

The presentation of our Lord, February 2, 2025

The Collect and Psalm will be read from The Episcopal Church Book of Common Prayer
The Old Testament, Epistle and Gospel will be read from the Holman Christian Standard Bible

The Collect: Almighty and everliving God, we humbly pray that, as your only-begotten Son was this day presented in the temple, so we may be presented to you with pure and clean hearts by Jesus Christ our Lord; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

Old Testament: Malachi 3:1-4

3 “See, I am going to send My messenger, and he will clear the way before Me. Then the Lord you seek will suddenly come to His temple, the Messenger of the covenant you desire—see, He is coming,” says the Lord of Hosts. 2 But who can endure the day of His coming? And who will be able to stand when He appears? For He will be like a refiner’s fire and like cleansing lye. 3 He will be like a refiner and purifier of silver; He will purify the sons of Levi and refine them like gold and silver. Then they will present offerings to the Lord in righteousness. 4 And the offerings of Judah and Jerusalem will please the Lord as in days of old and years gone by.

Hear what the Spirit is saying to God's people

Psalm: Psalm 84 or Psalm 24:7-10

Psalm 84

1 How dear to me is your dwelling, O LORD of hosts! *

My soul has a desire and longing for the courts of the LORD;
my heart and my flesh rejoice in the living God.

2 The sparrow has found her a house

and the swallow a nest where she may lay her young; *
by the side of your altars, O LORD of hosts,

my King and my God.

3 Happy are they who dwell in your house! *

they will always be praising you.

4 Happy are the people whose strength is in you! *

whose hearts are set on the pilgrims' way.

5 Those who go through the desolate valley will find it a place of springs, *

for the early rains have covered it with pools of water.

6 They will climb from height to height, *

and the God of gods will reveal himself in Zion.

7 LORD God of hosts, hear my prayer; *

hearken, O God of Jacob.

8 Behold our defender, O God; *

and look upon the face of your Anointed.

9 For one day in your courts is better than a thousand in my own room, *

and to stand at the threshold of the house of my God

than to dwell in the tents of the wicked.

10 For the LORD God is both sun and shield; *

he will give grace and glory;

11 No good thing will the LORD withhold *

from those who walk with integrity.

12 O LORD of hosts, *

happy are they who put their trust in you!

Or

Psalm 24: 7 – 10

7 Lift up your heads, O gates;

lift them high, O everlasting doors; *

and the King of glory shall come in.

8 "Who is this King of glory?" *

"The LORD, strong and mighty,

the LORD, mighty in battle."

9 Lift up your heads, O gates;

lift them high, O everlasting doors; *

and the King of glory shall come in.

10 “Who is he, this King of glory?” *

“The LORD of hosts,
he is the King of glory.”

Epistle: Hebrews 2:14-18

14 Now since the children have flesh and blood in common, Jesus also shared in these, so that through His death He might destroy the one holding the power of death—that is, the Devil— 15 and free those who were held in slavery all their lives by the fear of death. 16 For it is clear that He does not reach out to help angels, but to help Abraham’s offspring. 17 Therefore, He had to be like His brothers in every way, so that He could become a merciful and faithful high priest in service to God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people. 18 For since He Himself was tested and has suffered, He is able to help those who are tested.

Hear what the Spirit is saying to God's people

Gospel: Luke 2:22-40

22 And when the days of their purification according to the law of Moses were finished, they brought Him up to Jerusalem to present Him to the Lord 23 (just as it is written in the law of the Lord: Every firstborn male will be dedicated to the Lord) 24 and to offer a sacrifice (according to what is stated in the law of the Lord: a pair of turtledoves or two young pigeons).

25 There was a man in Jerusalem whose name was Simeon. This man was righteous and devout, looking forward to Israel’s consolation, and the Holy Spirit was on him. 26 It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he saw the Lord’s Messiah. 27 Guided by the Spirit, he entered the temple complex. When the parents brought in the child Jesus to perform for Him what was customary under the law, 28 Simeon took Him up in his arms, praised God, and said:

29 Now, Master,
You can dismiss Your slave in peace,
as You promised.
30 For my eyes have seen Your salvation.
31 You have prepared it
in the presence of all peoples—
32 a light for revelation to the Gentiles
and glory to Your people Israel.

33 His father and mother were amazed at what was being said about Him. 34 Then Simeon blessed them and told His mother Mary: “Indeed, this child is destined to cause the fall and rise of many in Israel and to be a sign that will be opposed— 35 and a sword will pierce your own soul—that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed.”

36 There was also a prophetess, Anna, a daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was well along in years, having lived with her husband seven years after her marriage, 37 and was a widow for 84 years. She did not leave the temple complex, serving God night and day with fasting and prayers. 38 At that very moment, she came up and began to thank God and to speak about Him to all who were looking forward to the redemption of Jerusalem.

39 When they had completed everything according to the law of the Lord, they returned to Galilee, to their own town of Nazareth. 40 The boy grew up and became strong, filled with wisdom, and God’s grace was on Him.

The Gospel of the Lord

On February 3 we celebrate the lives of The Dorchester Chaplains. Read from A Great Cloud of Witnesses.

On January 23, 1943, the USAT Dorchester, a converted cruise ship, set sail with a troop convoy from New York City for Greenland with 902 persons on board. Among them were

four U.S. Army chaplains, Lt. George Fox (Methodist), Lt. Alexander Goode (Jewish), Lt. Clark Poling (Dutch Reformed), and Lt. John Washington (Roman Catholic).

George Fox had served as a medical corps assistant in World War I, where he was decorated for heroism. Alexander Goode joined the National Guard while he was studying for the rabbinate. Clark Poling's father told him that chaplains had a high mortality rate. He prayed for strength, courage, and understanding, then joined the Army Chaplains Corps. John Washington was a gang leader in Newark, New Jersey, when he was called to the priesthood. On February 3, one day from their destination, a German U-boat fired torpedoes, striking the boiler room of the *Dorchester*. Even though everyone was sleeping with their life jackets, many of the soldiers left them behind as they clambered topside to seek escape and safety. Unfortunately, only two of the fourteen lifeboats were successfully lowered into the water, making it necessary for most men to dive into the nineteen degree water.

The four chaplains moved among the men, assisting, calming, and passing out life jackets from the ship's store to those forced to jump into the freezing ocean. Having given up their own life vests to save the lives of the soldiers, the chaplains remained on the aft deck, arms linked in prayer until the ship sank, claiming their lives. Two hundred thirty men were rescued from the icy waters by other ships in the convoy. Many survived because of the selflessness and heroism of the four chaplains. The memory of the self-sacrifice of these chaplains is maintained today within the the United States military chaplains corps.

Chaplains Fox, Goode, Poling, and Washington responded to a high calling to represent God's love among men of war. On the day they died, they personified the words of Jesus found in John 15:13, "Greater love has no one than this, that he lay down his life for his friends."

Let us pray: Holy God, you inspired the *Dorchester* chaplains to be models of steadfast sacrificial love in a tragic and terrifying time: Help us to follow their example, that their courageous ministry may inspire chaplains and all who serve, to recognize your presence in the midst of peril; through Jesus Christ our Savior, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. **Amen.**