

## **Third Sunday of Advent Sunday, December 15, 2019**

**The Collect:** 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.**

### **Old Testament: Isaiah 35:1-10 read from the God's Word Bible**

The desert and the dry land will be glad,  
and the wilderness will rejoice and blossom.

2 Like a lily the land will blossom.

It will rejoice and sing with joy.

It will have the glory of Lebanon, the majesty of Carmel and Sharon.

Everyone will see the glory of the Lord, the majesty of our God.

3 Strengthen limp hands.

Steady weak knees.

4 Tell those who are terrified,

“Be brave; don’t be afraid.

Your God will come with vengeance, with divine revenge.

He will come and rescue you.”

5 Then the eyes of the blind will be opened,

and the ears of the deaf will be unplugged.

6 Then those who are lame will leap like deer,

and those who cannot speak will shout for joy.

Water will gush out into the desert,

and streams will gush out into the wilderness.

7 Then the hot sand will become a pool,

and dry ground will have springs.

Grass will become cattails and rushes

in the home of jackals.

8 A highway will be there, a roadway.

It will be called the Holy Road.

Sinners won't travel on it.

It will be for those who walk on it.

Godless fools won't wander onto it.

9 Lions won't be there.

Wild animals won't go on it.

They won't be found there.

But the people reclaimed by the Lord will walk on it.

10 The people ransomed by the Lord will return.

They will come to Zion singing with joy.

Everlasting happiness will be on their heads as a crown.

They will be glad and joyful.

They will have no sorrow or grief.

## **The Word of the Lord**

### **Psalm: Psalm 146:4-9 or Canticle 3 or Canticle 15 read from The Episcopal Church Book of Common Prayer**

#### **Psalm 146:4-9**

4 Happy are they who have the God of Jacob for their help! \*

whose hope is in the Lord their God;

5 Who made heaven and earth, the seas, and all that is in them; \*

who keeps his promise for ever;

6 Who gives justice to those who are oppressed, \*

and food to those who hunger.

7 The Lord sets the prisoners free;

the Lord opens the eyes of the blind; \*

the Lord lifts up those who are bowed down;

8 The Lord loves the righteous;

the Lord cares for the stranger; \*

he sustains the orphan and widow,

but frustrates the way of the wicked.

9 The Lord shall reign for ever, \*  
your God, O Zion, throughout all generations.  
Hallelujah!

### **Canticle 3**

My soul doth magnify the Lord, \*  
and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Savior.  
For he hath regarded \*  
the lowliness of his handmaiden.  
For behold from henceforth \*  
all generations shall call me blessed.  
For he that is mighty hath magnified me, \*  
and holy is his Name.  
And his mercy is on them that fear him \*  
throughout all generations.  
He hath showed strength with his arm; \*  
he hath scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts.  
He hath put down the mighty from their seat, \*  
and hath exalted the humble and meek.  
He hath filled the hungry with good things, \*  
and the rich he hath sent empty away.  
He remembering his mercy has holpen his servant Israel, \*  
as he promised to our forefathers,  
Abraham and his seed for ever.  
Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit: \*  
as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be for ever. Amen.

### **Canticle 15**

My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord,  
my spirit rejoices in God my Savior; \*  
for he has looked with favor on his lowly servant.  
From this day all generations will call me blessed: \*

the Almighty has done great things for me,  
and holy is his Name.

He has mercy on those who fear him \*  
in every generation.

He has shown the strength of his arm, \*  
he has scattered the proud in their conceit.

He has cast down the mighty from their thrones, \*  
and has lifted up the lowly.

He has filled the hungry with good things, \*  
and the rich he has sent away empty.

He has come to the help of his servant Israel, \*  
for he has remembered his promise of mercy,

The promise he made to our fathers, \*  
to Abraham and his children for ever.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit: \*  
as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be for ever. Amen.

### **Epistle: James 5:7-10 read from the Holman Christian Standard Bible**

7 Therefore, brothers, be patient until the Lord's coming. See how the farmer waits for the precious fruit of the earth and is patient with it until it receives the early and the late rains. 8 You also must be patient. Strengthen your hearts, because the Lord's coming is near.

9 Brothers, do not complain about one another, so that you will not be judged. Look, the judge stands at the door!

10 Brothers, take the prophets who spoke in the Lord's name as an example of suffering and patience.

### **The Word of the Lord**

### **Gospel: Matthew 11:2-11 read from the International Children's Bible**

2 John the Baptist was in prison, but he heard about the things the Christ was doing. So

John sent some of his followers to Jesus. 3 They asked Jesus, “Are you the man who John said was coming, or should we wait for another one?”

4 Jesus answered, “Go back to John and tell him about the things you hear and see: 5 The blind can see. The crippled can walk. People with harmful skin diseases are healed. The deaf can hear. The dead are raised to life. And the Good News is told to the poor. 6 The person who does not lose faith because of me is blessed.”

7 As John’s followers were leaving, Jesus began talking to the people about John. Jesus said, “What did you go out to the desert to see? A reed blown by the wind? No. 8 Really, what did you go out to see? A man dressed in fine clothes? No. Those people who wear fine clothes live in kings’ palaces. 9 So what did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, and I tell you, John is more than a prophet. 10 This was written about John in the Scriptures: ‘I will send my messenger ahead of you. He will prepare the way for you.’

11 I tell you the truth: John the Baptist is greater than any other man who has ever lived. But even the least important person in the kingdom of heaven is greater than John.

### **The Gospel of the Lord**

**Closing Prayer: On December 15th we remember Robert McDonald, Priest. Read from *A Great Cloud of Witnesses*.**

Robert McDonald was a priest, missionary, and archdeacon, who served among the First Nations peoples of Canada.

McDonald was born in 1829 in Point Douglas, Manitoba. He attended local schools, worked alongside his father on the family farm, and married Julia Kutttag, with whom he had nine children.

Although McDonald showed initial reluctance, he responded to the church’s call to mission service among the native peoples of Canada. He was ordained a priest in 1853 and took charge of the Islington Mission on the Winnipeg River. It was there that he discovered his gift

for languages, and it was there that he became fluent in the language of the Ojibway Tribe and began to translate the Bible.

In 1862, the Church Missionary Society persuaded McDonald to establish a new mission at Fort Yukon. It was here, as later at Fort McPherson, where McDonald made his enduring contribution to the tribes of the Tinjizoo Nation. He developed a written alphabet for the Tukudh language so that the people could read the texts of the Christian tradition. He also published a grammar and dictionary in Tukudh, both of which remain standard reference works. Over the next forty years, working together with his wife, Julia, and other translators, he accomplished the translation of the whole of the Bible, the Book of Common Prayer, a hymnal, and other texts. Possessing these common texts was critical not only to the Christian mission, but also had a unifying impact on the common life of the various tribes in the region.

McDonald retired from the Church Missionary Society in 1904 and lived in Winnipeg, Manitoba, until his death on August 29th, 1913. He is buried in the cemetery of St. John's Anglican Cathedral.

**Let us pray:** God of ice, sea, and sky, you called your servant Robert McDonald and made him strong to endure all hardships for the sake of serving you in the Arctic: Send us forth as laborers into your harvest, that by patience in our duties and compassion in our dealings, many may be gathered to your kingdom; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who is alive and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**