

Silver and Gold Have We None



TONY LEE 2007

Compass Housing Alliance

The Church of Steadfast Love

Advent 2022

During the Season of Advent we prepare our hearts and minds for the coming of the Christ. We celebrate the birth of Jesus at Christmas, and we remember that in him the Kingdom of God came to earth. Now we wait expectantly for his return, not as the baby that was once worshipped in the manger, but as our Savior that will come again and restore all things unto himself.

As Christmas approaches the craziness of our lives traditionally increase as gift buying and parties are added to our daily routines, but not everyone has the comforts that many of us enjoy without giving them a second thought. It is for this reason that we call our devotional, "Silver and Gold Have We None." Those whom we serve have not the material possessions that our society prizes, but they have the wonderful gifts of hope and promise. And we, those who find ourselves on the streets this holiday seasons, in the shelters, and securely housed, would like to share of ourselves with you this season.

May you find this devotional useful for increasing and deepening faith as you reflect on the Living Word, and on our humble insights.

Peace be with you this Advent season and throughout the coming year. Come Lord Jesus.

Amen.

Pr. Kristy Daniels

Matthew 24:36-44

³⁶ "But about that day and hour no one knows, neither the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. ³⁷ For as the days of Noah were, so will be the coming of the Son of Man. ³⁸ 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, ³⁹ and they knew nothing until the flood came and swept them all away, so too will be the coming of the Son of Man. ⁴⁰ Then two will be in the field; one will be taken and one will be left. ⁴¹ Two women will be grinding meal together; one will be taken and one will be left. ⁴² Keep awake therefore, for you do not know on what day your Lord is coming. ⁴³ 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. ⁴⁴ Therefore you also must be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an unexpected hour.

The necessity for watchfulness

This reading made me sit up and pay attention. It feels to me that our world is particularly unpredictable right now—war, famine, pandemics, hurricanes, floods, drought. But then nothing in life has ever been guaranteed.

To me, a master procrastinator, Jesus is saying, be ready for anything. Don't keep delaying the important things He wants us to do like helping others, mending relationships, keeping our selves and our houses, literally and figuratively, in order.

This is something to ponder especially in Advent, which symbolizes Jesus' coming. Even as we know he is already here.

Monday, Nov. 28/Lunes, 28 de Noviembre

Romans 13:11-14

- ¹¹ 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;
- ¹² the night is far gone, the day is near. Let us then lay aside the works of darkness and put on the armor of light;
- ¹³ let us live honorably as in the day, not in reveling and drunkenness, not in debauchery and licentiousness, not in quarreling and jealousy.
- ¹⁴ Instead, put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to gratify its desires.

It is the same time back then as it is now. I have had a lot of blessings in my life so that is a lot of what informs this reading. The light has to do with all my blessings that I have received. Housing is a blessing and learning how to crochet and friendship. God bless everyone!

-Billy Levins

Tuesday, Nov. 29/Martes, 29 de Noviembre

Psalm 122

¹ I was glad when they said to me, "Let us go to the house of the Lord!"

² Our feet are standing within your gates, O Jerusalem.

³ Jerusalem—built as a city that is bound firmly together.

⁴ To it the tribes go up, the tribes of the Lord, as was decreed for Israel, to give thanks to the name of the Lord.

⁵ For there the thrones for judgment were set up, the thrones of the house of David.

⁶ Pray for the peace of Jerusalem: "May they prosper who love you.

⁷ Peace be within your walls, and security within your towers."

⁸ For the sake of my relatives and friends I will say, "Peace be within you."

⁹ For the sake of the house of the Lord our God, I will seek your good.

Concerning the revelations that's within me praise God it places peace within me that passes all understanding and yet it's a song that goes along with that peace, the song is Spring up O'Well meaning this river that flowing out of me it set the captive free make the lame to walk and the blind to see, this river of life is flowing out of me, Glory to God Hallelujah yes and Amen.

God Bless us all name and Always Amen!

-Danny Ray Lee

Wednesday, Nov. 30/Miercoles, 30 de Noviembre

Isaiah 2:1-5

¹ The word that Isaiah son of Amoz saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem. ² 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. ³ 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. ⁴ 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. ⁵ O house of Jacob, come, let us walk in the light of the Lord!

