

Trinity Episcopal Church  
5:30 pm Evening Prayer  
Advent 2019 – Year 2

# Reader's Guide



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5:30 pm Evening Prayer  
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## General Instructions

Before service begins at 5:30:

- Make sure doors at rear of nave are unlocked & appropriate lights are turned on.
- Pick up Evening Prayer Reader's Guide from the Sacristy (unless you have your copy with you).
- Light 3 office candles on either side of the cross.
- Encourage attendees to gather in the choir until there is overflow for the front rows of the nave.
- Take a seat in one of the front rows of the choir stalls.

During the service:

- Follow the service for Daily Evening Prayer, Rite Two, pp. 115-126 in Prayer Book. Speak slowly, clearly, and loud enough to be heard by all present.
- *Ask all to stand.*
  - Use one of the Opening Sentences, p. 115-116
- *Kneel.*
  - Confession of Sin, p. 116-117
- *Ask all to stand.*
  - Invitatory (with Alleluia), p. 117
  - O Gracious Light (together), p. 118
- *Ask all to be seated.*
  - The Psalm Appointed (read responsively by whole verse)
  - Glory to the Father ..., p. 118
  - A Reading from ... (Old Testament)
- *Ask all to stand*
  - The Song of Mary (together), p. 119
- *Ask all to be seated.*
  - A Reading from ... (Gospel)
- *Ask all to stand.*
  - The Apostles' Creed, p. 120
- *Kneel.*
  - The Prayers
  - Our Father ..., p. 121
  - Suffrages A, p. 121-122
  - The Collect of the Day (for appropriate week of Advent)
  - Choose one Collect, p. 123-124
  - Choose one Prayer for Mission, p. 124-125
  - The General Thanksgiving, p. 125

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- A Prayer of St. Chrystotom, p. 126
- Blessing & Conclusion, p. 126

After the service ends:

- Greet those who have attended.
- Extinguish office candles.
- Make sure doors at rear of nave are locked & appropriate lights are turned off.
- Return Evening Prayer Reader's Guide to the Sacristy and lock door.
- Exit through courtyard door.

## **Advent Collects**

### **First Week of Advent**

Almighty God, give us grace to cast away the works of darkness, and put on the armor of light, now in the time of this mortal life in which your Son Jesus Christ came to visit us in great humility; that in the last day, when he shall come again in his glorious majesty to judge both the living and the dead, we may rise to the life immortal; through him who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. *Amen.*

### **Second Week of Advent**

Merciful God, who sent your 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 lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. *Amen.*

### **Third Week of Advent**

Stir up your power, O Lord, and with great might come among us; and, because we are sorely hindered by our sins, let your bountiful grace and mercy speedily help and deliver us; through Jesus Christ our Lord, to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit, be honor and glory, now and for ever. *Amen.*

### **Fourth Week of Advent**

Purify our conscience, Almighty God, by your daily visitation, that your Son Jesus Christ, at his coming, may find in us a mansion prepared for himself; who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. *Amen.*

**Monday December 2**

Reader: **Ed Bond**

Psalm 4, p. 587-588

Old Testament: Amos 2:6-16

6 This is what the LORD says: “For three sins of Israel, even for four, I will not relent. They sell the innocent for silver, and the needy for a pair of sandals.

7 They trample on the heads of the poor as on the dust of the ground and deny justice to the oppressed. Father and son use the same girl and so profane my holy name.

8 They lie down beside every altar on garments taken in pledge. In the house of their god they drink wine taken as fines.

9 “Yet I destroyed the Amorites before them, though they were tall as the cedars and strong as the oaks. I destroyed their fruit above and their roots below.

10 I brought you up out of Egypt and led you forty years in the wilderness to give you the land of the Amorites.

11 “I also raised up prophets from among your children and Nazirites from among your youths. Is this not true, people of Israel?” declares the LORD.

12 “But you made the Nazirites drink wine and commanded the prophets not to prophesy. 13 “Now then, I will crush you as a cart crushes when loaded with grain.

14 The swift will not escape, the strong will not muster their strength, and the warrior will not save his life.

15 The archer will not stand his ground, the fleet-footed soldier will not get away, and the horseman will not save his life.

16 Even the bravest warriors will flee naked on that day,” declares the LORD.

Gospel: Matthew 21:1-11

1 As they approached Jerusalem and came to Bethphage on the Mount of Olives, Jesus sent two disciples,

2 saying to them, “Go to the village ahead of you, and at once you will find a donkey tied there, with her colt by her. Untie them and bring them to me.

3 If anyone says anything to you, say that the Lord needs them, and he will send them right away.”

4 This took place to fulfill what was spoken through the prophet:

5 “Say to Daughter Zion, ‘See, your king comes to you, gentle and riding on a donkey, and on a colt, the foal of a donkey.’ ”

6 The disciples went and did as Jesus had instructed them.

7 They brought the donkey and the colt and placed their cloaks on them for Jesus to sit on.

8 A very large crowd spread their cloaks on the road, while others cut branches from the trees and spread them on the road.

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**9** The crowds that went ahead of him and those that followed shouted, “Hosanna to the Son of David!” “Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!” “Hosanna in the highest heaven!”

