******

***Sunday December 13th, 2020***

***Advent Candle Meditation:*** In this third week of Advent, our attention is on love. The following Scripture verses may sound very familiar, so we ponder them slowly, from the paraphrase, “The Message”. Listen for the call to love in these words. ‘Teacher, which command in God’s Law is the most important?’ Jesus said, ‘Love the Lord your God with all your passion and prayer and intelligence.’ This is the most important, the first on any list. But there is a second to set alongside it: ‘Love others as well as you love yourself.’ These two commands are pegs; everything in God’s Law and the Prophets hangs from them.’

***Prelude***

***Welcome & Announcements***

***Opening Hymn – CP98 – Hark the Glad Sound!*** *(Vs. 1-4)*

***Hark the glad sound! The Saviour comes,***

***the Saviour promised long:***

***let every heart prepare a throne,***

***and every voice a song.***

***Christ comes, the prisoners to release***

***in Satan’s bondage held;***

***the gates of brass before him burst;***

***the iron fetters yield.***

***Christ comes, the broken heart to bind,***

***the bleeding soul to cure,***

***and from the treasuries of grace***

***to bless the humble poor.***

***Our glad hosannas, Prince of Peace,***

***thy welcome shall proclaim;***

***and heaven’s eternal arches ring***

***with thy beloved name.***

*Celebrant* The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of

God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with you all.

***All* And also with you.**

***Wait for the Lord, Whose Day Is Near - (CP94) (Played 3 Times)***

***Wait for the Lord, whose day is near.***

***Wait for the Lord: be strong, take heart!***

* ***Collect for the Day***
* Lord of Light who sent the Baptist to offer hope and face the world’s scorn: open our ears to hear the cries from the margins, exposing our fears, inciting our vision and calling us to a step of faith; through Jesus Christ, the one who is to come. **Amen.**
* ***The Readings***

***Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11*** *(Bible OT Pg. 691-2)*

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.

* ***John 1:6-8 19-28 (Bible NT Pg. 91-92)***
* There was a man sent from God, whose name was John.  He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him.  He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light.
* This is the testimony given by John when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, “Who are you?” He confessed and did not deny it, but confessed, “I am not the Messiah.” And they asked him, “What then? Are you Elijah?” He said, “I am not.” “Are you the prophet?” He answered, “No.” Then they said to him, “Who are you? Let us have an answer for those who sent us. What do you say about yourself?” He said, “I am the voice of one crying out in the wilderness, ‘Make straight the way of the Lord,’” as the prophet Isaiah said.  Now they had been sent from the Pharisees.  They asked him, “Why then are you baptizing if you are neither the Messiah, nor Elijah, nor the prophet?” John answered them, “I baptize with water. Among you stands one whom you do not know, the one who is coming after me; I am not worthy to untie the thong of his sandal.” This took place in Bethany across the Jordan where John was baptizing.

***Homily - The Reverend Canon Ruthanne Ward***

***Affirmation of Faith – Hear, O Israel*** *(BAS Pg. 53)*

Hear, O Israel,

the Lord our God, the Lord is one.

Love the Lord your God

with all your heart,

with all your soul,

with all your mind,

and with all your strength.

This is the first and the great commandment.

The second is like it:

Love your neighbour as yourself.

There is no commandment greater than these.

***The Prayers of the People***

***Confession and Absolution*** *(BAS Pg. 191)*

*Celebrant*  Dear friends in Christ,

God is steadfast in love and infinite in mercy; he welcomes sinners

and invites them to his table. Let us confess our sins, confident in God’s forgiveness.

*Silence is kept.*

*Celebrant* Most merciful God,

***All*****we confess that we have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done, and by what we have left undone. We have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbours as ourselves. We are truly sorry and we humbly repent. For the sake of your Son Jesus Christ, have mercy on us and forgive us, that we may delight in your will, and walk in your ways, to the glory of your name. Amen.**

*Celebrant*  Almighty God have mercy upon you, pardon and deliver you from all your sins, confirm and strengthen you in all goodness, and keep you in eternal life; through Jesus Christ our Lord.  **Amen.**

***The Peace***

*(Please turn to your neighbours and offer peace by way of a peace sign or slight bow)*

