

The Third Sunday in Advent

December 16, 2018

10:30 AM

*We welcome you to worship today. It is a privilege to have you as our guest.
As you enter the sanctuary, begin to worship quietly with personal prayer.
Please turn off your cell phone and turn your thoughts toward God.*

We prepare for worship

Take a moment and meditate on this as you prepare for worship...

O Lord Jesus Christ, who at Your first coming sent Your messenger to prepare Your way before You; Grant that the ministers and stewards of Your mysteries may likewise so prepare and make ready Your way, by turning the hearts of the disobedient to the wisdom of the just, that at Your second coming to judge the world we may be found an acceptable people in Your sight, who lives and reigns with the Father and the Holy spirit, ever one God, world without end. Amen.

Second Sunday before Christmas, The Book of Common Prayer

Prelude

Canon in D

Pachelbel

Gloria Hague, Director of Music

We praise our great God

The Lighting of the Advent Wreath

The Advent wreath is a circle with no beginning and no end. It is a symbol of God's unending love and faithfulness.

Isaiah the prophet calls us to prepare for the coming of Jesus by making straight all that is crooked:

"A voice cries out: 'In the wilderness prepare the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a highway for our God'" (Isa 40:3).

"Then the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all people shall see it together, for the mouth of the Lord has spoken" (Isa. 40:5).

Let us prepare the way for Jesus, the Christ, who is anointed by God "to bring good news to the oppressed, to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives and release to the prisoners" (Isa 61:11).

"For as a garden causes seeds to grow, so the Sovereign Lord will make righteousness and praise spring up before all nations" (Isa 61:11). We light this candle as a symbol of Christ's love that has come into the world.

*Hymn No. 198

Life Up Your Heads, Ye Mighty Gates

Truro

Lift up your heads, ye mighty gates! Behold, the King of glory waits;
The King of kings is drawing near, the Savior of the world is here.

A helper just he comes to thee, his chariot is humility,
His kingly crown is holiness, his scepter, pity in distress.

O blest the land, the city blest, where Christ the Ruler is confessed!
O happy hearts and happy homes to whom this King in triumph comes!

Fling wide the portals of your heart; make it a temple, set apart
From earthly use for heav'n's employ, adorned with prayer and love and joy.

Redeemer, come! I open wide my heart to thee; here, Lord, abide!
Let me thy inner presence feel; thy grace and love in my reveal.

So come, my Sovereign, enter in! Let new and nobler life begin!
Thy Holy Spirit, guide us on, until the glorious crown be won.

*Invocation

We embrace Christ our Savior

Psalter Reading (responsive)

Psalm 72:1-19

(Hymnal pg. 810)

Endow the king with your justice, O God, the royal son with your righteousness.

He will judge your people in righteousness, your afflicted ones with justice.

The mountains will bring prosperity to the people, the hills the fruit of righteousness.

He will defend the afflicted among the people and save the children of the needy; he will crush the oppressor.

He will endure as long as the sun, as long as the moon, through all generations.

He will be like rain falling on a mown field, like showers watering the earth.

In his days the righteous will flourish, prosperity will abound till the moon is no more.

He will rule from sea to sea and from the River to the ends of the earth.

The desert tribes will bow before him and his enemies will lick the dust.

The kings of Tarshish and of distant shores will bring tribute to him;

the kings of Sheba and Seba will present him gifts.

All kings will bow down to him and all nations will serve him.

For he will deliver the needy who cry out, the afflicted who have no one to help.

He will take pity on the weak and the needy and save the needy from death.

He will rescue them from oppression and violence, for precious is their blood in his sight.

Long may he live! May gold from Sheba be given him.

May people ever pray for him and bless him all day long.

Let grain abound throughout the land; on the tops of hills may it sway.

Let its fruit flourish like Lebanon; let it thrive like the grass of the field.

May his name endure forever; may it continue as long as the sun

All nations will be blessed through him, and they will call him blessed.

Praise be to the LORD God, the God of Israel, who alone does marvelous deeds.

Praise be to his glorious name forever, may the whole earth be filled with his glory.

Amen and Amen.

Assurance of Pardon (responsive)

Galatians 3 (selected)

The Scriptures foresaw that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, and announced the gospel in advance to Abraham: "All nations will be blessed through you."

So those who have faith are blessed along with Abraham, the man of faith.

All who rely on observing the law are under a curse, for it is written: "Cursed is everyone who does not continue to do everything written in the book of the Law."

Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us...

He redeemed us in order that the blessing given to Abraham might come to the Gentiles through Christ Jesus.