**10** When Jesus entered Jerusalem, the whole city was stirred and asked, “Who is this?”

**11** The crowds answered, “This is Jesus, the prophet from Nazareth in Galilee.”

## **Tuesday December 3**

Reader: **Bruce Scarborough**

Psalm 10, p. 594-595

Old Testament: Amos 3:1-11

**1** Hear this word, people of Israel, the word the LORD has spoken against you—against the whole family I brought up out of Egypt:

**2** “You only have I chosen of all the families of the earth; therefore I will punish you for all your sins.”

**3** Do two walk together unless they have agreed to do so?

**4** Does a lion roar in the thicket when it has no prey? Does it growl in its den when it has caught nothing?

**5** Does a bird swoop down to a trap on the ground when no bait is there? Does a trap spring up from the ground if it has not caught anything?

**6** When a trumpet sounds in a city, do not the people tremble? When disaster comes to a city, has not the LORD caused it?

**7** Surely the Sovereign LORD does nothing without revealing his plan to his servants the prophets.

**8** The lion has roared— who will not fear? The Sovereign LORD has spoken— who can but prophesy?

**9** Proclaim to the fortresses of Ashdod and to the fortresses of Egypt: “Assemble yourselves on the mountains of Samaria; see the great unrest within her and the oppression among her people.”

**10** “They do not know how to do right,” declares the LORD, “who store up in their fortresses what they have plundered and looted.”

**11** Therefore this is what the Sovereign LORD says: “An enemy will overrun your land, pull down your strongholds and plunder your fortresses.”

Gospel: Matthew 21:12-22

**12** Jesus entered the temple courts and drove out all who were buying and selling there. He overturned the tables of the money changers and the benches of those selling doves.

**13** “It is written,” he said to them, “ ‘My house will be called a house of prayer,’ but you are making it ‘a den of robbers.’”

**14** The blind and the lame came to him at the temple, and he healed them.

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**15** But when the chief priests and the teachers of the law saw the wonderful things he did and the children shouting in the temple courts, “Hosanna to the Son of David,” they were indignant.

**16** “Do you hear what these children are saying?” they asked him. “Yes,” replied Jesus, “have you never read, “ ‘From the lips of children and infants you, Lord, have called forth your praise?’”

**17** And he left them and went out of the city to Bethany, where he spent the night.

**18** Early in the morning, as Jesus was on his way back to the city, he was hungry.

**19** Seeing a fig tree by the road, he went up to it but found nothing on it except leaves. Then he said to it, “May you never bear fruit again!” Immediately the tree withered.

**20** When the disciples saw this, they were amazed. “How did the fig tree wither so quickly?” they asked.

**21** Jesus replied, “Truly I tell you, if you have faith and do not doubt, not only can you do what was done to the fig tree, but also you can say to this mountain, ‘Go, throw yourself into the sea,’ and it will be done.

**22** If you believe, you will receive whatever you ask for in prayer.”

## Thursday December 5

Reader: **Emily Fox**

Psalm 18:21-50, p. 604-606

Old Testament: Amos 4:6-13

**6** “I gave you empty stomachs in every city and lack of bread in every town, yet you have not returned to me,” declares the LORD.

**7** “I also withheld rain from you when the harvest was still three months away. I sent rain on one town, but withheld it from another. One field had rain; another had none and dried up.

**8** People staggered from town to town for water but did not get enough to drink, yet you have not returned to me,” declares the LORD.

**9** “Many times I struck your gardens and vineyards, destroying them with blight and mildew. Locusts devoured your fig and olive trees, yet you have not returned to me,” declares the LORD.

**10** “I sent plagues among you as I did to Egypt. I killed your young men with the sword, along with your captured horses. I filled your nostrils with the stench of your camps, yet you have not returned to me,” declares the LORD.

**11** “I overthrew some of you as I overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah. You were like a burning stick snatched from the fire, yet you have not returned to me,” declares the LORD.

**12** “Therefore this is what I will do to you, Israel, and because I will do this to you, Israel, prepare to meet your God.”

**13** He who forms the mountains, who creates the wind, and who reveals his thoughts to mankind, who turns dawn to darkness, and treads on the heights of the earth— the LORD God Almighty is his name.

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Gospel: Matthew 21:23-32

**23** Jesus entered the temple courts, and, while he was teaching, the chief priests and the elders of the people came to him. “By what authority are you doing these things?” they asked. “And who gave you this authority?”

**24** Jesus replied, “I will also ask you one question. If you answer me, I will tell you by what authority I am doing these things.

**25** John’s baptism—where did it come from? Was it from heaven, or of human origin?” They discussed it among themselves and said, “If we say, ‘From heaven,’ he will ask, ‘Then why didn’t you believe him?’

**26** But if we say, ‘Of human origin’—we are afraid of the people, for they all hold that John was a prophet.”

**27** So they answered Jesus, “We don’t know.” Then he said, “Neither will I tell you by what authority I am doing these things.

**28** “What do you think? There was a man who had two sons. He went to the first and said, ‘Son, go and work today in the vineyard.’