As I read these passages what sticks out to me is the word "rebuke". This is the "sharp criticism of a person's behavior because of their actions or behaviors."

The Lord is not giving up on His people, but He certainly is not happy with their behavior. Central to Isaiah's message is the Lord's faith in us. We can as people and nations stand together to love our neighbor and turn the energy and artifacts of war into the energy and artifacts of love and plenty for all people and nations.

September 2022, in the United Nations over 100 nations came together to rebuke Russian behavior leaving just a handful supporting Russia.

This is the first time that a level of unanimity of this magnitude has occurred in the United Nations in decades. In this season have hope and faith that the Lord's word as expressed by Isaiah can be a reality.

-Harvey Smith

Thursday, December 1/Jueves, 1 de Diciembre

Psalm 72:1-7, 18-19

¹ Give the king your justice, O God, and your righteousness to a king's son. ² May he judge your people with righteousness, and your poor with justice. ³ May the mountains yield prosperity for the people, and the hills, in righteousness. ⁴ May he defend the cause of the poor of the people, give deliverance to the needy, and crush the oppressor. ⁵ May he live while the sun endures, and as long as the moon, throughout all generations. ⁶ May he be like rain that falls on the mown grass, like showers that water the earth. ⁷ In his days may righteousness flourish and peace abound, until the moon is no more.

+¹⁸ Blessed be the Lord, the God of Israel, who alone does wondrous things. ¹⁹ Blessed be his glorious name forever; may his glory fill the whole earth. Amen and Amen.

Trust in God. He already knows and is looking for you to acknowledge Him. Lean not on your own understanding, acknowledging Him and He will guide your path as He has guided mine. My recent move was not my own initiative but was done through the Holy Spirit and God. Sometimes you don't realize that God is working in you until it is accomplished. I am mighty grateful and filled with contentment and blessed with my new place which is becoming a sanctuary that God has provided.

-Reggie

Friday, December 2/Viernes, 2 de Diciembre

Isaiah 11:1-10

¹ A shoot shall come out from the stump of Jesse, and a branch shall grow out of his roots. ² 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. ³ 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; ⁴ 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. ⁵ Righteousness shall be the belt around his waist, and faithfulness the belt around his loins. ⁶ 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. ⁷ The cow and the bear shall graze, their young shall lie down together; and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. ⁸ The nursing child shall play over the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put its hand on the adder's den. ⁹ 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. ¹⁰ 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.

I really loved reading this passage from Isaiah. My first thought was “It’s what’s needed at this time... a promise of hope for the future in these dire times of problems in the world.... Coming out of COVID...tales of war in Europe and elsewhere...upheaval all over”... Then I remembered that these are just our current problems. Certainly to those who suffered during worse times ...two World Wars in Europe in the last century...discrimination all over ... Many in the past have seen and suffered much more than we are now. Yet through all that, Christians who have lived before us, going back over 2000 years to the time of the Roman persecutions would have heard this verse and been given hope by it. And that hope goes back even further. Isaiah was writing to the people of Israel as well, who had suffered so much under oppressors. Verse 6 says that “the wolf shall lay down with the lamb”... a promise to the oppressed of the world. This is what helps me keep my faith, knowing that at some time in the future, there is hope for a world that seems to me, and has seen to so many in the past, to be in turmoil constantly. The peace that God promises, through Christ, is His promise to us that no matter how grim things seem now, there is hope for a better future. We hear this promise several times in the Bible. No matter what is going on the world today, there is hope in our future through Christ.

-Geoff Goucher

Saturday, December 3 Sabado, 3 de Diciembre

Romans 15:4-13

⁴For 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. ⁵May the God of steadfastness and encouragement grant you to live in harmony with one another, in accordance with Christ Jesus, ⁶so that together you may with one voice glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. ⁷Welcome one another, therefore, just as Christ has welcomed you, for the glory of God. ⁸For 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, ⁹and 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"; ¹⁰and again he says, "Rejoice, O Gentiles, with his people"; ¹¹and again, "Praise the Lord, all you Gentiles, and let all the peoples praise him"; ¹²and again Isaiah says, "The root of Jesse shall come, the one who rises to rule the Gentiles; in him the Gentiles shall hope." ¹³May 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.

As a child of God, I want to be a peacemaker with a good attitude of mind towards others and give “the benefit of the doubt”. My intent and devotion are for love, joy and peace – practice kindness and understanding.

