You shall set it down before the Lord your God and bow down before the Lord your God. Then you, together with the Levites and the aliens who reside among you, shall celebrate with all the bounty that the Lord your God has given to you and to your house.

Psalm 100

Be joyful in the Lord, all you lands;
serve the Lord with gladness
and come before his presence with a song.

**Know this: The Lord himself is God;
he himself has made us, and we are his;
we are his people and the sheep of his pasture.**

Enter his gates with thanksgiving;
go into his courts with praise;
give thanks to him and call upon his name.

**For the Lord is good;
his mercy is everlasting;
and his faithfulness endures from age to age.**

Second Reading: Philippians 4:4-9

Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice. Let your gentleness be known to everyone. The Lord is near. Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is pleasing, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence and if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things. As for the things that you have learned and received and heard and noticed in me, do them, and the God of peace will be with you.

Gospel: John 6:25-35

When they found him on the other side of the sea, they said to him, “Rabbi, when did you come here?” Jesus answered them, “Very truly, I tell you, you are looking for me not because you saw signs but because you ate your fill of the loaves. Do not work for the food that perishes but for the food that endures for eternal life, which the Son of Man will give you. For it is on him that God the Father has set his seal.” Then they said to him, “What must we do to perform the works of God?” Jesus answered them, “This is the work of God, that you believe in him whom he has sent.” So they said to him, “What sign are you going to give us, then, so that we may see it and believe you? What work are you performing? Our ancestors ate the manna in the wilderness, as it is written, ‘He gave them bread from heaven to eat.’” Then Jesus said to them, “Very truly, I tell you, it was not Moses who gave you the bread from heaven, but it is my Father who gives you the true bread from heaven. For the bread of God is that which comes down from heaven and gives life to the world.” They said to him, “Sir, give us this bread always.” Jesus said to them, “I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never be hungry, and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty.

Prayer over the Gifts

Source of all life,
the heaven and earth are yours,
yet you have given us dominion over all things.
Receive the symbols of our labour and love
which we offer you this day,
in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Prayer After Communion

God of our hope,
in this eucharist we find the source of all your blessings.
Nourished in these holy mysteries
may we, with our lives,
give you continual thanks and praise.
This we ask in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

19th Sunday after Pentecost Sunday, October 16th, 2022

Readings: JEREMIAH 31:27-34; PSALM 119:97-104; 2 TIMOTHY 3:14-4:5; LUKE 18:1-8

Collect

God of the known and unknown,
open us to those we would exclude and despise;
heal and liberate us when we are outcast,
so that we may learn to praise your name
with hearts that are whole;

through Jesus Christ, the Rejected One. Amen.
Prayers for an Inclusive Church (2009) alt.

First Reading: JEREMIAH 31:27-34

Jeremiah 31:27-34, the last semicontinuous selection from the book of Jeremiah, speaks of the future restoration of the people from exile. This extraordinary passage describes several paradigm shifts. There is the move from collective responsibility (the children being punished for the parents' sins) to personal accountability. The covenant with the whole people, recorded in Exodus 20–24, is now described as a covenant with believing individuals. The law formerly on stone tablets is now on human hearts. A religious hierarchy is being replaced with each person having access to God's forgiveness. This is the single use in the Old Testament of the term "new covenant." Christians have found this passage fundamental to their understanding of the New Testament's use of covenant language, seen for example in Jesus' words at the last supper, and is thus one of the most important passages of the Hebrew Scriptures for Christian hermeneutic.

The days are surely coming, says the Lord, when I will sow the house of Israel and the house of Judah with the seed of humans and the seed of animals. And just as I have watched over them to pluck up and break down, to overthrow, destroy, and bring evil, so I will watch over them to build and to plant, says the Lord. In those days they shall no longer say: "The parents have eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge." But all shall die for their own sins; the teeth of everyone who eats sour grapes shall be set on edge. The days are surely coming, says the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah. It will not be like the covenant that I made with their ancestors when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt - a covenant that they broke, though I was their husband, says the Lord. But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the Lord: I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. No longer shall they teach one another, or say to each other, "Know the Lord," for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest, says the Lord; for I will forgive their iniquity, and remember their sin no more.

Psalm 119:97-104

*Having heard God's promise of a new covenant with the least, we join together in **Psalm 119:97-104**. Psalm 119 is an alphabetical psalm, and thus the composite is seen as symbolizing the whole of truth. The "M" section (mem) praises God for the wondrous law, the commandment, the decrees, the precepts, the word, God's ordinances. This word of covenant mercy is like honey in our mouth.*

Oh, how I love your law! All the day long it is in my mind.

Your commandment has made me wiser than my enemies, and it is always with me.

I have more understanding than all my teachers, for your decrees are my study.

I am wiser than the elders, because I observe your commandments.

I restrain my feet from every evil way, that I may keep your word.

I do not shrink from your judgements, because you yourself have taught me.

How sweet are your words to my taste! They are sweeter than honey to my mouth.

Through your commandments I gain understanding; therefore I hate every lying way.

Second Reading: 2 TIMOTHY 3:14-4:5

This third selection from 2 Timothy contrasts the inspired Scripture and its correct interpretation by church leaders with self-serving heterodox teachers who attract “itching ears.” This passage became central to Christian fundamentalists who argue that divine inspiration implies inerrancy. With a wide variation in what is meant by divine inspiration—variations that might be upsetting to the author of 2 Timothy—all Christian churches say that they proclaim the inspired word of God. At weekly worship, we “proclaim the message.”

As for you, continue in what you have learned and firmly believed, knowing from whom you learned it, and how from childhood you have known the sacred writings that are able to instruct you for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. All scripture is inspired by God and is useful for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, so that everyone who belongs to God may be proficient, equipped for every good work. In the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who is to judge the living and the dead, and in view of his appearing and his kingdom, I solemnly urge you: proclaim the message; be persistent whether the time is favourable or unfavourable; convince, rebuke, and encourage, with the utmost patience in teaching. For the time is coming when people will not put up with sound doctrine, but having itching ears, they will accumulate for themselves teachers to suit their own desires, and will turn away from listening to the truth and wander away to myths. As for you, always be sober, endure suffering, do the work of an evangelist, carry out your ministry fully.

Gospel: LUKE 18:1-8

Believers are called to keep faith in God’s justice. Come, Lord Jesus, the church prays! By contrast with the unjust judge of the parable, the Son of Man will judge us all at the end. Luke’s focus on the needy widow is held next to the depiction of Christ as the judge.

Then Jesus told them a parable about their need to pray always and not to lose heart. He said, "In a certain city there was a judge who neither feared God nor had respect for people. In that city there was a widow who kept coming to him and saying, 'Grant me justice against my opponent.' For a while he refused; but later he said to himself, 'Though I have no fear of God and no respect for anyone, yet because this widow keeps bothering me, I will grant her justice, so that she may not wear me out by continually coming.'" And the Lord said, "Listen to what the unjust judge says. And will not God grant justice to his chosen ones who cry to him day and night? Will he delay long in helping them? I

tell you, he will quickly grant justice to them. And yet, when the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on earth?"

Prayer over the Gifts

Eternal God,
your word inspires our faith.
May we who offer you our praise
trust you in all things.
We ask this in the name of Jesus Christ the Lord.