*Confession of Faith (unison)

Westminster Larger Catechism, Q. 38

Why was it [necessary] that the Mediator should be God? **It was requisite that the Mediator should be God, that He might sustain and keep the human nature from sinking under the infinite wrath of God, and the power of death;¹ give worth and efficacy to His sufferings, obedience, and intercession;² and to satisfy God's justice,³ procure His favor,⁴ purchase a peculiar people,⁵ give His Spirit to them,⁶ conquer all their enemies,⁷ and bring them to everlasting salvation.⁸**

¹ Acts 2:24, 25; Rom. 1:4; 4:25; Heb. 9:14 ² Acts 20:28; Heb. 9:14; 7:25-28

³ Rom. 3:24-26 ⁴ Eph. 1:6; Matt. 3:17 ⁵ Titus 2:13, 14 ⁶ Gal. 4:6

⁷ Lk. 1:68-69, 71, 74 ⁸ Heb. 5:8, 9; 9:11-15

*Hymn No. 199

See, Amid the Winter's Snow

Goss

See, amid the winter's snow, born for us on earth below,
See the tender Lamb appears, promised from eternal years.

***Hail, thou ever blessed morn! Hail, redemption's happy dawn!
Sing through all Jerusalem, Christ is born in Bethlehem.***

Lo, within a manger lies he who built the starry skies:
He who, throned in height sublime, sits amid the cherubim.

Say, ye holy shepherds, say—what's your joyful news today?
Wherefore have ye left your sheep on the lonely mountain steep?

“As we watched at dead of night, lo, we saw a wondrous light;
angels singing, ‘Peace on earth,’ told us of the Savior’s birth.”

Sacred infant, all divine, what a tender love was thine,
Thus to come from highest bliss down to such a world as this!

Teach, O teach us, holy child, by thy face so meek and mild,
Teach us to resemble thee, in thy sweet humility.

Old Testament Reading

Judges 5:12-23 (ESV)

“Then down to the gates marched the people of the LORD.

¹² “Awake, awake, Deborah!

Awake, awake, break out in a song!

Arise, Barak, lead away your captives,

O son of Abinoam.

¹³ Then down marched the remnant of the noble;

the people of the LORD marched down for me against the mighty.

¹⁴ From Ephraim their root they marched down into the valley,

following you, Benjamin, with your kinsmen;

from Machir marched down the commanders,

and from Zebulun those who bear the lieutenant’s staff;

¹⁵ the princes of Issachar came with Deborah,

and Issachar faithful to Barak;

into the valley they rushed at his heels.

Among the clans of Reuben

there were great searchings of heart.

¹⁶ Why did you sit still among the sheepfolds,

to hear the whistling for the flocks?

Among the clans of Reuben

there were great searchings of heart.

¹⁷ Gilead stayed beyond the Jordan;

and Dan, why did he stay with the ships?

Asher sat still at the coast of the sea,

staying by his landings.

¹⁸ Zebulun is a people who risked their lives to the death;

Naphtali, too, on the heights of the field.

¹⁹ “The kings came, they fought;

then fought the kings of Canaan,

at Taanach, by the waters of Megiddo;

they got no spoils of silver.

²⁰ From heaven the stars fought,

from their courses they fought against Sisera.

²¹ The torrent Kishon swept them away,

the ancient torrent, the torrent Kishon.

March on, my soul, with might!

²² “Then loud beat the horses’ hoofs
with the galloping, galloping of his steeds.
²³ “Curse Meroz, says the angel of the LORD,
curse its inhabitants thoroughly,
because they did not come to the help of the LORD,
to the help of the LORD against the mighty.

Aisquith Life and Opportunities
The Prayers of God’s People and the Lord’s Prayer (in unison)

We respond in gratitude for God’s blessing

**The Doxology (Hymnal, pg. 731)* and Prayer of Dedication
God’s Tithes and Our Offerings
The Offertory

Sing Praise to Christ

J. S. Bach
The Adult Choir

Sing praise to Christ, the Lord, sing praise to Christ, sing praises. Alleluia! Sing praise to Christ, our risen Savior, our Savior and King! Adore Him forever...and worship His name...

The children may dismiss for church-time programs.

We hear God speak

Scripture Reading

Luke 1:56-80

(Pew Bible, pg. 724)

⁵⁶ And Mary remained with her about three months and returned to her home.