**29** “‘I will not,’ he answered, but later he changed his mind and went.

**30** “Then the father went to the other son and said the same thing. He answered, ‘I will, sir,’ but he did not go.

**31** “Which of the two did what his father wanted?” “The first,” they answered. Jesus said to them, “Truly I tell you, the tax collectors and the prostitutes are entering the kingdom of God ahead of you.

**32** For John came to you to show you the way of righteousness, and you did not believe him, but the tax collectors and the prostitutes did. And even after you saw this, you did not repent and believe him.

**Friday December 6**

Reader: **Russell Butts**

Psalms 22, p. 610-612

Old Testament: Amos 5:1-17

**1** Hear this word, Israel, this lament I take up concerning you:

**2** “Fallen is Virgin Israel, never to rise again, deserted in her own land, with no one to lift her up.”

**3** This is what the Sovereign LORD says to Israel: “Your city that marches out a thousand strong will have only a hundred left; your town that marches out a hundred strong will have only ten left.”

**4** This is what the LORD says to Israel: “Seek me and live;

**5** do not seek Bethel, do not go to Gilgal, do not journey to Beersheba. For Gilgal will surely go into exile, and Bethel will be reduced to nothing.”

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- 6** Seek the LORD and live, or he will sweep through the tribes of Joseph like a fire; it will devour them, and Bethel will have no one to quench it.
- 7** There are those who turn justice into bitterness and cast righteousness to the ground.
- 8** He who made the Pleiades and Orion, who turns midnight into dawn and darkens day into night, who calls for the waters of the sea and pours them out over the face of the land— the LORD is his name.
- 9** With a blinding flash he destroys the stronghold and brings the fortified city to ruin.
- 10** There are those who hate the one who upholds justice in court and detest the one who tells the truth.
- 11** You levy a straw tax on the poor and impose a tax on their grain. Therefore, though you have built stone mansions, you will not live in them; though you have planted lush vineyards, you will not drink their wine.
- 12** For I know how many are your offenses and how great your sins. There are those who oppress the innocent and take bribes and deprive the poor of justice in the courts.
- 13** Therefore the prudent keep quiet in such times, for the times are evil.
- 14** Seek good, not evil, that you may live. Then the LORD God Almighty will be with you, just as you say he is.
- 15** Hate evil, love good; maintain justice in the courts. Perhaps the LORD God Almighty will have mercy on the remnant of Joseph.
- 16** Therefore this is what the Lord, the LORD God Almighty, says: “There will be wailing in all the streets and cries of anguish in every public square. The farmers will be summoned to weep and the mourners to wail.
- 17** There will be wailing in all the vineyards, for I will pass through your midst,” says the LORD.

Gospel: Matthew 22:1-14

- 1** Jesus spoke to them again in parables, saying:
- 2** “The kingdom of heaven is like a king who prepared a wedding banquet for his son.
- 3** He sent his servants to those who had been invited to the banquet to tell them to come, but they refused to come.
- 4** “Then he sent some more servants and said, ‘Tell those who have been invited that I have prepared my dinner: My oxen and fattened cattle have been butchered, and everything is ready. Come to the wedding banquet.’
- 5** “But they paid no attention and went off—one to his field, another to his business.
- 6** The rest seized his servants, mistreated them and killed them.
- 7** The king was enraged. He sent his army and destroyed those murderers and burned their city.
- 8** “Then he said to his servants, ‘The wedding banquet is ready, but those I invited did not deserve to come.
- 9** So go to the street corners and invite to the banquet anyone you find.’
- 10** So the servants went out into the streets and gathered all the people they could find, the bad as well as the good, and the wedding hall was filled with guests.
- 11** “But when the king came in to see the guests, he noticed a man there who was not wearing wedding clothes.



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**12** He asked, ‘How did you get in here without wedding clothes, friend?’ The man was speechless.

**13** “Then the king told the attendants, ‘Tie his hand and foot, and throw him outside, into the darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.’

**14** “For many are invited, but few are chosen.”

## **Monday December 9**

Reader: **James Gavette**

Psalms 9, p. 593-594

Old Testament: Amos 7:1-9

**1** This is what the Sovereign LORD showed me: He was preparing swarms of locusts after the king’s share had been harvested and just as the late crops were coming up.

**2** When they had stripped the land clean, I cried out, “Sovereign LORD, forgive! How can Jacob survive? He is so small!”

**3** So the LORD relented. “This will not happen,” the LORD said.

**4** This is what the Sovereign LORD showed me: The Sovereign LORD was calling for judgment by fire; it dried up the great deep and devoured the land.

**5** Then I cried out, “Sovereign LORD, I beg you, stop! How can Jacob survive? He is so small!”

**6** So the LORD relented. “This will not happen either,” the Sovereign LORD said.

**7** This is what he showed me: The Lord was standing by a wall that had been built true to plumb, with a plumb line in his hand.

**8** And the LORD asked me, “What do you see, Amos?” “A plumb line,” I replied. Then the Lord said, “Look, I am setting a plumb line among my people Israel; I will spare them no longer.

**9** “The high places of Isaac will be destroyed and the sanctuaries of Israel will be ruined; with my sword I will rise against the house of Jeroboam.”