Prayer After Communion

God of peace,
you have nourished us in this sacrament
with the body and blood of Christ.
May we who have taken holy things
keep faith in our hearts and lives,
in the name of Jesus Christ the Lord.

22nd after Pentecost, Sunday, October 23rd, 2022

Readings: JOEL 2:23-32; PSALM 65; 2 TIMOTHY 4:6-8, 16-18; LUKE 18:9-14

Collect

God of the dispossessed,
you teach us to hunger for justice
even when the weak are shut out
and the powerful turn over in their beds:
in the heat of our anger
and the bitterness of our complaints,
give us courage to protest,
the persistence to pray and the heart to love;
through Jesus Christ, the true judge. Amen.
Prayers for an Inclusive Church (2009)

First Reading: JOEL 2:23-32

In about 430 bce, speaking to the community of Israelites who had returned from exile, the prophet Joel proclaimed that a plague of locusts, either literal or symbolic of an invading army, was God's judgment in the people, who had returned to their land but not to faithfulness to the covenant. However, in Joel 2:23-32 God promises to end the plague and send rain and eventually to bring an end to all evil in the eschaton. The passage about the coming of God's Spirit (vv. 28-29) is cited by Luke in the narrative of Pentecost (Acts 1:16-20). Although the semicontinuous set of first readings is not designed to coordinate with the Sunday's gospel reading, this one does, for God forgives both the Israelites and the tax collector. This passage of Joel became central to Christian proclamation because its reference to the Spirit opens up a Trinitarian

interpretation of the prophet's words. Seeing the connection between Joel and Acts illustrates the Christian interpretive technique that "Scripture interprets Scripture" and exemplifies the hermeneutic that illumines the New Testament with the Old. Readings from Joel are appointed for Ash Wednesday and, in the semicontinuous Old Testament option, only here.

O children of Zion, be glad and rejoice in the Lord your God; for he has given the early rain for your vindication, he has poured down for you abundant rain, the early and the later rain, as before. The threshing floors shall be full of grain, the vats shall overflow with wine and oil. I will repay you for the years that the swarming locust has eaten, the hopper, the destroyer, and the cutter, my great army, which I sent against you. You shall eat in plenty and be satisfied, and praise the name of the Lord your God, who has dealt wondrously with you. And my people shall never again be put to shame. You shall know that I am in the midst of Israel, and that I, the Lord, am your God and there is no other. And my people shall never again be put to shame. Then afterward I will pour out my spirit on all flesh; your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, and your young men shall see visions. Even on the male and female slaves, in those days, I will pour out my spirit. I will show portents in the heavens and on the earth, blood and fire and columns of smoke. The sun shall be turned to darkness, and the moon to blood, before the great and terrible day of the Lord comes. Then everyone who calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved; for in Mount Zion and in Jerusalem there shall be those who escape, as the Lord has said, and among the survivors shall be those whom the Lord calls.

Psalm 65

*Having heard of God's forgiveness—and Christians always think of baptism when they read of God's gift of rivers and rain—the assembly joins in **Psalm 65**, which is a song of gratitude for God's gift of a bountiful earth. The psalm recalls the plea of Jeremiah (v. 3); we stand with the tax collector in the temple (v. 4); and we praise God for the fruitful fields (vv. 9-13), which have ended the horror of the locust plague.*

REFRAIN You crown the year with your goodness, O Lord.

You are to be praised, O God, in Zion; to you shall vows be performed in Jerusalem.

To you that hear prayer shall all flesh come, because of their transgressions. R

Our sins are stronger than we are, but you will blot out our transgressions.

Happy are they whom you choose and draw to your courts to dwell there!

They will be satisfied by the beauty of your house, by the holiness of your temple. **R**

Awesome things will you show us in your righteousness, O God of our salvation,

O Hope of all the ends of the earth and of the seas that are far away.

You make fast the mountains by your power; they are girded about with might. R

You still the roaring of the seas, the roaring of their waves, and the clamour of the peoples.

Those who dwell at the ends of the earth will tremble at your marvellous signs; you make the dawn and the dusk to sing for joy. R

You visit the earth and water it abundantly; you make it very plenteous; the river of God is full of water.

You prepare the grain, for so you provide for the earth. R

You drench the furrows and smooth out the ridges; with heavy rain you soften the ground and bless its increase.

You crown the year with your goodness, and your paths overflow with plenty. R

May the fields of the wilderness be rich for grazing, and the hills be clothed with joy.

May the meadows cover themselves with flocks, and the valleys cloak themselves with grain; let them shout for joy and sing. R

Second Reading: 2 TIMOTHY 4:6-8, 16-18

In this last of the semicontinuous selections from 2 Timothy, the author compares the faithful life of the believer to a fight, to a race, to facing the lions. Paul's death, like a pagan sacrifice, is a gift offered to God. These metaphors may strike many contemporary believers as extreme. We can join with Paul to pray for those who misuse us (v. 16) and to praise God in all situations of our life (v. 18).

As for me, I am already being poured out as a libation, and the time of my departure has come. I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. From now on there is reserved for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, will give me on that day, and not only to me but also to all who have longed for his appearing. At my first defence no one came to my support, but all deserted me. May it not be counted against them! But the Lord stood by me and gave me strength, so that through me the message might be fully proclaimed and all the Gentiles might hear it. So I was rescued from the lion's mouth. The Lord will rescue me from every evil attack and save me for his heavenly kingdom. To him be the glory forever and ever. Amen.

Gospel: LUKE 18:9-14

We who assemble on Sunday are both the Pharisee—people who trust that their religious practices are God-pleasing enough—and the tax collector—people who know their own sinfulness and plead for God’s mercy. God responds by justifying the unrighteous.

Jesus also told this parable to some who trusted in themselves that they were righteous and regarded others with contempt: "Two men went up to the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. The Pharisee, standing by himself, was praying thus, 'God, I thank you that I am not like other people: thieves, rogues, adulterers, or even like this tax collector. I fast twice a week; I give a tenth of all my income.' But the tax collector, standing far off, would not even look up to heaven, but was beating his breast and saying, 'God, be merciful to me, a sinner!' I tell you, this man went down to his home justified rather than the other; for all who exalt themselves will be humbled, but all who humble themselves will be exalted."

Prayer over the Gifts

God of constant love,
you have guided your people
in all times and ages.
May we who offer you our praise today
always be ready to follow where you lead;
we ask this in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord.

Prayer After Communion

God our guide,
you have fed us with bread from heaven
as you fed the people of Israel.
May we who have been inwardly nourished
be ready to follow you all our days;
we ask this in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord.

All Saints Day, Sunday, October 30th, 2022

Readings Daniel 7:1-3, 15-18, Psalm 149, Ephesians 1:11-23, Luke 6:20-31

Collect

Blessed are you, gracious God,
creator of heaven and earth;
in the multitude of your saints
you have surrounded us
with so great a cloud of witnesses,
that we, rejoicing in their fellowship,
may run with patience the race that is set before us,

and together with them receive the crown of glory
that never fades away.
Therefore with angels and archangels
and with all who have served you in every age,
we raise our voices to proclaim the glory of your name.

First Reading: Daniel 7:1-3, 15-18

In the first year of Belshazzar king of Babylon, Daniel had a dream, and visions passed through his mind as he was lying in bed. He wrote down the substance of his dream.

Daniel said: “In my vision at night I looked, and there before me were the four winds of heaven churning up the great sea. Four great beasts, each different from the others, came up out of the sea.