It’s extremely painful to be misunderstood, we aren’t able to control others. Life is always throwing obstacles at us in our journeys in life.

I rejoice and am grateful for everything that I have, praise the Lord.

The God of patience and encouragement. There is always hope through the power of the Holy Spirit.

My purpose as a Christian is to glorify God.

-Sally Villaluz-Ghormley

Matthew 3:1-12

Mt 3:1 In those days John the Baptist appeared in the wilderness of Judea, proclaiming, ² "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near." ³ 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.'" ⁴ Now John wore clothing of camel's hair with a leather belt around his waist, and his food was locusts and wild honey. ⁵ Then the people of Jerusalem and all Judea were going out to him, and all the region along the Jordan, ⁶ and they were baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins. ⁷ 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?" ⁸ Bear fruit worthy of repentance. ⁹ 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. ¹⁰ 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. ¹¹ "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. ¹² 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."

When John talks about trees bearing good fruit, he means the good things which come from living a life securely rooted in God. Trees rooted in sin bear bad fruit which do not sustain life, so these trees must be chopped down. John announces the coming of Jesus, whose resurrection assures us that, although we sometimes eat bad fruit from the bad trees we plant, our deepest foundation is forever and always rooted in God.

Monday, December 5/Lunes, 5 de Diciembre

Titus 2:11-14

11 For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all,

12 training us to renounce impiety and worldly passions, and in the present age to live lives that are self-controlled, upright, and godly,

13 while we wait for the blessed hope and the manifestation of the glory of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ.

14 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.

The greatest gift that God has given us is salvation through his son Christ Jesus. With God's grace we can navigate this evil world with righteousness and wisdom in hopes that we will overcome it the way our Lord did. Our devotion to God and our faith in him preserves us when his grace is upon us. Our hopes are in the day our savior returns in the glory that God our father gave him.

-Tiffany Smith

Tuesday, December 6/Martes, 6 de Diciembre

Genesis 9:8-17

8 Then God said to Noah and to his sons with him, 9 “As for me, I am establishing my covenant with you and your descendants after you 10 and with every living creature that is with you, the birds, the domestic animals, and every animal of the earth with you, as many as came out of the ark.[a] 11

I establish my covenant with you, that never again shall all flesh be cut off by the waters of a flood, and never again shall there be a flood to destroy the earth.” 12 God said, “This is the sign of the covenant that I make between me and you and every living creature that is with you, for all future generations:

13 I have set my bow in the clouds, and it shall be a sign of the covenant between me and the earth. 14 When I bring clouds over the earth and the bow is seen in the clouds, 15 I will remember my covenant that is between me and you and every living creature of all flesh, and the waters shall never again become a flood to destroy all flesh. 16 When the bow is in the clouds, I will see it and remember the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature of all flesh that is on the earth.” 17 God said to Noah, “This is the sign of the covenant that I have established between me and all flesh that is on the earth.”

Went I was a little boy I love the story of Noah's Ark and the rainbow. God established His covenant with Noah, his family, and with every living. God renews the blessing of creation. Went Jesus was on this earth. He promised to as a new covenant to love one another and to bring more souls to the kingdom.

-Enrique Urizar

Wednesday, December 7/Miercoles, 7 de Diciembre

Isaiah 35:1-10

¹ The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad, the desert shall rejoice and blossom; like the crocus ² 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. ³ Strengthen the weak hands, and make firm the feeble knees. ⁴ 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." ⁵ Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf unstopped; ⁶ 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; ⁷ 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. ⁸ 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 traveler, not even fools, shall go astray. ⁹ 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. ¹⁰ 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.

The Eternal One made it possible for the redeemed to be fertile and righteous for the land and the water and seeds. The wildlife will not be rampide but domesticated. He also provides water for springs that will flourish throughout the land. There will be singing and joy for the abundance that may come.

-Von Rodriguez

Thursday, December 8/Miércoles, 8 de Diciembre

Psalm 146:5-10

Happy are those whose help is the God of Jacob, whose hope is in the LORD their God, 6 who made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them; who keeps faith forever; 7 who executes justice for the oppressed; who gives food to the hungry. The LORD sets the prisoners free; 8 the LORD opens the eyes of the blind. The LORD lifts up those who are bowed down; the LORD loves the righteous. 9 The LORD watches over the strangers; he upholds the orphan and the widow, but the way of the wicked he brings to ruin. 10 The LORD will reign forever, your God, O Zion, for all generations. Praise the LORD! God made a land for His favored people.

