

The Parish of St. Peter (Upper Gullies)

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“You are Peter, and on this rock I will build my Church.” Matthew 16-18

Sunday, December 3, 2017

FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT



Diocesan Bishop:

The Right Reverend Dr. Geoffrey Peddle

Rector:

The Reverend Jean Smith (On Leave)

Interim Administrator

The Reverend Irving Letto

Parish Deacon:

The Reverend Dr. Bonnie Morgan (On Leave)

Organist/Choir Director

Andrea Powell

Parish Wardens

Ralph Drover

Robert Hilliard

Office Administrator:

Jack Morgan

8:30am Book of Common Prayer: 10:30am Book of Alternative Services

LECTIONARY: Isaiah 64:1-9; Psalm 80:1-7, 16[17]-18[19] (BCP p433; BAS p812) 1 Corinthians 1:3-9; Mark 13:24-37

COLLECT Almighty God, give us grace to cast away the works of darkness and put on the armour of light, now in the time of this mortal life in which your Son Jesus Christ came to us in great humility, that on the last day, when he shall come again in his glorious majesty to judge both the living and the dead, we may rise to the life immortal; through him who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.

PRAYER OVER THE GIFTS God of love and power, your word stirs within us the expectation of the coming of your Son. Accept all we offer you this day, and sustain us with your promise of eternal life. We ask this in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION God for whom we wait, you have fed us with the bread of eternal life. Keep us ever watchful, that we may be ready to stand before the Son of man. We ask this in the name of Christ the Lord. Amen.

HYMNS FOR 10:30 SERVICE

Opening: (#88) **Come, Thou Long Expected Jesus**
Advent Candle Lighting: **A Candle is Burning** (1st verse)
Youth Choir: **When a Child is Born**
Gradual: (#92) **O Day of God, Draw Nigh**
Offering: (#93) **You Servants of the Lord**
Communion: (Choir Anthem) **Make Me a Servant**
Choral Benediction: **I am Walking a Path of Hope**
Closing (#8 Praise Book) **City of God**
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Pastoral Message

The opening words of today's reading from Isaiah sets the tone for the traditional understanding of Advent. **"O that you would tear open the heavens and come down, so that the mountains would quake at your presence - as when fire kindles brushwood and the fire causes water to boil - to make your name known to your adversaries."** (64:1) Why did Isaiah long for such violent divine intervention?

First, the nation established by King David did not become the ideal homeland of their dreams. Their hopes were frustrated by surrounding states and powerful empires that were jealous of their success and desirous of the strategic location of their land. To maintain some independence, their kings often had to enter into treaties that reduced their freedom and went against their most cherished values and beliefs. In spite of this, the capital Jerusalem was destroyed and the temple was burned. Many of their leading citizens were taken into exile.

Second, in a strange land the exiles gradually adapted to the ways of their captors and people like Isaiah could see that the social and spiritual values of their ancestors were threatened. The people back home were experiencing the same kind of change. Their very existence as a people was being threatened.

“We are clay, and you are our potter.” (64:8) Isaiah’s solution to the problem was for God to intervene and start over again. Later God says, **“I am about to create new heavens and a new earth.”** (65:17) I like to use the metaphor of “a clean slate” to describe this kind of theological thinking.

Most of us can remember times when we promised ourselves that we were going to turn over a new leaf. But it isn’t easy. People who are successful at making a real change usually do so only by learning to understand and respect those parts of their personalities that got them into trouble in the first place. Although we sometimes wish we could, we can’t go back to the very beginning, a completely “clean slate.”

It’s Advent. It’s the beginning of a new church year, a time to think of how we can change ourselves and the world for the better. Many of the biblical images we will be encountering during this season will be of the “clean slate” type.

I invite you to take time to seriously meditate on the Advent readings. You don’t have to have a degree in theology to do this. Indeed, the first step is to recognize that no one is able to know exactly what was in the minds of the writers of the Bible. Another important step is to see God as a friend, someone who appreciates us as we are, someone who loves our company. Relax and let your Bible study be like a visit with your best friend.

This week we are praying for:

All Church Leaders, especially +Justin, Archbishop of Canterbury, +Fred, Primate of the Anglican Church of Canada; +Ronald, Metropolitan of the Ecclesiastical Province of Canada, +Geoffrey, our Bishop; Jean+, our Rector; Bonnie+, our Deacon, and Irving+, our interim administrator.

In the Anglican/Lutheran Cycle of Prayer, ACC Primate, Archbishop Fred Hiltz and staff of the Primate's Office of the Anglican Church of Canada ELCIC National Bishop Susan Johnson and national staff of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada.

In the Tri-Diocesan Cycle of Prayer, the staff of the Western Newfoundland Synod Office; The Most Reverend Percy D. Coffin, Mrs Rebecca Pennell and Mrs. Gloria Grouchy. Also, the executive director of Killdevil Camp and Conference Centre, Mr. Malcolm Turner.

In the CBS Ministerial Cycle of Prayer we pray for the unity of all Christians; and for all clergy and members of the church communities of Conception Bay South.

We pray for our Alongsiders, Eva Adams and Evelyn Morgan.

Those who are sick or otherwise in need, especially: Rodney Andrews, Payton Best, John Bradbury, Janet Butler, Mary Dawe, Muriel Fowler, Brian Gosse, Deneal Haines, Mackenzie Jones, Marion Morgan, Glenys O'Brien, Pat Reid, Lucy Thistle, Chris Gillingham, Mary Bussey, Eileen Shaw (N.B.), Violet Batten, Les McDonald, Fred Kelly, Rev. Bonnie, Rev. Jean, Jeannete Rogers, Kenneth Smith.

In loving memory

A donation to the sound system has been gratefully received in memory of **Reg Morgan** (remembering his birthday on December 1st). From Marjorie and family.

Today's bulletin is given in loving memory of:

Leslie Dawe Jr, (remembering the 6th anniversary of his passing of December 3rd and his birthday on December 19th). From Cynthia and family.