“I, Daniel, was troubled in spirit, and the visions that passed through my mind disturbed me. I approached one of those standing there and asked him the meaning of all this.

“So he told me and gave me the interpretation of these things: ‘The four great beasts are four kings that will rise from the earth. But the holy people of the Most High will receive the kingdom and will possess it forever—yes, for ever and ever.’

PSALM 149

Hallelujah!
Sing to the Lord a new song;
sing his praise in the congregation of the faithful.

**Let Israel rejoice in his maker;
let the children of Zion be joyful in their king.**

Let them praise his name in the dance;
let them sing praise to him with timbrel and harp.

**For the Lord takes pleasure in his people
and adorns the poor with victory.**

Let the faithful rejoice in triumph;
let them be joyful on their beds.

**Let the praises of God be in their throat
and a two-edged sword in their hand;**

To wreak vengeance on the nations

and punishment on the peoples;
**To bind their kings in chains
and their nobles with links of iron;**

To inflict on them the judgement decreed;
this is glory for all his faithful people.
Hallelujah!

Second Reading: Ephesians 1:11-23

In Christ we have also obtained an inheritance, having been destined according to the purpose of him who accomplishes all things according to his counsel and will, so that we, who were the first to set our hope on Christ, might live for the praise of his glory. In him you also, when you had heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and had believed in him, were marked with the seal of the promised Holy Spirit; this is the pledge of our inheritance towards redemption as God's own people, to the praise of his glory.

I have heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love towards all the saints, and for this reason I do not cease to give thanks for you as I remember you in my prayers. I pray that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you a spirit of wisdom and revelation as you come to know him, so that, with the eyes of your heart enlightened, you may know what is the hope to which he has called you, what are the riches of his glorious inheritance among the saints, and what is the immeasurable greatness of his power for us who believe, according to the working of his great power. God put this power to work in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly places, far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and above every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the age to come. And he has put all things under his feet and has made him the head over all things for the church, which is his body, the fullness of him who fills all in all.

Gospel: Luke 6:20-31

Then he looked up at his disciples and said:
 'Blessed are you who are poor,
 for yours is the kingdom of God.
'Blessed are you who are hungry now,
 for you will be filled.
'Blessed are you who weep now,
 for you will laugh.

‘Blessed are you when people hate you, and when they exclude you, revile you, and defame you on account of the Son of Man. Rejoice on that day and leap for joy, for surely your reward is great in heaven; for that is what their ancestors did to the prophets.

‘But woe to you who are rich,
for you have received your consolation.

‘Woe to you who are full now,
for you will be hungry.

‘Woe to you who are laughing now,
for you will mourn and weep.

‘Woe to you when all speak well of you, for that is what their ancestors did to the false prophets.

‘But I say to you that listen, Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who abuse you. If anyone strikes you on the cheek, offer the other also; and from anyone who takes away your coat do not withhold even your shirt. Give to everyone who begs from you; and if anyone takes away your goods, do not ask for them again. Do to others as you would have them do to you.

Prayer over the Gifts

Holy and mighty God,
we give you thanks for the triumph of Christ
in the lives of all his saints.
Receive all we offer you this day,
and help us, like them, to run our course with faith,
that we may come to your eternal kingdom.
We ask this in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord.

Prayer After Communion

Lord of hosts,
we praise your glory reflected in your saints.
May we who share at this table
be filled with the joy of your eternal kingdom,
where Jesus is Lord, now and for ever.

All Souls Day Wednesday, November 2, 2022

Readings: WISDOM OF SOLOMON 3:1-9; PSALM 116:1-8; 1 PETER 1:3-9; JOHN 11:21-27

Collect

God of all,
we pray to you for those we love, but see no longer.
Grant them your peace,
let light perpetual shine upon them,
and in your loving wisdom and almighty power,
work in them the good purpose of your perfect will;
through Jesus Christ our Lord,
who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.

First Reading: WISDOM OF SOLOMON 3:1-9

The souls of the righteous are in the hand of God, and no torment will ever touch them. In the eyes of the foolish they seemed to have died, and their departure was thought to be a disaster, and their going from us to be their destruction; but they are at peace. For though in the sight of others they were punished, their hope is full of immortality. Having been disciplined a little, they will receive great good, because God tested them and found them worthy of himself; like gold in the furnace he tried them, and like a sacrificial burnt offering he accepted them. In the time of their visitation they will shine forth, and will run like sparks through the stubble. They will govern nations and rule over peoples, and the Lord will reign over them forever. Those who trust in him will understand truth, and the faithful will abide with him in love, because grace and mercy are upon his holy ones, and he watches over his elect.

PSALM 116:1-8

REFRAIN Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his servants.

I love the Lord, because he has heard the voice of my supplication, because he has inclined his ear to me whenever I called upon him. R

The cords of death entangled me; the grip of the grave took hold of me; I came to grief and sorrow.

Then I called upon the name of the Lord: "O Lord, I pray you, save my life." R
Gracious is the Lord and righteous; our God is full of compassion.

The Lord watches over the innocent; I was brought very low, and he helped me. R

Turn again to your rest, O my soul, for the Lord has treated you well.

For you have rescued my life from death, my eyes from tears, and my feet from stumbling.
R

I will walk in the presence of the Lord in the land of the living. R

Second Reading: 1 PETER 1:3-9

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! By his great mercy he has given us a new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, and into an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you, who are being protected by the power of God through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. In this you rejoice, even if now for a little while you have had to suffer various trials, so that the genuineness of your faith - being more precious than gold that, though perishable, is tested by fire - may be found to result in praise and glory and honour when Jesus Christ is revealed. Although you have not seen him, you love him; and even though you do not see him now, you believe in him and rejoice with an indescribable and glorious joy, for you are receiving the outcome of your faith, the salvation of your souls.

Gospel: JOHN 11:21-27

Martha said to Jesus, 'Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died. But even now I know that God will give you whatever you ask of him.' Jesus said to her, 'Your brother will rise again.' Martha said to him, 'I know that he will rise again in the resurrection on the last day.' Jesus said to her, 'I am the resurrection and the life. Those who believe in me, even though they die, will live, and everyone who lives and believes in me will never die. Do you believe this?' She said to him, 'Yes, Lord, I believe that you are the Messiah, the Son of God, the one coming into the world.'

Prayer over the Gifts

Gracious and righteous Lord,
we are united in the love of Jesus Christ.
Accept all we offer you this day,
and bring us, with all your faithful people
who have gone before us,
into his eternal glory;
who is Lord, now and for ever.

Prayer After Communion

God of love,
may the death and resurrection of Christ,

which we celebrate in this eucharist,
bring us, with the faithful departed,
into the peace of your eternal home.
We ask this in the name of Jesus Christ,
our hope and our salvation.

Remembrance Sunday, November 6th

Readings WISDOM OF SOLOMON 3:1-9; PSALM 116:1-8; 1 PETER 1:3-9; JOHN 11:21-27

Collect

Almighty God,
whose wisdom and whose love are over all,
accept the prayers we offer for our nation.
Give integrity to its citizens
and wisdom to those in authority,
that harmony and justice may be secured
in obedience to your will;
through Jesus Christ our Lord,
who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.