Praise the Lord, O my soul!

It is hard to wrap our brains around the thought that God loves and cares for us no matter what we do to push Him away. He is faithful and on that knowledge we can rest. He sets us free from our fears and opens our eyes to the pain of others and to His goodness. He fills us with joy when we can by His hands and feet on earth to help His beloved that need help. God is with us now and forever.

Praise the Lord!

-Cindy W

Friday, December 9/Viernes, 9 de Diciembre

Luke 1:46b-55

“My soul magnifies the Lord,
47 and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior,
48 for he has looked with favor on the lowly state of his servant.
Surely from now on all generations will call me blessed,
49 for the Mighty One has done great things for me,
and holy is his name;
50 indeed, his mercy is for those who fear him
from generation to generation.
51 He has shown strength with his arm;
he has scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts.
52 He has brought down the powerful from their thrones
and lifted up the lowly;
53 he has filled the hungry with good things
and sent the rich away empty.
54 He has come to the aid of his child Israel,
in remembrance of his mercy,
55 according to the promise he made to our ancestors,
to Abraham and to his descendants forever.”

The unexpected nature of God’s will is Mary, the mother of Jesus. Although the details are very scarce, we learn primarily from Luke that Mary is a young woman betrothed to a man named Joseph. She is visited by an angel who reveals that she has found favor in the eyes of the Lord and will give birth to a child who is the Son of God. The scenario certainly seems unlikely to Mary, since she is a virgin, but she responds with obedience. After hearing the news she visits Elizabeth who is also expecting a baby. Mary praises God, thanking God for the great things that are happening in her life and for the mercy God offers God’s people.

Mary’s acceptance and thanksgiving of her own surprise calling a powerful example of just how we might embrace our own journey with faith. The reality is that God has a plan for each of us, just as God had a plan for Mary. Our challenge is to not only follow God into the unknown but to also praise God for every opportunity and blessing He gives us on a daily basis. Be happy this Holiday season and praise God for everything just as Mary did.

-Dean McBee

Saturday, December 10/Sabado, 10 de Diciembre

James 5:7-10

⁷ 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.

⁸ You also must be patient. Strengthen your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is near.

⁹ Beloved, do not grumble against one another, so that you may not be judged. See, the Judge is standing at the doors!

¹⁰ As an example of suffering and patience, beloved, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord.

Faith is a journey not a destination. Through this journey we learn patience. We learn what is important and what our focus should be. We learn to not work against each other, but together. Through patience we learn the art of recognizing each other's strengths and the patience to let each others gifts shine to show God's blessings. We all bring value in the conversation.

-Frances Skeete

December 11 3rd Sunday in Advent/3 Domingo en Adviento

Matthew 11:2-11

² When John heard in prison what the Messiah was doing, he sent word by his disciples ³ and said to him, "Are you the one who is to come, or are we to wait for another?" ⁴ Jesus answered them, "Go and tell John what you hear and see: ⁵ 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. ⁶ And blessed is anyone who takes no offense at me." ⁷ 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? ⁸ What then did you go out to see? Someone dressed in soft robes? Look, those who wear soft robes are in royal palaces. ⁹ What then did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet. ¹⁰ 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.' ¹¹ 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.

John wanted to know what Jesus was about. John reflected confusion over what Jesus was to do. John was expecting a political Messiah who would overthrow the Romans.

Jesus indicated he was not a political person but was person who came to establish a kingdom that brought healing, liberation, and good news but not necessarily political power.

Jesus has given all of us a road map that Jesus knows will work for us. A map that encourages each person to be kind and loving to all. Jesus promises that this map will give us peace and hope.

-DeMar Sather

Monday, December 12/Lunes, 12 de Diciembre

John 1:1-14

¹ In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ² He was in the beginning with God. ³ All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being ⁴ in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. ⁵ The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it. ⁶ There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. ⁷ He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. ⁸ He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light. ⁹ The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world. ¹⁰ He was in the world, and the world came into being through him; yet the world did not know him. ¹¹ He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him. ¹² But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, ¹³ who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God. ¹⁴ 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.

