

Contents

This Week's Readings

Rector's Ramblings

Advent is a season of preparation and hope. It is a time where we prepare for the yearly celebration of the birth of Christ and a time of preparation for His return. In this column, then, will appear short texts from writers far more adept than I, and who have delved into the great mystery of the Incarnation.

"The Christian in Advent needs to listen to that, listen to such a degree that this season becomes both a season of joyful expectancy and a season of poverty--the knowledge that we cannot talk and touch ourselves into life, the deep poverty of the imagination which can only stand helplessly before the outrages and miseries of our world, utterly at a loss for a word of meaning or hope to speak. We are here at all, celebrating Advent (as a Jew celebrates the Passover) because there has been a word spoken, a word of unexpected interruption, a word that established for good the difference between the god we expect and the God who comes, a word that shows us once and for all what an idol looks like in the face of truth....The Advent tension is a way of learning again that God is God: that between even our deepest and holiest longing and the reality of God is a gap which only grace can cross; otherwise we are alone again, incommunicado, our signals and symbols bounced back to us off the glassy walls of the universe." --The Most Rev. Rowan D. Williams, 104th Archbishop of Canterbury, "A Ray of Darkness", 6.

In Christ's love,

The Good News

December 8, 2017



Women's & Men's Breakfast

Upon further review, there will be no breakfast fellowships in December.

Advent Study

Adult Formation during Advent will focus on reading St. Maximus' the Confessor's "Four Hundred Chapters on Love/Charity".

This is not a long book, in the time of Maximus a "chapter" was roughly equivalent to what we might call "sound bites".

Since Advent provides us less Wednesdays this year, to complete this walk through the chapters together, we will meet on 12/6, 12/13, 12/27 and 1/3.

Copies of the chapters will be made available, but if you wish to purchase a copy they can be found at [Amazon](https://www.amazon.com/dp/B000APR004).

Fourth Sunday of Advent - Christmas Worship Schedule

12/24

7:30AM Celebration of IV Advent.

4:30PM Evensong and Holy Eucharist for the Feast of Christmas.

10:30PM Candlelight Christ Mass. There will be no pre-service carol sing this year. The sung Mass will include hymns and will begin promptly at 10:30.

Christmas Day

9AM Rite I Mass

Dave Halt, Rector
309-660-8515



Ministry Links



St. Matthew's Webpage
The Episcopal Diocese of
Springfield
Rector's Blog

Midwest Food Bank

St. Matthew's will be volunteering at Midwest Food Bank on Wednesday, December 20.

We will work from 6-8PM, so mark your calendars for this evening of service and community building. All ages are welcome to help.

Theology Uncorked (Note Date Change)

A new ministry of theological discussion for young adults will meet again on 17 December immediately following Evensong. Invite your friends and anyone who might be interested.

Mission Leadership Team

St. Matthew's MLT will meet at 7PM on 12/11 in the Parish Hall. All are welcome to attend the meeting.

The Daily Devotional Reading

is available by clicking of the link below:
[Good News Daily](#)

Serving Schedule

10-December

7:30

Greeters: Ray Durham

Lector: Julie Bennett

E.M.: Chris Bennett

10:00

Acolyte: Christian Pitts

Crucifer: Brad Bauman

Lector: Chrissy Stoffer

E.M.: Jack Pitts

Monday Counter: Volunteer Needed

Coffee Hour: Susan & Jeff Clark

17-December

7:30

Greeter: Doug & Dede Dyson

Lector: Mark Gibson

E.M.: Bill Johns

10:00

Acolyte: Alley Roberson

Crucifer: Brad Bauman
Lector: John Stoffer
E.M.: Emily Lavikoff & Shelley Brenneman Carter
Monday Counter: Susan Clark
Coffee Hour: Martha Lakin & Linda Stawick

Outreach Opportunities

ITEMS-OF-THE-MONTH

Why the big white box in the hallway across from the office?
That's where we're asking you to place clean, gently used coats you no longer wear. We will deliver them to The Salvation Army's local headquarters for distribution to needy people this fall and winter. We'll also collect other gently used winter wear (gloves, hats, scarves). THANK YOU! The Outreach Committee

MITTEN TREES

It is an annual tradition at St. Matthew's that Christmas trees be trimmed with hats, scarves, gloves and mittens for children in need in the community. "Mitten Trees" have been placed in the Narthex and hallway outside the Parish Hall. Please help decorate them with store bought or handmade items during Advent and through the season of Christmas.