First Reading: WISDOM OF SOLOMON 3:1-9

The souls of the righteous are in the hand of God, and no torment will ever touch them. In the eyes of the foolish they seemed to have died, and their departure was thought to be a disaster, and their going from us to be their destruction; but they are at peace. For though in the sight of others they were punished, their hope is full of immortality. Having been disciplined a little, they will receive great good, because God tested them and found them worthy of himself; like gold in the furnace he tried them, and like a sacrificial burnt offering he accepted them. In the time of their visitation they will shine forth, and will run like sparks through the stubble. They will govern nations and rule over peoples, and the Lord will reign over them forever. Those who trust in him will understand truth, and the faithful will abide with him in love, because grace and mercy are upon his holy ones, and he watches over his elect.

PSALM 116:1-8

REFRAIN Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his servants.

I love the Lord, because he has heard the voice of my supplication, because he has inclined his ear to me whenever I called upon him. R

The cords of death entangled me; the grip of the grave took hold of me; I came to grief and sorrow.

Then I called upon the name of the Lord: "O Lord, I pray you, save my life." R

Gracious is the Lord and righteous; our God is full of compassion.

The Lord watches over the innocent; I was brought very low, and he helped me. R

Turn again to your rest, O my soul, for the Lord has treated you well.

For you have rescued my life from death, my eyes from tears, and my feet from stumbling.

R

I will walk in the presence of the Lord in the land of the living. R

Second Reading: 1 PETER 1:3-9

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! By his great mercy he has given us a new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, and into an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you, who are being protected by the power of God through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. In this you rejoice, even if now for a little while you have had to suffer various trials, so that the genuineness of your faith - being more precious than gold that, though perishable, is tested by fire - may be found to result in praise and glory and honour when Jesus Christ is revealed. Although you have not seen him, you love him; and even though you do not see him now, you believe in him and rejoice with an indescribable and glorious joy, for you are receiving the outcome of your faith, the salvation of your souls.

Gospel: JOHN 11:21-27

Martha said to Jesus, 'Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died. But even now I know that God will give you whatever you ask of him.' Jesus said to her, 'Your brother will rise again.' Martha said to him, 'I know that he will rise again in the resurrection on the last day.' Jesus said to her, 'I am the resurrection and the life. Those who believe in me, even though they die, will live, and everyone who lives and believes in me will never die. Do you believe this?' She said to him, 'Yes, Lord, I believe that you are the Messiah, the Son of God, the one coming into the world.'

Prayer over the Gifts

Judge eternal,
accept all we offer you this day,
and grant to our nation unity and peace.
This we ask in the name of Jesus Christ the Lord.

Prayer After Communion

God of love,
may we who have taken holy things
grow in unity and peace.
We ask this in the name of Jesus Christ the Lord.

23rd Sunday after Pentecost, Sunday, November 13th, 2022

Readings: ISAIAH 65:17-25; ISAIAH 12 (AS CANTICLE); 2 THESSALONIANS 3:6-13; LUKE 21:5-19

Collect

Living God,
burning wild and unconfined:
free us from the fear of death
and take away the limits
which bind our imagination
and choke our compassion,
so that we may feel your pleasure
in all that brings us life;
through Jesus Christ, risen and ascended. Amen.
Prayers for an Inclusive Church (2009) alt.

First Reading: ISAIAH 65:17-25

The last semicontinuous first reading in Year C is from third Isaiah (chaps. 56–66), compiled perhaps in the fifth century bce. Its glorious descriptions of the new world that God will create begin with a sustained picture of an ideal Jerusalem, where there will be no human suffering and no violence even in the animal world. In ancient Near Eastern poetry and narrative the mountain symbolized the abode of God. Christians have seen in such poetic passages as this a way to imagine the life of believers with God after death. In the resurrection of Jesus Christ, nature itself is reversed. Some Christians have backdated such descriptions in order to imagine God's creation of a paradise, teaching for example that before the Fall all animals were vegetarian. The serpent, which was a goddess symbol in Palestinian paganism, became in biblical literature a sign of evil.

For I am about to create new heavens and a new earth; the former things shall not be remembered or come to mind. But be glad and rejoice forever in what I am creating; for I am about to create Jerusalem as a joy, and its people as a delight. I will rejoice in

Jerusalem, and delight in my people; no more shall the sound of weeping be heard in it, or the cry of distress. No more shall there be in it an infant that lives but a few days, or an old person who does not live out a lifetime; for one who dies at a hundred years will be considered a youth, and one who falls short of a hundred will be considered accursed. They shall build houses and inhabit them; they shall plant vineyards and eat their fruit. They shall not build and another inhabit; they shall not plant and another eat; for like the days of a tree shall the days of my people be, and my chosen shall long enjoy the work of their hands. They shall not labour in vain, or bear children for calamity; for they shall be offspring blessed by the Lord and their descendants as well. Before they call I will answer, while they are yet speaking I will hear. The wolf and the lamb shall feed together, the lion shall eat straw like the ox; but the serpent its food shall be dust! They shall not hurt or destroy on all my holy mountain, says the Lord.

Psalm CANTICLE 3, (ISAIAH 12:2-6)

*Having heard the poetic descriptions of our future in God, we join together in the psalm-like poem of **Isaiah 12:2-6**. This chapter from first Isaiah is a song of thanksgiving to God, who has provided even wells for our salvation. When Christians encounter biblical poetry about wells, they always think of baptism. The church is now the Zion that is called to praise.*

Surely, it is God who saves me; I will trust in him and not be afraid. For the Lord is my stronghold and my sure defence, and he will be my Saviour. Therefore you shall draw water with rejoicing from the springs of salvation.

And on that day you shall say, Give thanks to the Lord and call upon his name; make his deeds known among the peoples; see that they remember that his name is exalted.

Sing the praises of the Lord, for he has done great things, and this is known in all the world. Cry aloud, inhabitants of Zion, ring out your joy, for the great one in the midst of you is the Holy One of Israel.

Second Reading: 2 THESSALONIANS 3:6-13

In this, the final excerpt in the ecumenical lectionary from 2 Thessalonians, Christians are called to live in the real present, rather than in an imagined ideal future. Care must be taken that this passage not be heard as condemning those countless people who cannot find adequate work, which was not a problem that the early church faced.

Now we command you, beloved in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, to keep away from believers who are living in idleness and not according to the tradition that they received from us. For you yourselves know how you ought to imitate us; we were not idle when we were with you, and we did not eat anyone's bread without paying for it; but with toil and labour we worked night and day, so that we might not burden any of you. This was not because we do not have that right but in order to give you an example to

imitate. For even when we were with you, we gave you this command: Anyone unwilling to work should not eat. For we hear that some of you are living in idleness, mere busybodies, not doing any work. Now such persons we command and exhort in the Lord Jesus Christ to do their work quietly and to earn their own living. Brothers and sisters, do not be weary in doing what is right.

Gospel: LUKE 21:5-19

The human fear of future terrors is perennial. Not breath-taking buildings, nor stunning art, nor religious affiliation, nor national pride, nor the stability of the earth, nor what our society likes to call “family values” will save: Christ is the one.

When some were speaking about the temple, how it was adorned with beautiful stones and gifts dedicated to God, Jesus 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." 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."

Prayer over the Gifts

Holy God,
in this eucharist we renew our baptismal covenant.
Help us, through our offering this day,
to renounce all things that draw us from your love.
This we ask in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord.