Gospel: Matthew 22:23-33

**23** That same day the Sadducees, who say there is no resurrection, came to him with a question.

**24** “Teacher,” they said, “Moses told us that if a man dies without having children, his brother must marry the widow and raise up offspring for him.

**25** Now there were seven brothers among us. The first one married and died, and since he had no children, he left his wife to his brother.

**26** The same thing happened to the second and third brother, right on down to the seventh.

**27** Finally, the woman died.

**28** Now then, at the resurrection, whose wife will she be of the seven, since all of them were married to her?”

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**29** Jesus replied, “You are in error because you do not know the Scriptures or the power of God.

**30** At the resurrection people will neither marry nor be given in marriage; they will be like the angels in heaven.

**31** But about the resurrection of the dead—have you not read what God said to you,

**32** ‘I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob?’ He is not the God of the dead but of the living.”

**33** When the crowds heard this, they were astonished at his teaching.

## **Tuesday December 10**

Reader: **Bruce Scarborough**

Psalm 39, p. 638-639

Old Testament: Amos 7:10-17

**10** Then Amaziah the priest of Bethel sent a message to Jeroboam king of Israel: “Amos is raising a conspiracy against you in the very heart of Israel. The land cannot bear all his words.

**11** For this is what Amos is saying: “ ‘Jeroboam will die by the sword, and Israel will surely go into exile, away from their native land.’ ”

**12** Then Amaziah said to Amos, “Get out, you seer! Go back to the land of Judah. Earn your bread there and do your prophesying there.

**13** Don’t prophesy anymore at Bethel, because this is the king’s sanctuary and the temple of the kingdom.”

**14** Amos answered Amaziah, “I was neither a prophet nor the son of a prophet, but I was a shepherd, and I also took care of sycamore-fig trees.

**15** But the LORD took me from tending the flock and said to me, ‘Go, prophesy to my people Israel.’

**16** Now then, hear the word of the LORD. You say, “ ‘Do not prophesy against Israel, and stop preaching against the descendants of Isaac.’

**17** “Therefore this is what the LORD says: “ ‘Your wife will become a prostitute in the city, and your sons and daughters will fall by the sword. Your land will be measured and divided up, and you yourself will die in a pagan country. And Israel will surely go into exile, away from their native land.’ ”

Gospel: Matthew 22:34-46

**34** Hearing that Jesus had silenced the Sadducees, the Pharisees got together.

**35** One of them, an expert in the law, tested him with this question:

**36** “Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the Law?”

**37** Jesus replied: “ ‘Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.’

**38** This is the first and greatest commandment.

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- 39** And the second is like it: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’  
**40** All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments.”  
**41** While the Pharisees were gathered together, Jesus asked them,  
**42** “What do you think about the Messiah? Whose son is he?” “The son of David,” they replied.  
**43** He said to them, “How is it then that David, speaking by the Spirit, calls him ‘Lord’? For he says,  
**44** “ ‘The Lord said to my Lord: “Sit at my right hand until I put your enemies under your feet.” ’  
**45** If then David calls him ‘Lord,’ how can he be his son?”  
**46** No one could say a word in reply, and from that day on no one dared to ask him any more questions.

**Thursday December 12**

Reader: **Kathleen Bond**

Psalm 37:19-42, p. 634-636

Old Testament: Amos 9:1-10

- 1** I saw the Lord standing by the altar, and he said: “Strike the tops of the pillars so that the thresholds shake. Bring them down on the heads of all the people; those who are left I will kill with the sword. Not one will get away, none will escape.  
**2** Though they dig down to the depths below, from there my hand will take them. Though they climb up to the heavens above, from there I will bring them down.  
**3** Though they hide themselves on the top of Carmel, there I will hunt them down and seize them. Though they hide from my eyes at the bottom of the sea, there I will command the serpent to bite them.  
**4** Though they are driven into exile by their enemies, there I will command the sword to slay them. “I will keep my eye on them for harm and not for good.”  
**5** The Lord, the LORD Almighty— he touches the earth and it melts, and all who live in it mourn; the whole land rises like the Nile, then sinks like the river of Egypt;  
**6** he builds his lofty palace in the heavens and sets its foundation on the earth; he calls for the waters of the sea and pours them out over the face of the land— the LORD is his name.  
**7** “Are not you Israelites the same to me as the Cushites?” declares the LORD. “Did I not bring Israel up from Egypt, the Philistines from Caphtor and the Arameans from Kir?  
**8** “Surely the eyes of the Sovereign LORD are on the sinful kingdom. I will destroy it from the face of the earth. Yet I will not totally destroy the descendants of Jacob,” declares the LORD.  
**9** “For I will give the command, and I will shake the people of Israel among all the nations as grain is shaken in a sieve, and not a pebble will reach the ground.  
**10** All the sinners among my people will die by the sword, all those who say, ‘Disaster will not overtake or meet us.’

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Gospel: Matthew 23:13-26

**13** “Woe to you, teachers of the law and Pharisees, you hypocrites! You shut the door of the kingdom of heaven in people’s faces. You yourselves do not enter, nor will you let those enter who are trying to.

**15** “Woe to you, teachers of the law and Pharisees, you hypocrites! You travel over land and sea to win a single convert, and when you have succeeded, you make them twice as much a child of hell as you are.

