

TLPC READINGS and PRAYERS for the First Sunday in Advent, Nov. 29, 2015

Because we're changing the format for Advent, instead of the Invitation to Worship, etc. Scott and I will invite people in the congregation to light the Advent Candle and offer the Opening Prayer. I'm sending the Advent Prayer directly to Bob and Lis Green for this week.

FIRST READING - *Our first reading comes from the prophet Jeremiah probably written around 590 BC. Jeremiah was God's faithful spokesman to the people, urging them to follow and obey the Lord; and as a result God gives Jeremiah the privilege of announcing the Good News of a Savior who is to come. Listen for God's Word from Jeremiah chapter 13, verses 14-16.*

Jeremiah 33:14-16

"The days are coming," declares the Lord, "when I will fulfill the good promise I made to the people of Israel and Judah. In those days and at that time I will raise up a righteous Branch – a descendant – from King David's line. He will do what is just and right in the land. In those days Judah will be saved and Jerusalem will live in safety. This is the name by which it will be called: "The Lord is our Righteousness."

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

***GOSPEL READING**

Luke 1: 5-25

When Herod was king of Judea, there was a Jewish priest named Zechariah, who was a member of the priestly order of Abijah. His wife, Elizabeth, was from the priestly line of Aaron. Both of them were righteous in God's eyes, careful to obey all of the Lord's commandments and regulations. But they had no children because Elizabeth was unable to conceive, and they were both very old. One day Zechariah was serving God as priest in the Temple because his order was on duty that week. As was the custom of the priests, he was chosen by lot to enter the sanctuary of the Lord and burn incense. At the time of the incense-offering, a great crowd stood outside, praying. An angel of the Lord appeared to Zechariah, standing to the right of the incense altar. When Zechariah saw him, he was terrified; and overwhelmed with fear over. But the angel said, 'Don't be afraid, Zechariah! God has heard your prayer. Your wife, Elizabeth, will bear you a son, and you will name him John. You will have great joy and gladness, and many will rejoice at his birth, for he will be great in the sight of the Lord. He must never drink wine or strong drink. Even before his birth he will be filled with the Holy Spirit. He will turn many of the people of Israel to the Lord their God. He will be a man with the spirit and power of Elijah and will turn the hearts of parents to their children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the righteous, to make ready a people prepared for the Lord.' Zechariah said

to the angel, 'How can I be sure this will happen? For I am an old man, and my wife is getting on in years.' The angel replied, 'I am Gabriel. I stand in the very presence of God. It was he who sent me to bring you this good news! But now, since you didn't believe what I said, you will be silent and unable to speak until the child is born. For my words will certainly be fulfilled at the proper time.' Meanwhile, the people were waiting for Zechariah, and wondered what delayed him in the sanctuary. When he finally did come out, he couldn't speak to them. Then they realized from his gestures and his silence that he must have seen a vision in the sanctuary. When Zechariah's week of service in the Temple was over, he returned home. After those days his wife Elizabeth conceived and went into seclusion for five months. "How kind the Lord is!" she exclaimed. He has taken away the disgrace I have endured among my people."

The Gospel of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.