Prayer After Communion

Gracious God,
in this sacrament
we have shared the body and blood of Christ.
May we who have been nourished by holy things
bear witness to his light,

and share in his eternal priesthood;
for he is Lord for ever and ever.

24th Sunday after Pentecost, Sunday, November 20th, 2022

Readings JEREMIAH 23:1-6; CANTICLE 19 (LUKE 1:68-79); COLOSSIANS 1:11-20; LUKE 23:33-43

Collect

God, who is faithful
when all the foundations crumble:
in the time of crisis,
as holy places fall and nations stumble,
give us the conviction to bear witness to your love,
whatever the cost;
through Jesus Christ, your Word and Wisdom. Amen.
Prayers for an Inclusive Church (2009) alt.

First Reading: JEREMIAH 23:1-6

Christians interpret Jeremiah 23:1-6 as a description of Jesus Christ, who reigns wisely and executes justice. The Hebrew of verse 6 refers to YHWH God, that is, the Lord, as the embodiment of righteousness, and Christians transfer to the Risen Christ the honorific "Lord," who reigns as king from the cross.

Woe to the shepherds who destroy and scatter the sheep of my pasture! says the Lord. Therefore thus says the Lord, the God of Israel, concerning the shepherds who shepherd my people: It is you who have scattered my flock, and have driven them away, and you have not attended to them. So I will attend to you for your evil doings, says the Lord. Then I myself will gather the remnant of my flock out of all the lands where I have driven them, and I will bring them back to their fold, and they shall be fruitful and multiply. I will raise up shepherds over them who will shepherd them, and they shall not fear any longer, or be dismayed, nor shall any be missing, says the Lord. The days are surely coming, says the Lord, when I will raise up for David a righteous Branch, and he shall reign as king and deal wisely, and shall execute justice and righteousness in the land. In his days Judah will be saved and Israel will live in safety. And this is the name by which he will be called: "The Lord is our righteousness."

Psalm CANTICLE 19, (LUKE 1:68-79)

An appropriate response to Jeremiah's poem is Zechariah's song in [Luke 1:68-79](#). For centuries, Christians who sing Morning Prayer have begun each day with this song of praise, also called the Benedictus. There are three settings of the Song of Zechariah in Evangelical Lutheran Worship: p. 303, #250, and #552. It is a rare king who lifts up the lowly.

REFRAIN The dawn from on high shall break upon us.

Blessed be the Lord, the God of Israel; he has come to his people and set them free.

He has raised up for us a mighty Saviour, born of the house of his servant David. R

Through his holy prophets he promised of old, that he would save us from our enemies, from the hands of all who hate us.

He promised to show mercy to our fathers and to remember his holy covenant. R

This was the oath he swore to our father Abraham, to set us free from the hands of our enemies, free to worship him without fear, holy and righteous in his sight all the days of our life. R

You, my child, shall be called the prophet of the Most High, for you will go before the Lord to prepare his way, to give his people knowledge of salvation by the forgiveness of their sins.

In the tender compassion of our God the dawn from on high shall break upon us, to shine on those who dwell in darkness and the shadow of death, and to guide our feet into the way of peace. R

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit: as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be for ever. Amen. R

Second Reading: COLOSSIANS 1:11-20

The reading from Colossians is most appropriate to celebrate the sovereign Christ: all other thrones or rulers were created through his power and for him alone. As an ideal king would be imagined, Christ holds all things together, has first place in everything, embodies God, and makes peace on earth. God is the strength from which the people derive their strength.

May you be made strong with all the strength that comes from his glorious power, and may you be prepared to endure everything with patience, while joyfully giving thanks to the Father, who has enabled you to share in the inheritance of the saints in the light. He has rescued us from the power of darkness and transferred us into the kingdom of his beloved Son, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins. He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation; for in him all things in heaven and on earth were created, things visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or powers - all things have been created through him and for him. He himself is before all things, and in him all things hold together. He is the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, so that he might come to have first place in everything. For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, and through him God was pleased to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, by making peace

through the blood of his cross.

Gospel: LUKE 23:33-43

When they came to the place that is called The Skull, they crucified Jesus there with the criminals, one on his right and one on his left. Then Jesus said, "Father, forgive them; for they do not know what they are doing." And they cast lots to divide his clothing. And the people stood by, watching; but the leaders scoffed at him, saying, "He saved others; let him save himself if he is the Messiah of God, his chosen one!" The soldiers also mocked him, coming up and offering him sour wine, and saying, "If you are the King of the Jews, save yourself!" There was also an inscription over him, "This is the King of the Jews." One of the criminals who were hanged there kept deriding him and saying, "Are you not the Messiah? Save yourself and us!" But the other rebuked him, saying, "Do you not fear God, since you are under the same sentence of condemnation? And we indeed have been condemned justly, for we are getting what we deserve for our deeds, but this man has done nothing wrong." Then he said, "Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom." He replied, "Truly I tell you, today you will be with me in Paradise."

Prayer over the Gifts

Eternal God,
by your grace you have raised us up
and enthroned us with Christ in the heavenly realms.
Receive all we offer you this day,
and lead us in those good works
for which you have created us.
We ask this in the name of Jesus Christ the Lord.

Prayer After Communion

Almighty God,
you have made us a royal priesthood
in the kingdom of your Son our Saviour Jesus Christ.
Make known his victory through us, we pray,
that all the world may see his light.
We ask this in the name of Jesus Christ the Lord.

First Sunday of Advent, Sunday, November 27th, 2022

Readings ISAIAH 2:1-5; PSALM 122; ROMANS 13:11-14; MATTHEW 24:36-44

Collect

God of justice and peace,
from the heavens you rain down mercy and kindness.
Raise our heads in expectation,
so 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.
Revised Common Lectionary Prayers (2002) alt.

First Reading: ISAIAH 2:1-5

In Advent the church both anticipates and celebrates the presence of God in Jesus Christ, who is himself, like Jerusalem in the oracle, the locus of divine justice and peace for the world.

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 plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more. O house of Jacob, come, let us walk in the light of the Lord!

Psalm 122

I was glad when they said to me, "Let us go to the house of the Lord."

Now our feet are standing within your gates, O Jerusalem.

Jerusalem is built as a city that is at unity with itself;

To which the tribes go up, the tribes of the Lord, the assembly of Israel, to praise the Name of the Lord.

For there are the thrones of judgement, the thrones of the house of David.

Pray for the peace of Jerusalem: "May they prosper who love you.

Peace be within your walls and quietness within your towers.

For my kindred and companions' sake, I pray for your prosperity.

Because of the house of the Lord our God, I will seek to do you good."

Second Reading: ROMANS 13:11-14

At the start of Advent the church hears Paul's wake-up call, to put on the Lord Jesus Christ. In the darkness of winter, we awake to the light of Christ. God is like the coming dawn.

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.

Gospel: MATTHEW 24:36-44

Advent begins the liturgical year, and in this Year A, the gospel readings from Matthew complement the festival gospels taken from John. At this beginning we contemplate the end: the arrival of the divine judge means the end of the earth as we know it. In Advent, we are called to ready our lives to receive our disorienting God. The arrival of God, like a flood, always surprises us.

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.

Prayer over the Gifts

God of love and power,
your word stirs within us the expectation
of the coming of your Son.
Accept all we offer you this day,

and sustain us with your promise of eternal life.
We ask this in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord.