Jesus Christ was baptized by John.

I was baptized at St. John's Lutheran Church in Dayton, OH!

I too am a devoted son of Jesus Christ.

Merry Christmas and Happy Holidays!

-Willie Heard

**Willie was born on a summer Sunday, July 15th, 1973
and baptized as an adult at 33.**

Tuesday, December 13/Martes, 13 de Diciembre

Psalm 96

1 O sing to the Lord a new song; sing to the Lord, all the earth.
2 Sing to the Lord; bless his name; tell of his salvation from day to day.
3 Declare his glory among the nations, his marvelous works among all the peoples.
4 For great is the Lord and greatly to be praised; he is to be revered above all gods.
5 For all the gods of the peoples are idols, but the Lord made the heavens.
6 Honor and majesty are before him; strength and beauty are in his sanctuary.
7 Ascribe to the Lord, O families of the peoples, ascribe to the Lord glory and strength.
8 Ascribe to the Lord the glory due his name; bring an offering, and come into his courts.
9 Worship the Lord in holy splendor; tremble before him, all the earth.
10 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."
11 Let the heavens be glad, and let the earth rejoice; let the sea roar and all that fills it;
12 let the field exult and everything in it. Then shall all the trees of the forest sing for joy.
13 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.

Proclaim the good news of His salvation. These songs in Psalm 96 were songs to the Lord were not only celebrations, they were also proclamations. They proclaim His salvation and declared His glory and His wonders to the entire world, to all the nations. These songs in Psalm 96 are sung all the time in churches. They can be found 216 times in the Bible.

Let all the earth sing a new song to the Lord. The Psalm ends with the joyful confidence that God will judge and set things right.

While out for a walk, or on a trip somewhere or on a run around the lake or just sitting at the park looking out over the waterfront Sing a new song and give the Lord praise about what He has created. The beauty and clear air, the freedom we have.

The past 2 years have been rough with COVID-19, now Monkeypox and inflation-gas prices, food prices, and the war in Ukraine but in all things Sing a new song and give praise for what we have.

-Dean McBee

Wednesday, December 14/Meircoles, 14 de Diciembre
Romans 10:10-18

¹⁰ For one believes with the heart and so is justified, and one confesses with the mouth and so is saved. ¹¹ The scripture says, "No one who believes in him will be put to shame." ¹² For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek; the same Lord is Lord of all and is generous to all who call on him. ¹³ For, "Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved." ¹⁴ But how are they to call on one in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in one of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without someone to proclaim him? ¹⁵ And how are they to proclaim him unless they are sent? As it is written, "How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!" ¹⁶ But not all have obeyed the good news; for Isaiah says, "Lord, who has believed our message?" ¹⁷ So faith comes from what is heard, and what is heard comes through the word of Christ. ¹⁸ But I ask, have they not heard? Indeed they have; for "Their voice has gone out to all the earth, and their words to the ends of the world."

For all who believe in their hearts will not be put in shame, as the Lord is generous to all who call on him, and all who believe in him and have faith in the word of Christ will be heard.

Even if we have made mistakes in life and have done things that we know are wrong, as long as we repent and have faith in the Lord we will be forgiven.

-Jon Napiontek

Thursday, December 15/Jueves, 15 de Diciembre

Isaías /Isaiah 7:10-16

¹⁰ Again the Lord spoke to Ahaz, saying,

¹¹ Ask a sign of the Lord your God; let it be deep as Sheol or high as heaven. ¹² But Ahaz said, I will not ask, and I will not put the Lord to the test. ¹³ Then Isaiah said: "Hear then, O house of David! Is it too little for you to weary mortals, that you weary my God also? ¹⁴

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. ¹⁵ He shall eat curds and honey by the time he knows how to refuse the evil and choose the good. ¹⁶ 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.

This portion of the Old Testament covers a violent period of time when warring factions and alliances were raised to conquer Jerusalem. Isaiah was urged to trust in the Lord and hold firm in your faith and you will prevail. This chapter in Biblical times has been echoed since time immortal. Justifying wars based on messages received by prophets, false gods, and perceived historical rights. How sad that over the millennia we as a human race have not found a common ground to compromise our differences without resulting in wars that in the end benefit no one. Let us hope that a second coming (a peaceful reckoning) will occur before humankind self destructs.

