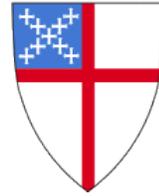


Lessons for December 17th, 2017
Third Sunday of Advent



First Reading: Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11

Hear the Word of God as it is written in Isaiah chapter 61 verses 1 to 4 and 8 to 11.

The spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me, because the LORD has anointed me; he has sent me to bring good news to the oppressed, to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and release to the prisoners; to proclaim the year of the LORD's favor, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all who mourn; to provide for those who mourn in Zion— to give them a garland instead of ashes, the oil of gladness instead of mourning, the mantle of praise instead of a faint spirit. They will be called oaks of righteousness, the planting of the LORD, to display his glory. They shall build up the ancient ruins, they shall raise up the former devastations; they shall repair the ruined cities, the devastations of many generations. For I the LORD love justice, I hate robbery and wrongdoing; I will faithfully give them their recompense, and I will make an everlasting covenant with them. Their descendants shall be known among the nations, and their offspring among the peoples; all who see them shall acknowledge that they are a people whom the LORD has blessed. I will greatly rejoice in the LORD, my whole being shall exult in my God; for he has clothed me with the garments of salvation, he has covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decks himself with a garland, and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels. For as the earth brings forth its shoots, and as a garden causes what is sown in it to spring up, so the Lord GOD will cause righteousness and praise to spring up before all the nations.

This is the Word of the Lord.

Psalm 126

Let us all stand and read Psalm 126, responsively by verse.

- 1 When the LORD restored the fortunes of Zion, then were we like those who dream.
- 2 Then was our mouth filled with laughter, and our tongue with shouts of joy.
- 3 Then they said among the nations, "The LORD has done great things for them."
- 4 The LORD has done great things for us, and we are glad indeed.
- 5 Restore our fortunes, O LORD, like the watercourses of the Negev.
- 6 Those who sowed with tears will reap with songs of joy.
- 7 Those who go out weeping, carrying the seed, will come again with joy, shouldering their sheaves.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit. As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be, World without end. Amen.

Second Reading: 1 Thessalonians 5:16-24

Hear the Word of God as it is written in First Thessalonians chapter 5 verses 16 to 24.

Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you. Do not quench the Spirit. Do not despise the words of prophets, but test everything; hold fast to what is good; abstain from every form of evil.

May the God of peace himself sanctify you entirely; and may your spirit and soul and body be kept sound and blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. The one who calls you is faithful, and he will do this.

This is the Word of the Lord.