Prayer After Communion

God for whom we wait,
you have fed us with the bread of eternal life.
Keep us ever watchful, that we may be ready
to stand before the Son of man.
We ask this in the name of Christ the Lord.

Second Sunday of Advent, Sunday, December 4th, 2022

Readings ISAIAH 11:1-10; PSALM 72:1-7, 18-19; ROMANS 15:4-13; MATTHEW 3:1-12

Collect

God of timeless grace,
you fill us with joyful expectation:
make us ready for the message that prepares the way,
so that with uprightness of heart and holy joy
we may eagerly await the coming of your Son,
Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,
now and for ever. Amen.
Revised Common Lectionary Prayers (2002) alt.

First Reading: ISAIAH 11:1-10

In Advent we read Old Testament poems that are filled with images of peace, justice, and joy. The church sees in past, present, and future the presence of Jesus Christ, in whom is the realization of these perennial human hopes. Jesus fills and fulfills our human hopes.

A shoot shall come out from the stump 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. 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.

Psalm 72:1-7, 18-19

The psalm for the day is the beginning and conclusion of Psalm 72, one of the royal psalms that were composed to celebrate some specific event in the life or career of an Israelite king. In Psalm 72, the people are asking God to bless the king and his reign. Responding to the promise in Isaiah 11 of a coming king, Christians sing the ancient prayer as a way to praise Christ, who is coming at Christmas, and this morning, and at the end of time, to establish a world of righteousness. The concluding line, "May all the earth be filled with your glory," anticipates the "Holy, holy, holy" that we sing at the communion table.

Give the King your justice, O God, and your righteousness to the King's Son;

That he may rule your people righteously and the poor with justice;

That the mountains may bring prosperity to the people, and the little hills bring righteousness.

He shall defend the needy among the people; he shall rescue the poor and crush the oppressor.

He shall live as long as the sun and moon endure, from one generation to another.

He shall come down like rain upon the mown field, like showers that water the earth.

In his time shall the righteous flourish; there shall be abundance of peace till the moon shall be no more.

Blessed be the Lord God, the God of Israel, who alone does wondrous deeds!

And blessed be your glorious name for ever! and may all the earth be filled with your glory. Amen. **Amen.**

Second Reading: ROMANS 15:4-13

Christ comes not only to the Jewish people, as we would know from the Scriptures, and not only to us in the church, but also to all the Gentiles, that is, to all people of the world. In Advent we prepare for this momentous arrival, which in word and sacrament fills us with the power of the Holy Spirit. God comes always as the Triune One.

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. 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.

Gospel: MATTHEW 3:1-12

To prepare for the coming of God in Jesus Christ, we are invited into a total reversal of life's values, a complete change of mind, the burning up of useless chaff. God comes to inaugurate "the kingdom of heaven," Matthew's Jewish way to speak of the presence and power of God. We celebrate that presence of God coming today in word and sacrament.

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 ax 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 carry his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. His winnowing fork is in his hand, and he will clear his threshing floor and will gather his wheat into the granary; but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire."

Prayer over the Gifts

God our strength,
we are nothing without you.
Receive all we offer you this day
as you sustain us with your mercy;
in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord.

Prayer After Communion

Faithful God,
we thank you for feeding us with this heavenly banquet.
Help us always to hear the prophet's call
to turn our hearts to you;
in the name of Jesus Christ the Lord.

Third Sunday of Advent, Sunday, December 11th, 2022

Readings ISAIAH 35:1-10; CANTICLE 18 (LUKE 1:47-55); JAMES 5:7-10; MATTHEW 11:2-11

Collect

God for whom we watch and wait,
you sent John the Baptist
to prepare the way of your Son:
give us courage to speak the truth,
to hunger for justice,
and to suffer for the cause of right,
with Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.
Common Worship: Additional Collects (2004)

First Reading: ISAIAH 35:1-10

Sometimes in the lectionary, the first reading presents the full citation that is referred to in the gospel reading. This Sunday, the first reading is the oracle from Isaiah that Jesus cites in today's gospel reading. On Sunday, Christians praise the resurrection of Christ as just such a joyous transformation of all things. The Sunday liturgy means to celebrate that transformation

The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad, the desert shall rejoice and blossom; like the crocus it shall blossom abundantly, and rejoice with joy and singing. The glory of Lebanon shall be given to it, the majesty of Carmel and Sharon. They shall see the glory of the Lord, the majesty of our God. Strengthen the weak hands, and make firm the feeble knees. Say to those who are of a fearful heart, "Be strong, do not fear! Here is your God. He will come with vengeance, with terrible recompense. He will come and save you." Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf unstopped; then the lame shall leap like a deer, and the tongue of the speechless sing for joy. For waters shall break forth in the wilderness, and streams in the desert; the burning sand shall become a pool, and the thirsty ground springs of water; the haunt of jackals shall become a swamp, the grass shall become reeds and rushes. A highway shall be there, and it shall be called the Holy Way; the unclean shall not travel on it, but it shall be for God's people; no traveller, not even fools, shall go astray. No lion shall be there, nor shall any ravenous beast come up on it; they shall not be found there, but the redeemed shall walk there. And the ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with singing; everlasting joy shall be upon their heads; they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

CANTICLE 18 LUKE 1:47-55

My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord, my spirit rejoices in God my Saviour; for he has looked with favour on his lowly servant.

From this day all generations will call me blessed: the Almighty has done great things for me, and holy is his name.

He has mercy on those who fear him in every generation.

He has shown the strength of his arm, he has scattered the proud in their conceit.

He has cast down the mighty from their thrones, and has lifted up the lowly.

He has filled the hungry with good things, and the rich he has sent away empty.

He has come to the help of his servant Israel, for he has remembered his promise of mercy, the promise he made to our fathers, to Abraham and his children for ever.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit: as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be for ever.

Second Reading: JAMES 5:7-10

The Old Testament and gospel readings that promise wondrous signs of the presence of the Lord are held next to this New Testament call to patience. In Advent, we join the early church in waiting, perhaps impatiently, for the coming of the Judge and for the end of suffering and evil.

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.

Gospel: MATTHEW 11:2-11

The gospel of Advent 3 responds to the gospel of Advent 2: last week John the Baptist predicted the coming judgment, and this week Jesus, also citing the prophet Isaiah, speaks of the transformative power of his ministry. Each week we hear more about what the presence of God means for the world, today and at the end of time. That coming begins here, in word and sacrament.

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." 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."

Prayer over the Gifts

God of hope,
renew in us the joy of your salvation
and make us a living sacrifice to you,
for the sake of Jesus Christ our Lord.

Prayer After Communion

Merciful God,
may this eucharist free us from our sins,
fill us with unending joy,
and prepare us for the birthday of our Saviour.
We ask this in the name of Jesus Christ,
who is Lord now and for ever.

The Fourth Sunday of Advent, Sunday, December 18th, 2022

Readings ISAIAH 7:10-16; PSALM 80:1-7, 16-18; ROMANS 1:1-7; MATTHEW 1:18-25

Collect

Heavenly Father,
who chose the Virgin Mary, full of grace,
to be the mother of our Lord and Saviour,
now fill us with your grace,
that we in all things may embrace your will
and with her rejoice in your salvation;
through Jesus Christ our Lord,
who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.