**16** “Woe to you, blind guides! You say, ‘If anyone swears by the temple, it means nothing; but anyone who swears by the gold of the temple is bound by that oath.’

**17** You blind fools! Which is greater: the gold, or the temple that makes the gold sacred?

**18** You also say, ‘If anyone swears by the altar, it means nothing; but anyone who swears by the gift on the altar is bound by that oath.’

**19** You blind men! Which is greater: the gift, or the altar that makes the gift sacred?

**20** Therefore, anyone who swears by the altar swears by it and by everything on it.

**21** And anyone who swears by the temple swears by it and by the one who dwells in it.

**22** And anyone who swears by heaven swears by God’s throne and by the one who sits on it.

**23** “Woe to you, teachers of the law and Pharisees, you hypocrites! You give a tenth of your spices—mint, dill and cumin. But you have neglected the more important matters of the law—justice, mercy and faithfulness. You should have practiced the latter, without neglecting the former.

**24** You blind guides! You strain out a gnat but swallow a camel.

**25** “Woe to you, teachers of the law and Pharisees, you hypocrites! You clean the outside of the cup and dish, but inside they are full of greed and self-indulgence.

**26** Blind Pharisee! First clean the inside of the cup and dish, and then the outside also will be clean.

**Friday December 13**

Reader: **Adam Gwin**

Psalm 35, p. 629-632

Old Testament: Haggai 1:1-15

**1** In the second year of King Darius, on the first day of the sixth month, the word of the LORD came through the prophet Haggai to Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel, governor of Judah, and to Joshua son of Jozadak, the high priest:

**2** This is what the LORD Almighty says: “These people say, ‘The time has not yet come to rebuild the LORD’s house.’”

**3** Then the word of the LORD came through the prophet Haggai:

**4** “Is it a time for you yourselves to be living in your paneled houses, while this house remains a ruin?”

**5** Now this is what the LORD Almighty says: “Give careful thought to your ways.

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**6** You have planted much, but harvested little. You eat, but never have enough. You drink, but never have your fill. You put on clothes, but are not warm. You earn wages, only to put them in a purse with holes in it.”

**7** This is what the LORD Almighty says: “Give careful thought to your ways.

**8** Go up into the mountains and bring down timber and build my house, so that I may take pleasure in it and be honored,” says the LORD.

**9** “You expected much, but see, it turned out to be little. What you brought home, I blew away. Why?” declares the LORD Almighty. “Because of my house, which remains a ruin, while each of you is busy with your own house.

**10** Therefore, because of you the heavens have withheld their dew and the earth its crops.

**11** I called for a drought on the fields and the mountains, on the grain, the new wine, the olive oil and everything else the ground produces, on people and livestock, and on all the labor of your hands.”

**12** Then Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel, Joshua son of Jozadak, the high priest, and the whole remnant of the people obeyed the voice of the LORD their God and the message of the prophet Haggai, because the LORD their God had sent him. And the people feared the LORD.

**13** Then Haggai, the LORD’s messenger, gave this message of the LORD to the people: “I am with you,” declares the LORD.

**14** So the LORD stirred up the spirit of Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel, governor of Judah, and the spirit of Joshua son of Jozadak, the high priest, and the spirit of the whole remnant of the people. They came and began to work on the house of the LORD Almighty, their God,

**15** on the twenty-fourth day of the sixth month.

Gospel: Matt. 23:27-39

**27** “Woe to you, teachers of the law and Pharisees, you hypocrites! You are like whitewashed tombs, which look beautiful on the outside but on the inside are full of the bones of the dead and everything unclean.

**28** In the same way, on the outside you appear to people as righteous but on the inside you are full of hypocrisy and wickedness.

**29** “Woe to you, teachers of the law and Pharisees, you hypocrites! You build tombs for the prophets and decorate the graves of the righteous.

**30** And you say, ‘If we had lived in the days of our ancestors, we would not have taken part with them in shedding the blood of the prophets.’

**31** So you testify against yourselves that you are the descendants of those who murdered the prophets.

**32** Go ahead, then, and complete what your ancestors started!

**33** “You snakes! You brood of vipers! How will you escape being condemned to hell?

**34** Therefore I am sending you prophets and sages and teachers. Some of them you will kill and crucify; others you will flog in your synagogues and pursue from town to town.

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**35** And so upon you will come all the righteous blood that has been shed on earth, from the blood of righteous Abel to the blood of Zechariah son of Berekiah, whom you murdered between the temple and the altar.

**36** Truly I tell you, all this will come on this generation.

**37** “Jerusalem, Jerusalem, you who kill the prophets and stone those sent to you, how often I have longed to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, and you were not willing.

**38** Look, your house is left to you desolate.

**39** For I tell you, you will not see me again until you say, ‘Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.’”

## Monday December 16

Reader: **James Gavette**

Psalm 44, p. 645-647

Old Testament: Zechariah 1:7-17

**7** On the twenty-fourth day of the eleventh month, the month of Shebat, in the second year of Darius, the word of the LORD came to the prophet Zechariah son of Berekiah, the son of Iddo.