-John Douglas

Friday, December 16/Miércoles, 16 de Diciembre

Psalm 80:1-8, 17-19

¹ Give ear, O Shepherd of Israel, you who lead Joseph like a flock!

You who are enthroned upon the cherubim, shine forth ² before Ephraim and Benjamin and Manasseh. Stir up your might, and come to save us! ³ Restore us, O God; let your face shine, that we may be saved. ⁴ O Lord God of hosts, how long will you be angry with your people's prayers? ⁵ You have fed them with the bread of tears, and given them tears to drink in full measure. ⁶ You make us the scorn of our neighbors; our enemies laugh among themselves. ⁷ Restore us, O God of hosts; let your face shine, that we may be saved. ⁸ You brought a vine out of Egypt; you drove out the nations and planted it.

¹⁷ But let your hand be upon the one at your right hand, the one whom you made strong for yourself. ¹⁸ Then we will never turn back from you; give us life, and we will call on your name. ¹⁹ Restore us, O Lord God of hosts; let your face shine, that we may be saved.

El Señor dice a Jose: Guía. Jose quiere a su familia. Le pido a mi Señor que me ayude a ser lo que era antes. ¡Que me mire y me salve! Le pido a mi Dios Todopoderoso que no se enoje, que me de salvación. Que no me convierta en burla de mis vecinos y mis enemigos; me los quite de enfrente de mi.

Que Dios todopoderoso me bendiga hoy por siempre, por los siglos de los siglos, Amén.

~

The Lord says to Jose: Guide. Jose loves his family. I ask my Lord for help to be what I was before. Look at me, save me! Almighty God, don't be angry at me and give me salvation. Don't make me a mockery of my neighbors and my enemies; take them away from me.

May Almighty God bless me today and forever, forever and ever, Amen.

-Margarito Perez

Saturday, December 17/Sabado, 17 de Diciembre

Romans 1:1-7

¹ Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, set apart for the gospel of God, ² which he promised beforehand through his prophets in the holy scriptures, ³ the gospel concerning his Son, who was descended from David according to the flesh ⁴ 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, ⁵ 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, ⁶ including yourselves who are called to belong to Jesus Christ, ⁷ 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.

Paul writes to the fledgling church at Rome that Jesus is the fulfillment of the prophesies of old. That his life and death and resurrection were foretold. He came as a man, a descendent of David and through his death and resurrection he ascended into heaven the Son of God.

Paul has been tasked to bring the Good News of our salvation through Jesus' grace to the world. That Jesus' promise is for all mankind.

-Maggie Smith

December 18 4th Sunday in Advent/4 Domingo en Adviento

Matthew 1:18-25

¹⁸ 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. ¹⁹ Her husband Joseph, being a righteous man and unwilling to expose her to public disgrace, planned to dismiss her quietly. ²⁰ 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. ²¹ She will bear a son, and you are to name him Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins." ²² All this took place to fulfill what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet: ²³ "Look, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall name him Emmanuel," which means, "God is with us." ²⁴ When Joseph awoke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him; he took her as his wife, ²⁵ but had no marital relations with her until she had borne a son; and he named him Jesus.

Good text. I think they are all aliens. San Francisco has videos. They have a ship that descends into the water.

Salvation means I'm not going to hell because I have a savior. This makes me feel good. And I feel good that others aren't going to hell either.

Christmas don't come. It means I'm getting older. I would like to keep time right where it is at, I don't want to get older. It is not good getting old.

-Ken Nelson

Monday, December 19/Lunes, 19 de Diciembre

Genesis 17:15-22

15 God said to Abraham, “As for Sarai your wife, you shall not call her Sarai, but Sarah shall be her name. 16 I will bless her and also give you a son by her. I will bless her, and she shall give rise to nations; kings of peoples shall come from her.” 17 Then Abraham fell on his face and laughed and said to himself, “Can a child be born to a man who is a hundred years old? Can Sarah, who is ninety years old, bear a child?” 18 And Abraham said to God, “O that Ishmael might live in your sight!” 19 God said, “No, but your wife Sarah shall bear you a son, and you shall name him Isaac.[a] I will establish my covenant with him as an everlasting covenant for his offspring after him. 20 As for Ishmael, I have heard you; I will bless him and make him fruitful and exceedingly numerous; he shall be the father of twelve princes, and I will make him a great nation. 21 But my covenant I will establish with Isaac, whom Sarah shall bear to you at this season next year.” 22 And when he had finished talking with him, God went up from Abraham.