First Reading ISAIAH 7:10-16

Matthew sees in Christ a fulfillment of the promises in the Hebrew Scriptures. One example is his applying the Isaiah oracle about a newborn infant to the birth of Jesus, since the Greek rendering of "young woman" suggested "virgin woman." We read Isaiah 7 on this Sunday in order to understand what Matthew wrote in chapter 1. In this reading, we stand with believers

of past centuries who place their trust for salvation in God, and we recall the tradition of interpretation upon which we stand, even when our methods of interpretation are different.

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."

Psalm 80:1-7, 17-19

In the first reading, Christians have heard the promise that God will save the people. The sung response is the beginning and conclusion of Psalm 80, a prayer for help for the community. We join with ancient Israelites to beg that God will save us now and in the future. We too have suffered, and "the one at your right hand" is the Christ whom we both anticipate and celebrate now in word and sacrament. The name of this one on whom we call (v. 18) is Immanuel (Isa. 7:14).

Hear, O Shepherd of Israel, leading Joseph like a flock; shine forth, you that are enthroned upon the cherubim.

In the presence of Ephraim, Benjamin, and Manasseh, stir up your strength and come to help us.

Restore us, O God of hosts; show the light of your countenance, and we shall be saved.

O Lord God of hosts, how long will you be angered despite the prayers of your people?

You have fed them with the bread of tears; you have given them bowls of tears to drink.

You have made us the derision of our neighbours, and our enemies laugh us to scorn.

Restore us, O God of hosts; show the light of your countenance, and we shall be saved.

Let your hand be upon the man of your right hand, the son of man you have made so strong for yourself.

And so will we never turn away from you; give us life, that we may call upon your name.

Restore us, O Lord God of hosts; show the light of your countenance, and we shall be saved.

Second Reading ROMANS 1:1-7

All of Advent, all of the entire Christian year, is summed up in Paul's opening sentence. On every Sunday throughout the year, we celebrate the resurrection of Jesus Christ and call one another into the obedience of faith.

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.

Gospel MATTHEW 1:18-25

Year A relies on the gospel of Matthew for many of its narratives. According to Matthew, especially the men in the Jewish tradition are called into God's plan for salvation, but in this Sunday's gospel, God's promises are present through a woman. The child born is named "Emmanuel": God is with us, in word and sacrament, today and always.

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.

Prayer over the Gifts

Gracious God,
by the power of the Spirit
who sanctified the mother of your Son,
make holy all we offer you this day.
We ask this in the name of Jesus Christ the Lord.

Prayer After Communion

Faithful God,
in this sacrament we receive the promise of salvation.
May we, like the Virgin Mary,
be obedient to your will.
We ask this in the name of Jesus Christ the Lord.

Christmas Eve, Saturday December 24, 2022

Readings: Isaiah 9:2-7; Psalm 96; Titus 2:11-14; Luke 2:1-14, (15-20)

Collect

God of promise,
from ancient times you have sustained your people.
With Mary and Joseph,
teach us to treasure in our hearts the birth of Jesus,
and with shepherds and angels,
lead us to praise the holy Child of Bethlehem
in whose name we pray. **Amen.**
Revised Common Lectionary Prayers 2002 alt.

First Reading: Isaiah 9:2-7

That the angels in Luke name the child the Messiah, in Greek “Christ,” recalls oracles such as Isaiah 9, and Christians have seen in Jesus Christ the ancient promises of a coming king fulfilled. Jesus is “wonderful Counselor and mighty God” among us. Thus Christians hear in this oracle references to the triune God.

The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who lived in a land of deep darkness—on them light has shined.

You have multiplied the nation, you have increased its joy; they rejoice before you as with joy at the harvest, as people exult when dividing plunder. For the yoke of their burden, and the bar across their shoulders, the rod of their oppressor, you have broken as on the day of Midian. For all the boots of the tramping warriors and all the garments rolled in blood shall be burned as fuel for the fire.

For a child has been born for us, a son given to us; authority rests upon his shoulders; and he is named Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. His authority shall grow continually, and there shall be endless peace for the throne of David and his kingdom. He will establish and uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time onward and forevermore. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will do this.

Psalm 96

Psalm 96 is one of the praise songs that names God as king and was perhaps used by the ancient Israelites to laud a king at his enthronement. In response to Isaiah 9 and its proclamation of the birth of the Mighty

God, Christians sing Psalm 96 to praise Christ as our king. All the gods, all families of all peoples, the very earth, the sea and the fields all rejoice. Even as we go home to enjoy our Christmas trees, we know that “all the trees of the wood” have shouted in praise to Christ. Yet we remember the promises of Advent: he comes to judge the world.

O sing to the Lord a new song; sing to the Lord, all the earth.

Sing to the Lord, bless his name; tell of his salvation from day to day.

Declare his glory among the nations, his marvelous works among all the peoples.

For great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised; he is to be revered above all gods.

For all the gods of the peoples are idols, but the Lord made the heavens.

Honor and majesty are before him; strength and beauty are in his sanctuary.

Ascribe to the Lord, O families of the peoples, ascribe to the Lord glory and strength.

Ascribe to the Lord the glory due his name; bring an offering and come into his courts.

Worship the Lord in holy splendor; tremble before him, all the earth.

Say among the nations, “The Lord is king!

The world is firmly established; it shall never be moved.

He will judge the peoples with equity.”

Let the heavens be glad, and let the earth rejoice; let the sea roar, and all that fills it;

let the field exult, and everything in it. Then shall all the trees of the forest sing for joy

before the Lord; for he is coming, for he is coming to judge the earth.

He will judge the world with righteousness, and the peoples with his truth.

Second Reading: Titus 2:11-14

As is often the case, the second reading indicates the implications of the gospel for the church: the appearance of God in Jesus Christ creates a people redeemed, purified, and dedicated to a life of good works. Christ among us changes our identity, our style of life, and the goal of our existence.

For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all,[a] training us to renounce impiety and worldly passions, and in the present age to live lives that are self-controlled, upright, and godly, while we wait for the blessed hope and the manifestation of the glory of our great God and Savior,[b] Jesus Christ. He it is who gave himself for us that he might redeem us from all iniquity and purify for himself a people of his own who are zealous for good deeds.

Gospel: Luke 2:1-14-20

Luke 2, the only biblical narrative detailing the birth of Jesus, is proclaimed at the first eucharist of Christmas. In contrast to Matthew's interest in high status males, Luke emphasizes the opposite: a pregnant woman, "no place in the inn," and lower-class shepherds. Thanks in part to Luke's talent in storytelling, this narrative has become for many people synonymous with Christmas. The challenge at this service is to proclaim the truth of this narrative as other than and far beyond stereotypical sentimentality.

In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered. This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. All went to their own towns to be registered. Joseph also went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to the city of David called Bethlehem, because he was descended from the house and family of David. He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.

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 Savior, 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 favors!"

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.

Prayer over the Gifts

Good and loving God,
we rejoice in the birth of Jesus,
who came among the poor
to bring the riches of your grace.
As you have blessed us with your gifts,
let them be a blessing for others.
With the trees of the field,
with all earth and heaven,
we should for joy at the coming of your Son,
Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Evangelical Lutheran Worship (2006) alt.

Prayer After Communion

Radiant God,
with our eyes we have seen your salvation,
and in this meal we have feasted on your grace.
May your Word take flesh in us,
so that we may be your holy people,
revealing your glory made known to us
in Jesus Christ, our Saviour and Lord. **Amen.**

Evangelical Lutheran Worship (2006) alt.