**8** During the night I had a vision, and there before me was a man mounted on a red horse. He was standing among the myrtle trees in a ravine. Behind him were red, brown and white horses.

**9** I asked, “What are these, my lord?” The angel who was talking with me answered, “I will show you what they are.”

**10** Then the man standing among the myrtle trees explained, “They are the ones the LORD has sent to go throughout the earth.”

**11** And they reported to the angel of the LORD who was standing among the myrtle trees, “We have gone throughout the earth and found the whole world at rest and in peace.”

**12** Then the angel of the LORD said, “LORD Almighty, how long will you withhold mercy from Jerusalem and from the towns of Judah, which you have been angry with these seventy years?”

**13** So the LORD spoke kind and comforting words to the angel who talked with me.

**14** Then the angel who was speaking to me said, “Proclaim this word: This is what the LORD Almighty says: ‘I am very jealous for Jerusalem and Zion,

**15** and I am very angry with the nations that feel secure. I was only a little angry, but they went too far with the punishment.’

**16** “Therefore this is what the LORD says: ‘I will return to Jerusalem with mercy, and there my house will be rebuilt. And the measuring line will be stretched out over Jerusalem,’ declares the LORD Almighty.

**17** “Proclaim further: This is what the LORD Almighty says: ‘My towns will again overflow with prosperity, and the LORD will again comfort Zion and choose Jerusalem.’”

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Gospel: Matthew 24:15-31

**14** And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come.

**15** “So when you see standing in the holy place ‘the abomination that causes desolation,’ spoken of through the prophet Daniel—let the reader understand—

**16** then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains.

**17** Let no one on the housetop go down to take anything out of the house.

**18** Let no one in the field go back to get their cloak.

**19** How dreadful it will be in those days for pregnant women and nursing mothers!

**20** Pray that your flight will not take place in winter or on the Sabbath.

**21** For then there will be great distress, unequaled from the beginning of the world until now—and never to be equaled again.

**22** “If those days had not been cut short, no one would survive, but for the sake of the elect those days will be shortened.

**23** At that time if anyone says to you, ‘Look, here is the Messiah!’ or, ‘There he is!’ do not believe it.

**24** For false messiahs and false prophets will appear and perform great signs and wonders to deceive, if possible, even the elect.

**25** See, I have told you ahead of time.

**26** “So if anyone tells you, ‘There he is, out in the wilderness,’ do not go out; or, ‘Here he is, in the inner rooms,’ do not believe it.

**27** For as lightning that comes from the east is visible even in the west, so will be the coming of the Son of Man.

**28** Wherever there is a carcass, there the vultures will gather.

**29** “Immediately after the distress of those days “ ‘the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light; the stars will fall from the sky, and the heavenly bodies will be shaken.’

**30** “Then will appear the sign of the Son of Man in heaven. And then all the peoples of the earth will mourn when they see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven, with power and great glory.

**31** And he will send his angels with a loud trumpet call, and they will gather his elect from the four winds, from one end of the heavens to the other.

**Tuesday December 17**

Reader: **Russell Butts**

Psalm 47, p. 650

Old Testament: Zechariah 2:1-13

**1** Then I looked up, and there before me was a man with a measuring line in his hand.

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**2** I asked, “Where are you going?” He answered me, “To measure Jerusalem, to find out how wide and how long it is.”

**3** While the angel who was speaking to me was leaving, another angel came to meet him  
**4** and said to him: “Run, tell that young man, ‘Jerusalem will be a city without walls because of the great number of people and animals in it.

**5** And I myself will be a wall of fire around it,’ declares the LORD, ‘and I will be its glory within.’

**6** “Come! Come! Flee from the land of the north,” declares the LORD, “for I have scattered you to the four winds of heaven,” declares the LORD.

**7** “Come, Zion! Escape, you who live in Daughter Babylon!”

**8** For this is what the LORD Almighty says: “After the Glorious One has sent me against the nations that have plundered you—for whoever touches you touches the apple of his eye—

**9** I will surely raise my hand against them so that their slaves will plunder them. Then you will know that the LORD Almighty has sent me.

**10** “Shout and be glad, Daughter Zion. For I am coming, and I will live among you,” declares the LORD.

**11** “Many nations will be joined with the LORD in that day and will become my people. I will live among you and you will know that the LORD Almighty has sent me to you.

**12** The LORD will inherit Judah as his portion in the holy land and will again choose Jerusalem.

**13** Be still before the LORD, all mankind, because he has roused himself from his holy dwelling.”

Gospel: Matthew 24:32-44

**32** “Now learn this lesson from the fig tree: As soon as its twigs get tender and its leaves come out, you know that summer is near.

**33** Even so, when you see all these things, you know that it is near, right at the door.

**34** Truly I tell you, this generation will certainly not pass away until all these things have happened.

**35** Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will never pass away.

**36** “But about that day or hour no one knows, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father.

**37** As it was in the days of Noah, so it will be at the coming of the Son of Man.

**38** For in the days before the flood, people were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, up to the day Noah entered the ark;

**39** and they knew nothing about what would happen until the flood came and took them all away. That is how it will be at the coming of the Son of Man.