*May the Peace of the Lord be always with you.* ***And also with you.***

***Offertory Hymn – CP101 – Hail to the Lord’s Anointed*** *(Vs. 1,2,4)*

***Hail to the Lord’s anointed,***

***great David’s greater Son!***

***Hail, in the time appointed,***

***his reign on earth begun!***

***He comes to break oppression,***

***to set the captive free,***

***to take away transgression,***

***and rule in equity.***

***He shall come down like showers***

***upon the fruitful earth,***

***and love, joy, hope, like flowers,***

***spring in his path to birth.***

***Before him on the mountains***

***shall peace the herald go,***

***and righteousness in fountains***

***from hill to valley flow.***

***O’er every foe victorious,***

***he on his throne shall rest,***

***from age to age more glorious,***

***all-blessing and all-best.***

***The tide of time shall never***

***his covenant remove.***

***His name shall stand forever:***

***that name to us is Love.***

***Prayer over the Gifts*** *(BAS Pg. 271)*

God of hope, renew in us the joy of your salvation and make us a living sacrifice to you, for the sake of Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

***The Eucharist***

*Celebrant* The Lord be with you.

***All* And also with you.**

*Celebrant* Lift up your hearts.

***All* We lift them to the Lord.**

*Celebrant* Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

***All* It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

We give you thanks and offer our praise, almighty and ever living God. You comforted your people with the promise of the Redeemer, through whom you will also make all things new in the day when he comes again to judge the world with mercy and justice. And so, with the Church throughout the ages and with the hosts of heaven, we praise your name with our unending song:

***All*  Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might, heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest.**

**Blessed is the One who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.**

Holy God, the Beginning and the End, our Salvation and our Hope, we praise you for creating a world of order and beauty.

When we brought on chaos, cruelty and despair, you sent your prophets to proclaim justice and mercy.

At the end of the ages your Son Jesus came to bring us your love and to heal all the suffering world.

In the night in which he was betrayed, our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks; broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying: Take and eat; this is my body, given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it for all to drink, saying: This cup is the new covenant in my blood, shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin. Do this for the remembrance of me.

Remembering, therefore,

**his life, his death, and resurrection,**

we await his coming again in righteousness and peace.

Send your Spirit on us and on this bread and this wine we share: strengthen our faith, increase our hope, and bring to birth the justice and joy of your Son.

Through him all glory and honour is yours, Creator God, with the Sustaining Spirit, in your Holy Church, both now and forever**, Amen.**

***The Lord’s Prayer***

*Celebrant* As our Saviour Christ has taught us, let us pray.

**Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Save us from the time of trial, and deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and for ever. Amen.**

***The Breaking of the Bread***

*Celebrant*   God of promise, you prepare a banquet for us in your kingdom.

***All* Happy are those who are called to the supper of the Lamb.**

*Celebrant*  The gifts of God for the people of God.

***All* Thanks be to God.**

***Prayer after Communion*** *(BAS Pg. 271)*

Merciful God, may this eucharist free us from our sins, fill us with unending joy, and prepare us for the birthday of our Saviour. We ask this in the name of Jesus Christ, who is Lord now and for ever.  **Amen.**

***Doxology***

Glory to God,

***All* whose power, working in us, can do infinitely more than we can ask or imagine. Glory to God from generation to generation, in the Church and in Christ Jesus, for ever and ever. Amen.**

***Blessing***

***Closing Hymn – CP109 – When the King Shall Come Again*** *(VS. 1,2,4)*

***When the King shall come again,***

***all his power revealing,***

***splendour shall announce his reign,***

***life and joy and healing;***

***earth no longer in decay,***

***hope no more frustrated,***

***this is God’s redemption day***

***longingly awaited.***

***In the desert, trees take root,***

***fresh from God’s creation;***

***plants and flowers and sweetest fruit***

***join the celebration;***

***rivers spring up from the earth,***

***barren lands adorning.***

***Valleys, this is your new birth;***

***mountains, greet the morning!***

***There God’s highway shall be seen***

***where no roaring lion,***

***nothing evil or unclean,***

***walks the road to Zion:***

***ransomed people homeward bound***

***all your praises voicing,***

***see your Lord with glory crowned,***

***share in his rejoicing!***

***Postlude***