The Birth of John the Baptist

⁵⁷ Now the time came for Elizabeth to give birth, and she bore a son. ⁵⁸ And her neighbors and relatives heard that the Lord had shown great mercy to her, and they rejoiced with her. ⁵⁹ And on the eighth day they came to circumcise the child. And they would have called him Zechariah after his father, ⁶⁰ but his mother answered, “No; he shall be called John.” ⁶¹ And they said to her, “None of your relatives is called by this name.” ⁶² And they made signs to his father, inquiring what he wanted him to be called. ⁶³ And he asked for a writing tablet and wrote, “His name is John.” And they all wondered. ⁶⁴ And immediately his mouth was opened and his tongue loosed, and he spoke, blessing God. ⁶⁵ And fear came on all their neighbors. And all these things were talked about through all the hill country of Judea, ⁶⁶ and all who heard them laid them up in their hearts, saying, “What then will this child be?” For the hand of the Lord was with him.

Zechariah’s Prophecy

⁶⁷ And his father Zechariah was filled with the Holy Spirit and prophesied, saying,

⁶⁸ “Blessed be the Lord God of Israel,
for he has visited and redeemed his people
⁶⁹ and has raised up a horn of salvation for us
in the house of his servant David,
⁷⁰ as he spoke by the mouth of his holy prophets from of old,
⁷¹ that we should be saved from our enemies
and from the hand of all who hate us;
⁷² to show the mercy promised to our fathers

and to remember his holy covenant,
⁷³ the oath that he swore to our father Abraham, to grant us
⁷⁴ that we, being delivered from the hand of our enemies,
 might serve him without fear,
⁷⁵ in holiness and righteousness before him all our days.
⁷⁶ And you, child, will be called the prophet of the Most High;
 for you will go before the Lord to prepare his ways,
⁷⁷ to give knowledge of salvation to his people
 in the forgiveness of their sins,
⁷⁸ because of the tender mercy of our God,
 whereby the sunrise shall visit us from on high
⁷⁹ to give light to those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death,
 to guide our feet into the way of peace.”

⁸⁰ And the child grew and became strong in spirit, and he was in the wilderness until the day of his public appearance to Israel.

Sermon “Zechariah’s Song” Pastor Bell

We respond to God’s grace

*Hymn *On Jordan’s Bank the Baptist’s Cry* Puer Nobis

On Jordan’s bank the Baptist’s Cry announces that the Lord is nigh.
 Awake and harken, for he brings glad tidings of the King of kings!

Then cleansed be every life from sin: make straight the way for God within,
 And let us all our hearts prepare for Christ to come and enter there.

We hail you as our Savior, Lord, our refuge and our great reward.
 Without your grace we waste away like flowers that wither and decay.

Stretch forth your hand, our health restore, and make us rise to fall no more.
 O let your face upon us shine and fill the world with love divine.

All praise to you eternal Son, whose advent has our freedom won,
 Whom with the Father we adore, and Holy Spirit, ever more.

*Benediction and Three-Fold *Amen* (*Hymnal*, pg. 740) Danish
 Postlude *Hornpipe* Purcell

 *Those who are able, please stand.

Christmas Card box is on the narthex table.

The Canticle Singers under the direction of Wendy Wickham will present their winter concert, “O Morning Star,” TODAY at 4:00 PM at Trinity Episcopal Church, 120 Allegheny Avenue in Towson. An offering will be taken at each performance.

The Maryland State Boychoir will be presenting the Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols TODAY 4:00 PM, Saturday, December 22nd at 7:00 PM, and Sunday, December 23rd at 4:00 PM at the Boychoir Center for the Arts at 3400 Norman Avenue. Call 410-554-8644 for tickets and more information.

The Maryland State Boychoir will hold a free concert on Wednesday, December 19th at 7:00 p.m. at Calvary Lutheran Church 2625 E. Northern Parkway. There will be a cookie and apple cider reception afterwards.

The Tuesday evening Women's Bible Study will start a new book study, John McArthur's Colossians & Philemon, on January 8, 2019. If you are interested in joining us for this study, contact Janet Johnson (410-666-5814) so that she can order the book for you.

This Week at Aisquith

TODAY	10:30 AM Worship
THURSDAY	7:30 PM Choir practice (sanctuary)
SUNDAY	9:00 AM Adult Sunday School
	10:30 AM Worship

Coming Soon

Monday, December 24th at 7:00 PM Candlelight Christmas Eve Service

On Christmas Eve the Baltimore Brass will give a concert beginning at **6:30 PM** and will participate in the music that evening.

Rev. Robert E. Bell, Pastor

Rev. John E. Ceselsky, Assistant Pastor

Mrs. Gloria Hague, Director of Music

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