Christmas Day, Sunday, December 25, 2022

Readings: Isaiah 52:7-10; Psalm 98; Hebrews 1:1-4, (5-12); John 1:1-14

Collect

Almighty God,
you wonderfully created
and yet more wonderfully restored our human nature.
May we share the divine life of your Son Jesus Christ,
who humbled himself to share our humanity,
and now lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

First Reading: Isaiah 52:7-10

Christians see in this passage from Second Isaiah, which directly precedes the Suffering Servant poem appointed for Good Friday, a way to speak about Jesus, whose birth near Jerusalem embodied the reign of God and brought salvation to the world.

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

The third of the enthronement psalms that Christians sing at Christmas is Psalm 98. Isaiah 52 has proclaimed, "Break forth together into singing," and we do, singing "a new song of the Lord." Christ has brought us victory. All lands, trumpets and horns, even rivers and hills are applauding the birth of Christ. Anticipating John 1, we speak of Christ as the holy arm of God.

O sing to the Lord a new song, for he has done marvelous things. His right hand and his holy arm have gotten him victory.

The Lord has made known his victory; he has revealed his vindication in the sight of the nations.

He has remembered his steadfast love and faithfulness to the house of Israel. All the ends of the earth have seen the victory of our God.

Make a joyful noise to the Lord, all the earth; break forth into joyous song and sing praises.

Sing praises to the Lord with the lyre, with the lyre and the sound of melody.

With trumpets and the sound of the horn make a joyful noise before the King, the Lord.

Let the sea roar, and all that fills it; the world and those who live in it.

Let the floods clap their hands; let the hills sing together for joy

at the presence of the Lord, for he is coming to judge the earth.

He will judge the world with righteousness, and the peoples with equity.

Second Reading: Hebrews 1:1-4

The beautifully written introduction to Hebrews offers worshipers yet more profound language with which to picture the meaning of Jesus Christ. The Son of God, he was with God at the creation of the world; on earth he was the powerful divine word; and now he reigns with God over all things. At Christmas we praise Christ, not only an infant, but indeed the very God.

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.

Gospel: John 1:1-14

Epecially John's gospel guided the church into the mystery of the incarnation: the Jesus whose birth the church celebrates at Christmas is the Word of God, indeed God in the flesh. On Christmas Day the church moves from the beloved narrative of Bethlehem to the central conviction of the Christian faith, that Jesus is God from before the creation of the world. Christmas celebrates God alive in glory and active among humankind. The lectionary appoints Genesis 1, "In the beginning," at Easter, and John 1, "In the beginning," at Christmas.

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.

Prayer over the Gifts

God of peace,
your Son Jesus Christ has reconciled us to you.
May all we offer you today
renew us as members of your household.

We ask this in his name. **Amen.**

Prayer After Communion

Father of all,
the child born for us is the Saviour of the world.
May he who made us your children
welcome us into your kingdom,
where he is alive and reigns with you now and for ever. **Amen.**

First Sunday after Christmas, Sunday, January 1, 2023

Readings ISAIAH 63:7-9; PSALM 148; HEBREWS 2:10-18; MATTHEW 2:13-23

Collect

Almighty God,
you have shed upon us the new light
of your incarnate Word.
May this light, enkindled in our hearts,
shine forth in our lives;
through Jesus Christ our Lord,
who lives and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.

First Reading: ISAIAH 63:7-9

I will recount the gracious deeds of the Lord, the praiseworthy acts of the Lord, because of all that the Lord has done for us, and the great favour to the house of Israel that he has shown them according to his mercy, according to the abundance of his steadfast love. For he said, "Surely they are my people, children who will not deal falsely"; and he became their saviour in all their distress. It was no messenger or angel but his presence that saved them; in his love and in his pity he redeemed them; he lifted them up and carried them all the days of old.

PSALM 148

REFRAIN Alleluia.

Hallelujah! Praise the Lord from the heavens; praise him in the heights.
Praise him, all you angels of his; praise him, all his host.
Praise him, sun and moon; praise him, all you shining stars. R

**Praise him, heaven of heavens, and you waters above the heavens.
Let them praise the name of the Lord; for he commanded, and they were created.**

**He made them stand fast for ever and ever; he gave them a law which shall not pass away.
R**

Praise the Lord from the earth, you sea-monsters and all deeps;
Fire and hail, snow and fog, tempestuous wind, doing his will;

**Mountains and all hills, fruit trees and all cedars;
Wild beasts and all cattle, creeping things and winged birds; R**

Kings of the earth and all peoples, princes and all rulers of the world;
Young men and maidens, old and young together.

**Let them praise the name of the Lord, for his name only is exalted, his splendour is over
earth and heaven.**

He has raised up strength for his people and praise for all his loyal servants, the children of
Israel, a people who are near him. **Hallelujah! R**

Second Reading: HEBREWS 2:10-18

It was fitting that God, for whom and through whom all things exist, in bringing many
children to glory, should make the pioneer of their salvation perfect through sufferings.
For the one who sanctifies and those who are sanctified all have one Father. For this
reason Jesus is not ashamed to call them brothers and sisters, saying, "I will proclaim your
name to my brothers and sisters, in the midst of the congregation I will praise you." And
again, "I will put my trust in him." And again, "Here am I and the children whom God has
given me." Since, therefore, the children share flesh and blood, he himself likewise shared
the same things, so that through death he might destroy the one who has the power of
death, that is, the devil, and free those who all their lives were held in slavery by the fear of
death. For it is clear that he did not come to help angels, but the descendants of Abraham.
Therefore he had to become like his brothers and sisters in every respect, so that he might
be a merciful and faithful high priest in the service of God, to make a sacrifice of atonement
for the sins of the people. Because he himself was tested by what he suffered, he is able to
help those who are being tested.

Gospel: MATTHEW 2:13-23

Now after they had left, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and said,
"Get up, take the child and his mother, and flee to Egypt, and remain there until I tell
you; for Herod is about to search for the child, to destroy him." Then Joseph got up,
took the child and his mother by night, and went to Egypt, and remained there until
the death of Herod. This was to fulfil what had been spoken by the Lord through the
prophet, "Out of Egypt I have called my son." When Herod saw that he had been tricked by

the wise men, he was infuriated, and he sent and killed all the children in and around Bethlehem who were two years old or under, according to the time that he had learned from the wise men. Then was fulfilled what had been spoken through the prophet Jeremiah: "A voice was heard in Ramah, wailing and loud lamentation, Rachel weeping for her children; she refused to be consoled, because they are no more." When Herod died, an angel of the Lord suddenly appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt and said, "Get up, take the child and his mother, and go to the land of Israel, for those who were seeking the child's life are dead." Then Joseph got up, took the child and his mother, and went to the land of Israel. But when he heard that Archelaus was ruling over Judea in place of his father Herod, he was afraid to go there. And after being warned in a dream, he went away to the district of Galilee. There he made his home in a town called Nazareth, so that what had been spoken through the prophets might be fulfilled, "He will be called a Nazorean."

Prayer over the Gifts

God of light,
in the birth of your Son we see your glory.
May we who share in this mystery
grow daily in your love.
This we ask in the name of Jesus Christ the Lord.

Prayer After Communion

Source of truth and joy,
may we who have received the gift of divine life
always follow the way of your Son.
This we ask in the name of Jesus Christ the Lord.