God will test you and then work with you because he knows you obey God's commands.

So God changed Sarai to Sarah because she suffered with Abram, God made her a mother of great men.

-Courtenay

Tuesday, December 20/ Martes, 20 de Diciembre

Galatians 3:6-14

6 Just as Abraham “believed God, and it was reckoned to him as righteousness,” 7 so, you see, those who believe are the descendants of Abraham. 8 And the scripture, foreseeing that God would reckon as righteous the gentiles by faith, declared the gospel beforehand to Abraham, saying, “All the gentiles shall be blessed in you.” 9 For this reason, those who believe are blessed with Abraham who believed.

10 For all who rely on the works of the law are under a curse, for it is written, “Cursed is everyone who does not observe and obey all the things written in the book of the law.” 11 Now it is evident that no one is reckoned as righteous before God by the law, for “the one who is righteous will live by faith.”[a] 12 But the law does not rest on faith; on the contrary, “Whoever does the works of the law[b] will live by them.” 13 Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us—for it is written, “Cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree”— 14 in order that in Christ Jesus the blessing of Abraham might come to the gentiles, so that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.

Spirit of Abraham. He was the right person in God’s eyes. Abraham believed in faith by the gentiles and believers. Also, they believed in the story to observe and obey the law. Evidence of righteousness and the law and Christ the redeemer. Christ redeems everyone. Also believed that Spirit of faith blessed you in the Spirit. Christ Jesus blessing of delivery on earth, a blessing to disciples. Gentiles through the Spirit believed.

-Amos Silas

Wednesday, December 21/Miercoles, 21 de Diciembre

Genesis 37:2-11

2 These are the descendants of Jacob.

Joseph, being seventeen years old, was shepherding the flock with his brothers; he was a helper to the sons of Bilhah and Zilpah, his father's wives, and Joseph brought a bad report of them to their father. 3 Now Israel loved Joseph more than any other of his children because he was the son of his old age, and he made him an ornamented robe.[a] 4 But when his brothers saw that their father loved him more than all his brothers, they hated him and could not speak peaceably to him. 5 Once Joseph had a dream, and when he told it to his brothers, they hated him even more. 6 He said to them, "Listen to this dream that I dreamed. 7 There we were, binding sheaves in the field. Suddenly my sheaf rose and stood upright; then your sheaves gathered around it and bowed down to my sheaf." 8 His brothers said to him, "Are you indeed to reign over us? Are you indeed to have dominion over us?" So they hated him even more because of his dreams and his words. 9 He had another dream and told it to his brothers, saying, "Look, I have had another dream: the sun, the moon, and eleven stars were bowing down to me." 10 But when he told it to his father and to his brothers, his father rebuked him and said to him, "What kind of dream is this that you have had? Shall we indeed come, I and your mother and your brothers, and bow to the ground before you?" 11 So his brothers were jealous of him, but his father kept the

matter in mind.

This is only part of the story which makes a point that we as humans only see part of the picture God sees the whole picture and where He wants us to end up. Joseph was hated by his family because he was faithful to God. Jesus said that it's the cost of following him that our enemies will be those of our household. But God used this situation and Joseph to feed people during a famine. So when we are faithful to God in any situation He can use us to help others.

Michelle D.

Thursday, December 22/ Jueves 22 de Diciembre

Titus 3:4-7

Tit 3:4 But when the goodness and loving kindness of God our Savior appeared, ⁵ he saved us, not because of any works of righteousness that we had done, but according to his mercy, through the water of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit. ⁶ This Spirit he poured out on us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior, ⁷ so that, having been justified by his grace, we might become heirs according to the hope of eternal life.

Pero Dios nuestro Salvador mostró su bondad y su amor por la humanidad. ⁵ Él nos salvó gracias a su misericordia, no por algo bueno que hubiéramos hecho. Nos salvó lavándonos, dándonos una vida nueva al renovarnos por medio del Espíritu Santo. ⁶ Dios derramó en abundancia el Espíritu Santo sobre nosotros por medio de Jesucristo, nuestro Salvador. ⁷ Así que aprobados por el generoso amor de Dios, disfrutamos de la esperanza de la vida eterna que Dios tiene para sus hijos.