**40** Two men will be in the field; one will be taken and the other left.

**41** Two women will be grinding with a hand mill; one will be taken and the other left.

**42** “Therefore keep watch, because you do not know on what day your Lord will come.

**43** But understand this: If the owner of the house had known at what time of night the thief was coming, he would have kept watch and would not have let his house be broken into.



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**44** So you also must be ready, because the Son of Man will come at an hour when you do not expect him.

**Thursday December 19**

Reader: **Emily Fox**

Psalm 59, p. 665-667

Old Testament: Zechariah 4:1-14

**1** Then the angel who talked with me returned and woke me up, like someone awakened from sleep.

**2** He asked me, “What do you see?” I answered, “I see a solid gold lampstand with a bowl at the top and seven lamps on it, with seven channels to the lamps.

**3** Also there are two olive trees by it, one on the right of the bowl and the other on its left.”

**4** I asked the angel who talked with me, “What are these, my lord?”

**5** He answered, “Do you not know what these are?” “No, my lord,” I replied.

**6** So he said to me, “This is the word of the LORD to Zerubbabel: ‘Not by might nor by power, but by my Spirit,’ says the LORD Almighty.

**7** “What are you, mighty mountain? Before Zerubbabel you will become level ground. Then he will bring out the capstone to shouts of ‘God bless it! God bless it!’ ”

**8** Then the word of the LORD came to me:

**9** “The hands of Zerubbabel have laid the foundation of this temple; his hands will also complete it. Then you will know that the LORD Almighty has sent me to you.

**10** “Who dares despise the day of small things, since the seven eyes of the LORD that range throughout the earth will rejoice when they see the chosen capstone in the hand of Zerubbabel?”

**11** Then I asked the angel, “What are these two olive trees on the right and the left of the lampstand?”

**12** Again I asked him, “What are these two olive branches beside the two gold pipes that pour out golden oil?”

**13** He replied, “Do you not know what these are?” “No, my lord,” I said.

**14** So he said, “These are the two who are anointed to serve the Lord of all the earth.”

Gospel: Matthew 25:1-13

**1** “At that time the kingdom of heaven will be like ten virgins who took their lamps and went out to meet the bridegroom.

**2** Five of them were foolish and five were wise.

**3** The foolish ones took their lamps but did not take any oil with them.

**4** The wise ones, however, took oil in jars along with their lamps.

**5** The bridegroom was a long time in coming, and they all became drowsy and fell asleep.

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- 6** “At midnight the cry rang out: ‘Here’s the bridegroom! Come out to meet him!’  
**7** “Then all the virgins woke up and trimmed their lamps.  
**8** The foolish ones said to the wise, ‘Give us some of your oil; our lamps are going out.’  
**9** “‘No,’ they replied, ‘there may not be enough for both us and you. Instead, go to those who sell oil and buy some for yourselves.’  
**10** “But while they were on their way to buy the oil, the bridegroom arrived. The virgins who were ready went in with him to the wedding banquet. And the door was shut.  
**11** “Later the others also came. ‘Lord, Lord,’ they said, ‘open the door for us!’  
**12** “But he replied, ‘Truly I tell you, I don’t know you.’  
**13** “Therefore keep watch, because you do not know the day or the hour.

**Friday December 20**

Reader: **Adam Gwin**

Psalm 51, p. 656-657

Old Testament: Zechariah 7:8-8:8

- 8** And the word of the LORD came again to Zechariah:  
**9** “This is what the LORD Almighty said: ‘Administer true justice; show mercy and compassion to one another.  
**10** Do not oppress the widow or the fatherless, the foreigner or the poor. Do not plot evil against each other.’  
**11** “But they refused to pay attention; stubbornly they turned their backs and covered their ears.  
**12** They made their hearts as hard as flint and would not listen to the law or to the words that the LORD Almighty had sent by his Spirit through the earlier prophets. So the LORD Almighty was very angry.  
**13** “ ‘When I called, they did not listen; so when they called, I would not listen,’ says the LORD Almighty.  
**14** ‘I scattered them with a whirlwind among all the nations, where they were strangers. The land they left behind them was so desolate that no one traveled through it. This is how they made the pleasant land desolate.’ ”
- 1** The word of the LORD Almighty came to me.  
**2** This is what the LORD Almighty says: “I am very jealous for Zion; I am burning with jealousy for her.”  
**3** This is what the LORD says: “I will return to Zion and dwell in Jerusalem. Then Jerusalem will be called the Faithful City, and the mountain of the LORD Almighty will be called the Holy Mountain.”  
**4** This is what the LORD Almighty says: “Once again men and women of ripe old age will sit in the streets of Jerusalem, each of them with cane in hand because of their age.  
**5** The city streets will be filled with boys and girls playing there.”  
**6** This is what the LORD Almighty says: “It may seem marvelous to the remnant of this people at that time, but will it seem marvelous to me?” declares the LORD Almighty.

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**7** This is what the LORD Almighty says: “I will save my people from the countries of the east and the west.

**8** I will bring them back to live in Jerusalem; they will be my people, and I will be faithful and righteous to them as their God.”

