



*This Sunday at St. Luke's
December 4, 2022*

8:15 a.m. – Holy Communion (said service)

10 a.m. – Holy Communion with hymns and sermon

The Second Sunday in Advent



Hope from God's Word Written

The Second Sunday in Advent is commonly called **Bible Sunday**. It takes its name from words found in the Epistle for the Day and echoed in the Collect: "Whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort [strength] of the scriptures might have hope." The hope mentioned here manifested itself to the people of the Southern Kingdom of Judah who were taken into exile in Babylon in the period surrounding the destruction of Jerusalem and her Temple in 587 BC. In this strange land, those with spiritual

insight clung to words written by the prophets, not the least Isaiah who foretold a time when God would come and rescue His people just as He had done for their forebearers in Egypt during the days of Moses. More than that, a new Davidic king was promised who would bring rescue and justice not just to them but to the whole world. He would reign over the Gentiles (the nations). Still more remarkably, this Davidic King was identified with Yahweh: He would be called Immanuel, “God with us.”

The promises delivered by the prophets began to be fulfilled some 70 years after they went into captivity when Cyrus, king of Persia, issued a decree allowing those who wished to return to their own land, but full realization of these promises had to wait for the coming of Jesus. He was that promised King out of David’s line, the Messiah. He was Immanuel. He was the One who would save them for their sins, not the least the sin that had sent them into exile, but also sin going all the way back to Adam.

We who live on the near side of the cross also receive hope from the Scriptures. From them, we learn that He who appeared the first time to deal with sin will appear a second time to save those who are eagerly awaiting Him. We further learn that at that time death itself will be destroyed and new heavens and a new (renewed) earth will appear. We, therefore, have hope, a hope that propels us to serve Him each day. (VHM)

THE COLLECT FOR THE SECOND SUNDAY IN ADVENT

BLESSED Lord, who hast caused all holy Scriptures to be written for our learning; Grant that we may in such wise hear them, read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest them, that by patience and comfort of thy holy Word, we may embrace, and ever hold fast, the blessed hope of everlasting life, which thou hast given us in our Saviour Jesus Christ. *Amen.*

THE COLLECT FOR ADVENT

ALMIGHTY God, give us grace that we may cast away the works of darkness, and put upon us the armour of light, now in the time of this mortal life, in which thy 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 quick and the dead, we may rise to the life immortal, through him who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Ghost, now and ever. *Amen.*

¶ *This Collect is to be repeated every day, with the other Collects in Advent, until Christmas-eve.*

THE EPISTLE – Romans 15:4-13 (J.B. Phillips)

The God of Hope in the Book of Hope

15 ⁴For all those words which were written long ago are meant to teach us today; that when we read in the scriptures of the endurance of men and of all the help that God gave them in those days, we may be encouraged to go on hoping in our own time.

⁵⁻⁷May the God who inspires men to endure, and gives them a Father's care, give you a mind united towards one another because of your common loyalty to Jesus Christ. And then, as one man, you will sing from the heart the praises of God the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. So open your hearts to one another as Christ has opened his heart to you, and God will be glorified.

A reminder—Christ the universal saviour

⁸⁻⁹Christ was made a servant of the Jews to prove God's trustworthiness, since he personally implemented the promises made long ago to the fathers, and also that the Gentiles might bring glory to God for his mercy to them. It is written: 'For this reason I will confess to you among the Gentiles, and sing to your name'.

¹⁰And again: 'Rejoice, O Gentiles, with his people!'

¹¹And yet again: 'Praise the Lord, all you Gentiles! Laud him, all you peoples!'

¹²And then Isaiah says: 'There shall be a root of Jesse; and he who shall rise to reign over the Gentiles, in him the Gentiles shall hope'.

¹³May the God of hope fill you with joy and peace in your faith, that by the power of the Holy Spirit, your whole life and outlook may be radiant with hope.

NOTE: Human relations are often difficult between men, between religious or cultural groups, between nations. The Christian, however, does not lose heart. The apostle tells us in this reassuring passage that Scripture gives us the encouragement and the necessary fortitude to have hope in these matters. Here is an important aspect of the meaning of salvation. (William Sydnor)

THE GOSPEL – St. Luke 21:25-33 (J.B. Phillips)

Signs of His coming

21 ²⁵There will be signs in the sun and moon and stars, and on the earth there will be dismay among the nations and bewilderment at the roar of the surging sea.

Men's courage will fail completely as they realise what is threatening the world, for the very powers of heaven will be shaken. Then men will see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with great power and splendour! But when these things begin to happen, look up, hold your heads high, for you will soon be free."

Vigilance is essential

²⁹Then he gave them a parable.

30-33 “Look at a fig-tree, or indeed any tree, when it begins to burst its buds, and you realise without anybody telling you that summer is nearly here. So, when you see these things happening, you can be equally sure that the kingdom of God has nearly come. Believe me, this generation will not disappear until all this has taken place. Earth and heaven will pass away, but my words will never pass away.

NOTE: The ‘coming’ spoken of in this passage is Christ’s coming in judgment upon Jerusalem in A.D. 70. At that time, Roman soldiers surrounded the city and laid it even to the ground. Those who did not heed the signs that Jesus gave concerning this coming calamity and who stayed in the city perished. In accordance with Jesus’ words in today’s passage, the generation then present were around to witness this coming in judgment.