Porque de tal manera nos ama Dios que ofreció a su Hijo por nosotros. El conoce lo mas profundo de nuestro corazones. El conoce nuestros pensamientos. Vendito sea le Nombre de Dios.

Because God loves us so much that he offered his Son for us. He knows the depths of our hearts. He knows our thoughts. Blessed be the Name of God.

-Eduardo Villalobos

Friday, December 23rd/Viernes 23 de Diciembre
Isaiah 62:1-12

“Upon your walls, O Jerusalem, I have posted sentinels; all day and all night they shall never be silent. You who remind the Lord, take no rest and give him no rest until he establishes Jerusalem and makes it renowned throughout the earth. The Lord has sworn by his right hand and by his mighty arm. I will not again give your grain to be food for your enemies and foreigners shall not drink the wine for which you have labored; but those who garner it shall eat it and praise the Lord, and those who gather it shall drink it in my holy courts. Go through, go through the gates, prepare the way for the people; build up, build up the highway, clear it of stones, lift up an ensign over the peoples. The Lord has proclaimed to the end of the earth, “See, your salvation comes; his reward is with him, and his recompense before him”. They shall be called “The Holy People, The Redeemed of the Lord,” and you shall be called, “Sought Out, A City Not Forsaken.”

These passages from Isaiah offer insight into the plans and workings of our Heavenly Father, though no human mind could ever hope to fully understand what and how God, in His infinite wisdom, has done and will do on the behalf of his chosen people. He has for so long sought to redeem and restore His people, though they in turn invoked His anger by their sin, desertion from His precepts, and outright stubbornness.

Isaiah is writing in a time when Jerusalem is a shadow of its former self, still functioning as a city but with a corrupt and downtrodden population under the subjugation of the Babylonians. He is looking forward to the time when Jerusalem will hear God's comforting message and assurances that she will be restored "...to a shining righteousness." This message of hope is also meant to include the Gentiles, who will see God lifting up the people of Israel and come to trust in Him as well. God the Father will delight in His transformed people as a groom delights in his bride. New names will be used for this ascension of Jerusalem to replace the former. Verse 12 finishes with the promise His people will be called holy, and redeemed! Praise God!

-David Schexnayder

Saturday, December 24th/ Sabado 24 de Diciembre

Isaiah 9:2-7

² " 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. ³ 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. ⁴ 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. ⁵ For all the boots of the tramping warriors and all the garments rolled in blood shall be burned as fuel for the fire. ⁶ 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. ⁷ 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.

Estamos viviendo tiempos difíciles por la pandemia que pareciera no tener fin. Estamos además viviendo una época de crisis económica provocada por la pandemia y la guerra...sin embargo, nos alegra saber que tenemos en nuestra vida a Cristo Jesús quien nos guía y que recordamos durante este Tiempo de Adviento. La lectura de Isaías nos invita a alegrarnos con todo a pesar de las adversidades. Nos recuerda Jesucristo es nuestra luz y esperanza. ¡Ven Cristo Jesús a instalar tu Reino de Paz y Justicia en nuestras vidas!

We are living difficult times due to the pandemic that seems to have no end. We are also experiencing a time of economic crisis caused by the pandemic and the war... however, we are happy to know that we have Christ Jesus in our lives who guides us and who we remember during this Advent Season. The reading from Isaiah invites us to rejoice because despite adversity Jesus Christ is our light and hope. Come Christ Jesus to install your Kingdom of Peace and Justice in our lives!

-Esaú Cuevas

Christmas Day/Navidad

Luke 2:1-20



Christmas is anticipation fulfilled. What wonderful gift will I receive? The gift of Xmas is that each of us bring value. Jesus's birth in a manger is recognition all living things are connected. We have a responsibility to take of the Earth...to demonstrate God's love in all its forms. Jesus's birth represents renewal, forgiveness, compassion, hope, and love. God is saying, "I am here". May you remember your special gift.

Merry Christmas!

-Frances Skeete

Church of Steadfast Love
at
Compass Housing Alliance
77 S. Washington St.
Seattle, WA 98104
(206) 474-1007