St. Matthew's Schedule for the week of December 10th

Coffee Hour follows 10:00 a.m. worship in the Parish hall

Sunday-11:00 a.m.-Guild of the Holy Rosary

Sunday-5:30 p.m.-Evensong

Monday-7:00 a.m.-Morning Prayer

Monday-5:30 p.m.-Brownies in lower level

Monday-7:00 p.m.- MLT Budget meeting

Tuesday-7:00 a.m.-Morning Prayer

Tuesday-10:00 a.m.-Quilters

Wednesday-7:00 a.m.-Morning Prayer

Wednesday-5:30 p.m.-Light supper for study participants

Wednesday-6:00 p.m.- Adult Advent study & Catechesis of the Good Shepherd

Thursday-7:30 a.m.-Morning Prayer and breakfast

Friday-7:00 a.m.-Morning Prayer

Office Hours: Monday through Friday: 9:00 a.m.- 1:00 p.m.

If you have anything you would like added to the schedule or announcements in the bulletin and news letter please send an email reply to the newsletter, or call the office.

Readings for December 10, 201

Old Testament

Isaiah 40:1-11

Comfort, O comfort my people,
says your God.
Speak tenderly to Jerusalem,
and cry to her
that she has served her term,
that her penalty is paid,
that she has received from the Lord's hand
double for all her sins.

A voice cries out:
"In the wilderness prepare the way of the Lord,
make straight in the desert a highway for our God.
Every valley shall be lifted up,
and every mountain and hill be made low;
the uneven ground shall become level,
and the rough places a plain.
Then the glory of the Lord shall be revealed,
and all people shall see it together,
for the mouth of the Lord has spoken."

A voice says, "Cry out!"
And I said, "What shall I cry?"
All people are grass,
their constancy is like the flower of the field.
The grass withers, the flower fades,
when the breath of the Lord blows upon it;
surely the people are grass.
The grass withers, the flower fades;
but the word of our God will stand for ever.
Get you up to a high mountain,
O Zion, herald of good tidings;
lift up your voice with strength,
O Jerusalem, herald of good tidings,
lift it up, do not fear;
say to the cities of Judah,
"Here is your God!"
See, the Lord God comes with might,
and his arm rules for him;
his reward is with him,
and his recompense before him.
He will feed his flock like a shepherd;
he will gather the lambs in his arms,
and carry them in his bosom,
and gently lead the mother sheep.

Psalm 85:1-2, 8-13

Benedixisti, Domine

1 You have been gracious to your land, O Lord, *
you have restored the good fortune of Jacob.

2 You have forgiven the iniquity of your people *

and blotted out all their sins.

8 I will listen to what the Lord God is saying, *
for he is speaking peace to his faithful people
and to those who turn their hearts to him.

9 Truly, his salvation is very near to those who fear him, *
that his glory may dwell in our land.

10 Mercy and truth have met together; *
righteousness and peace have kissed each other.

11 Truth shall spring up from the earth, *
and righteousness shall look down from heaven.

12 The Lord will indeed grant prosperity, *
and our land will yield its increase.

13 Righteousness shall go before him, *
and peace shall be a pathway for his feet.

The Epistle

2 Peter 3:8-15a

Do not ignore this one fact, beloved, that with the Lord one day
is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like one day.

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

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

Therefore, beloved, while you are waiting for these things,
strive to be found by him at peace, without spot or blemish;
and regard the patience of our Lord as salvation.

The Gospel

Mark 1:1-8

The beginning of the good news of Jesus Christ, the Son of
God.

As it is written in the prophet Isaiah,

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

the voice of one crying out in the wilderness:

'Prepare the way of the Lord,
make his paths straight,'"

John the baptizer appeared in the wilderness, proclaiming a
baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. And people
from the whole Judean countryside and all the people of
Jerusalem were going out to him, and were baptized by him in

the river Jordan, confessing their sins. Now John was clothed with camel's hair, with a leather belt around his waist, and he ate locusts and wild honey. He proclaimed, "The one who is more powerful than I is coming after me; I am not worthy to stoop down and untie the thong of his sandals. I have baptized you with water; but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit."

Birthdays & Anniversaries December 10 - 16

Anniversaries

Birthdays

Mary Hunt
Colin Bernnett

Collect for the second Sunday of Advent, December 10th

Merciful God, who didst send thy messengers the prophets to preach repentance and prepare the way for our salvation: Give us grace to heed their warnings and forsake our sins, that we may greet with joy the coming of Jesus Christ our Redeemer; who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever Amen.

Contact Information

St. Matthew's Episcopal Church