Christians have always understood Jesus’ words as pointing beyond His coming in judgment in A.D. 70. Clearly also in view here is Christ’s final Coming at the end of the age. The call to be vigilant still stands. (VHM)

Tom Wright on “The sun will be darkened, the moon won’t shine, the stars will fall from the sky, and the heavenly powers will be shaken”:

“This language was well known, regular code for talking about what we would call high social and political convulsions. When we say that empires ‘fall’, or that kingdoms ‘rise’, we don’t normally envisage any actual downward or upward physical movement. Matthew intends us to understand that the time of the coming of the Son of Man will be a time when the whole world seems to be in turmoil.”

LECTIONARY READING

OLD TESTAMENT LESSON – Isaiah 52:1-10 (RSV)

Let Zion rejoice

52 Awake, awake,
put on your strength, O Zion;
put on your beautiful garments,
O Jerusalem, the holy city;
for there shall no more come into you
the uncircumcised and the unclean.

² Shake yourself from the dust, arise,

O captive^[a] Jerusalem;
loose the bonds from your neck,

O captive daughter of Zion.

³ For thus says the Lord: “You were sold for nothing, and you shall be redeemed without money. ⁴ For thus says the Lord God: My people went down at the first into Egypt to sojourn there, and the Assyrian oppressed them for nothing. ⁵ Now therefore what have I here, says the Lord, seeing that my people are taken away for nothing? Their rulers wail, says the Lord, and continually all the day my name is

despised. ⁶Therefore my people shall know my name; therefore in that day they shall know that it is I who speak; here am I.”

⁷How beautiful upon the mountains
are the feet of him who brings good tidings,
who publishes peace, who brings good tidings of good,
who publishes salvation,
who says to Zion, “Your God reigns.”

⁸Hark, your watchmen lift up their voice,
together they sing for joy;
for eye to eye they see
the return of the Lord to Zion.

⁹Break forth together into singing,
you waste places of Jerusalem;
for the Lord has comforted his people,
he has redeemed Jerusalem.

¹⁰The Lord has bared his holy arm
before the eyes of all the nations;
and all the ends of the earth shall see
the salvation of our God.

NOTE: In this lovely poetry the prophet looks ahead to the release of God’s people from Babylon. Nevertheless, the Christian cannot divorce the prophet’s message from the coming of our Lord. (William Sydnor)

The Second Sunday in Advent

The Preacher – The Rector

Sunday Worship Options

In-church.

Drive-in. Those choosing this option are asked to remain in their automobile and listen to the service via their car radio (FM 98.1). Holy Communion will be provided.

Online. Services are livestreamed on Facebook and available for viewing following the service on You Tube.

To access both put “Parish Church of St. Luke, Blue Ridge, Ga.” In the search bar.



Tip of the Canterbury Cap to Kathryn Noblett, Laurien Burgreen, Judy Brooten and Teresa Wankel for the reception following ‘Carols by Candlelight’.

Poinsettias need for Christmas services



Poinsettias are \$15 a pot. To place one or more in memory or honor of someone, please speak to KathrynNoblett or call the church office.



OUR MISSION

St. Luke's mission is to grow spiritually in the knowledge and love of Jesus Christ and in the fellowship of the Holy Spirit and to share our faith, our hands and hearts for the sake of the Gospel, our community and the world.

Financial Pledge for the Year of our Lord 2023

As stewards of God's gifts and in gratitude for all blessings, I pledge the following amount to the work of Christ through St. Luke's Church for 2023.

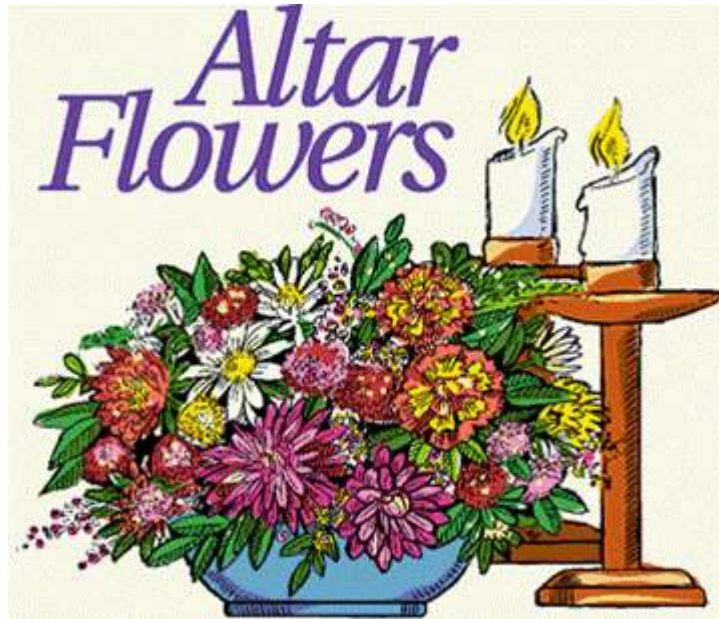
Name

Address

—
Amount

_____ Weekly _____ Monthly _____ Yearly

(Please tick the appropriate blank)



SIGN-UP FOR FLOWERS

A sign-up sheet for Altar flowers is available in Thomason Hall for 2022.

Please sign up for days you wish to commemorate.

Flowers are needed throughout the end of the year. Please email or call Kathryn Noblett at the church office to sign up.

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St. Luke's Church, "The Parish Church of the Mountains," 7 Ewing St., (POB 1821), Blue Ridge, Georgia 30513; (706) 632-8245; www.stlukesblueridge.org; stlukes@tds.net.