

Fourth Sunday of Advent, Dec. 21, 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 New International Version Bible

The Collect: 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.**

Old Testament: Isaiah 7:10-16

10 Again the Lord spoke to Ahaz, 11 “Ask the Lord your God for a sign, whether in the deepest depths or in the highest heights.”

12 But Ahaz said, “I will not ask; I will not put the Lord to the test.”

13 Then Isaiah said, “Hear now, you house of David! Is it not enough to try the patience of humans? Will you try the patience of my God also? 14 Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign: The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and will call him Immanuel.

15 He will be eating curds and honey when he knows enough to reject the wrong and choose the right, 16 for before the boy knows enough to reject the wrong and choose the right, the land of the two kings you dread will be laid waste.

Hear what the Spirit is saying to God's people

Psalm: Psalm 80:1-7, 16-18

1 Hear, O Shepherd of Israel, leading Joseph like a flock; *12/21/25
shine forth, you that are enthroned upon the cherubim.

- 2 In the presence of Ephraim, Benjamin, and Manasseh, *
stir up your strength and come to help us.
- 3 Restore us, O God of hosts; *
show the light of your countenance, and we shall be saved.
- 4 O Lord God of hosts, *
how long will you be angered
despite the prayers of your people?
- 5 You have fed them with the bread of tears; *
you have given them bowls of tears to drink.
- 6 You have made us the derision of our neighbors, *
and our enemies laugh us to scorn.
- 7 Restore us, O God of hosts; *
show the light of your countenance, and we shall be saved.
- 16 Let your hand be upon the man of your right hand, *
the son of man you have made so strong for yourself.
- 17 And so will we never turn away from you; *
give us life, that we may call upon your Name.
- 18 Restore us, O Lord God of hosts; *
show the light of your countenance, and we shall be saved.

Epistle: Romans 1:1-7

1 Paul, a servant of Christ Jesus, called to be an apostle and set apart for the gospel of God
— 2 the gospel he promised beforehand through his prophets in the Holy Scriptures
3 regarding his Son, who as to his earthly life was a descendant of David, 4 and who
through the Spirit of holiness was appointed the Son of God in power by his resurrection
from the dead: Jesus Christ our Lord. 5 Through him we received grace and apostleship to
call all the Gentiles to the obedience that comes from faith for his name's sake. 6 And you
also are among those Gentiles who are called to belong to Jesus Christ.

7 To all in Rome who are loved by God and called to be his holy people:

Grace and peace to you from God our Father and from the Lord Jesus Christ.

Hear what the Spirit is saying to God's people

Gospel: Matthew 1:18-25

18 This is how the birth of Jesus the Messiah came about: His mother Mary was pledged to be married to Joseph, but before they came together, she was found to be pregnant through the Holy Spirit. 19 Because Joseph her husband was faithful to the law, and yet did not want to expose her to public disgrace, he had in mind to divorce her quietly.

20 But after he had considered this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, "Joseph son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary home as your wife, because what is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. 21 She will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins."

22 All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had said through the prophet: 23 "The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel" (which means "God with us").

24 When Joseph woke up, he did what the angel of the Lord had commanded him and took Mary home as his wife. 25 But he did not consummate their marriage until she gave birth to a son. And he gave him the name Jesus.

The Gospel of the Lord

On December 22 we celebrate the life of Henry Budd, Priest. Read from A Great Cloud of Witnesses.

Henry Budd was the first person of First Nations ancestry to be ordained in the Anglican tradition in North America. He is remembered for his service among the Cree in Western Canada. Budd was an orphan, and the date of his birth is unknown. He entered a mission

school that was a joint venture with the Hudson's Bay Company to provide a Christian education to the First Nations people in the area of Rupert's Land, the vast expanse of land that encircled Hudson Bay before its division into Canadian provinces. Before embarking on a vocation as a priest and teacher, he worked as a clerk for the Hudson's Bay Company.

Henry Budd's ministry began as a lay teacher in the Red River region of Manitoba, where he taught at St. John's Anglican Parish School. He and his wife, Betsy, remained in the area for the next thirteen years, where Budd taught school and served as a lay minister in the Anglican Church.

Ordained to the priesthood on December 22, 1850, having been trained largely by personal mentoring and tutoring from other clergy, Budd was assigned to the Mission at Nipawim where he worked as a pastor until 1867. Thereafter, Budd returned to The Pas, where he was put in charge of a vast area encompassing several communities, and where he continued his vocation as both priest and teacher. Records of the Church Missionary Society indicate that Budd was paid half of what the white missionaries were paid on account of his race. Henry Budd is remembered as an eloquent speaker and writer in both Cree and English. He endeared himself to those he served by exhibiting clearly in the living of his life the Christian principles he preached and the values he taught. Enduring among his many contributions are his translations of the Scriptures and the Book of Common Prayer into the Cree language.

Budd died on April 2, 1875, just a few days after he had conducted Easter services. He is buried in The Pas, Manitoba.

Let us pray: Creator of light, we thank you for your priest Henry Budd, who carried the great treasure of Scripture to his people the Cree nation, earning their trust and love. Grant that his example may call us to reverence, orderliness, and love, that we may give you glory in word and action; through Jesus Christ our Savior, who with you and the Holy Spirit lives and reigns, one God, for ever and ever.

Amen.