Gospel: Matthew 25:14-30

**14** “Again, it will be like a man going on a journey, who called his servants and entrusted his wealth to them.

**15** To one he gave five bags of gold, to another two bags, and to another one bag, each according to his ability. Then he went on his journey.

**16** The man who had received five bags of gold went at once and put his money to work and gained five bags more.

**17** So also, the one with two bags of gold gained two more.

**18** But the man who had received one bag went off, dug a hole in the ground and hid his master’s money.

**19** “After a long time the master of those servants returned and settled accounts with them.

**20** The man who had received five bags of gold brought the other five. ‘Master,’ he said, ‘you entrusted me with five bags of gold. See, I have gained five more.’

**21** “His master replied, ‘Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master’s happiness!’

**22** “The man with two bags of gold also came. ‘Master,’ he said, ‘you entrusted me with two bags of gold; see, I have gained two more.’

**23** “His master replied, ‘Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master’s happiness!’

**24** “Then the man who had received one bag of gold came. ‘Master,’ he said, ‘I knew that you are a hard man, harvesting where you have not sown and gathering where you have not scattered seed.

**25** So I was afraid and went out and hid your gold in the ground. See, here is what belongs to you.’

**26** “His master replied, ‘You wicked, lazy servant! So you knew that I harvest where I have not sown and gather where I have not scattered seed?

**27** Well then, you should have put my money on deposit with the bankers, so that when I returned I would have received it back with interest.

**28** “ ‘So take the bag of gold from him and give it to the one who has ten bags.

**29** For whoever has will be given more, and they will have an abundance. Whoever does not have, even what they have will be taken from them.

**30** And throw that worthless servant outside, into the darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.’

**Monday December 23**

Reader: **Ed Bond**

Psalm 112, p. 755

Old Testament: Zephaniah 3:14-20

**14** Sing, Daughter Zion; shout aloud, Israel! Be glad and rejoice with all your heart, Daughter Jerusalem!

**15** The LORD has taken away your punishment, he has turned back your enemy. The LORD, the King of Israel, is with you; never again will you fear any harm.

**16** On that day they will say to Jerusalem, “Do not fear, Zion; do not let your hands hang limp.

**17** The LORD your God is with you, the Mighty Warrior who saves. He will take great delight in you; in his love he will no longer rebuke you, but will rejoice over you with singing.”

**18** “I will remove from you all who mourn over the loss of your appointed festivals, which is a burden and reproach for you.

**19** At that time I will deal with all who oppressed you. I will rescue the lame; I will gather the exiles. I will give them praise and honor in every land where they have suffered shame.

**20** At that time I will gather you; at that time I will bring you home. I will give you honor and praise among all the peoples of the earth when I restore your fortunes before your very eyes,” says the LORD..

Gospel: Luke 1:1-25

**1** Many have undertaken to draw up an account of the things that have been fulfilled among us,

**2** just as they were handed down to us by those who from the first were eyewitnesses and servants of the word.

**3** With this in mind, since I myself have carefully investigated everything from the beginning, I too decided to write an orderly account for you, most excellent Theophilus,  
**4** so that you may know the certainty of the things you have been taught.

**5** In the time of Herod king of Judea there was a priest named Zechariah, who belonged to the priestly division of Abijah; his wife Elizabeth was also a descendant of Aaron.

**6** Both of them were righteous in the sight of God, observing all the Lord’s commands and decrees blamelessly.

**7** But they were childless because Elizabeth was not able to conceive, and they were both very old.

**8** Once when Zechariah’s division was on duty and he was serving as priest before God,  
**9** he was chosen by lot, according to the custom of the priesthood, to go into the temple of the Lord and burn incense.

**10** And when the time for the burning of incense came, all the assembled worshipers were praying outside.

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**11** Then an angel of the Lord appeared to him, standing at the right side of the altar of incense.

**12** When Zechariah saw him, he was startled and was gripped with fear.

**13** But the angel said to him: “Do not be afraid, Zechariah; your prayer has been heard. Your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you are to call him John.

**14** He will be a joy and delight to you, and many will rejoice because of his birth,

**15** for he will be great in the sight of the Lord. He is never to take wine or other fermented drink, and he will be filled with the Holy Spirit even before he is born.

**16** He will bring back many of the people of Israel to the Lord their God.

**17** And he will go on before the Lord, in the spirit and power of Elijah, to turn the hearts of the parents to their children and the disobedient to the wisdom of the righteous—to make ready a people prepared for the Lord.”

**18** Zechariah asked the angel, “How can I be sure of this? I am an old man and my wife is well along in years.”

**19** The angel said to him, “I am Gabriel. I stand in the presence of God, and I have been sent to speak to you and to tell you this good news.

**20** And now you will be silent and not able to speak until the day this happens, because you did not believe my words, which will come true at their appointed time.”

**21** Meanwhile, the people were waiting for Zechariah and wondering why he stayed so long in the temple.

**22** When he came out, he could not speak to them. They realized he had seen a vision in the temple, for he kept making signs to them but remained unable to speak.

**23** When his time of service was completed, he returned home.

**24** After this his wife Elizabeth became pregnant and for five months remained in seclusion.

**25** “The Lord has done this for me,” she said. “In these days he has shown his favor and taken away my disgrace among the people.”