**MORNING PRAYER READINGS
December 16-20, 2024
The Third Week of Advent**

**MONDAY IN THE THIRD WEEK OF ADVENT
December 16** (PSALM 41 & 52 BCP 641)

**FIRST LESSON** A reading from the Book of Isaiah [8:16—9:1]

Bind up the testimony, seal the teaching among my disciples. I will wait for the Lord, who is hiding his face from the house of Jacob, and I will hope in him. See, I and the children whom the Lord has given me are signs and portents in Israel from the Lord of hosts, who dwells on Mount Zion. Now if people say to you, ‘Consult the ghosts and the familiar spirits that chirp and mutter; should not a people consult their gods, the dead on behalf of the living, for teaching and for instruction?’ surely, those who speak like this will have no dawn! They will pass through the land, greatly distressed and hungry; when they are hungry, they will be enraged and will curse their king and their gods. They will turn their faces upwards, or they will look to the earth, but will see only distress and darkness, the gloom of anguish; and they will be thrust into thick darkness.

But there will be no gloom for those who were in anguish. In the former time he brought into contempt the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, but in the latter time he will make glorious the way of the sea, the land beyond the Jordan, Galilee of the nations.

—Here ends the Lesson (*or* Reading).
[*OR* The Word of the Lord. *Thanks be to God.*]

**SECOND LESSON** A reading from the Second Letter of Peter [1:1-11]

Simeon Peter, a servant and apostle of Jesus Christ,
To those who have received a faith as precious as ours through the righteousness of our God and Saviour Jesus Christ:
May grace and peace be yours in abundance in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord.

His divine power has given us everything needed for life and godliness, through the knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness. Thus he has given us, through these things, his precious and very great promises, so that through them you may escape from the corruption that is in the world because of lust, and may become participants in the divine nature. For this very reason, you must make every effort to support your faith with goodness, and goodness with knowledge, and knowledge with self-control, and self-control with endurance, and endurance with godliness, and godliness with mutual affection, and mutual affection with love. For if these things are yours and are increasing among you, they keep you from being ineffective and unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. For anyone who lacks these things is short-sighted and blind, and is forgetful of the cleansing of past sins. Therefore, brothers and sisters, be all the more eager to confirm your call and election, for if you do this, you will never stumble. For in this way, entry into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ will be richly provided for you.

—Here ends the Lesson (*or* Reading).
[*OR* The Word of the Lord. *Thanks be to God.*]

**TUESDAY IN THE THIRD WEEK OF ADVENT
December 17** (PSALM 45 BCP 647)

**FIRST LESSON** A reading from the Book of Isaiah [9:1-7]

There will be no gloom for those who were in anguish. In the former time he brought into contempt the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, but in the latter time he will make glorious the way of the sea, the land beyond the Jordan, Galilee of the nations.
The people who walked in darkness
   have seen a great light;
those who lived in a land of deep darkness—
   on them light has shined.
You have multiplied the nation,
   you have increased its joy;
they rejoice before you
   as with joy at the harvest,
   as people exult when dividing plunder.
For the yoke of their burden,
   and the bar across their shoulders,
   the rod of their oppressor,
   you have broken as on the day of Midian.
For all the boots of the tramping warriors
   and all the garments rolled in blood
   shall be burned as fuel for the fire.
For a child has been born for us,
   a son given to us;
authority rests upon his shoulders;
   and he is named
Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God,
   Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.
His authority shall grow continually,
   and there shall be endless peace
for the throne of David and his kingdom.
   He will establish and uphold it
with justice and with righteousness
   from this time onwards and for evermore.
The zeal of the Lord of hosts will do this.

—Here ends the Lesson (*or* Reading).
[*OR* The Word of the Lord. *Thanks be to God.*]

**SECOND LESSON** A reading from the Second Letter of Peter [1:12-21]

I intend to keep on reminding you of these things, though you know them already and are established in the truth that has come to you. I think it right, as long as I am in this body, to refresh your memory, since I know that my death will come soon, as indeed our Lord Jesus Christ has made clear to me. And I will make every effort so that after my departure you may be able at any time to recall these things.

For we did not follow cleverly devised myths when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but we had been eyewitnesses of his majesty. For he received honour and glory from God the Father when that voice was conveyed to him by the Majestic Glory, saying, ‘This is my Son, my Beloved, with whom I am well pleased.’ We ourselves heard this voice come from heaven, while we were with him on the holy mountain.

So we have the prophetic message more fully confirmed. You will do well to be attentive to this as to a lamp shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts. First of all you must understand this, that no prophecy of scripture is a matter of one’s own interpretation, because no prophecy ever came by human will, but men and women moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God.

—Here ends the Lesson (*or* Reading).
[*OR* The Word of the Lord. *Thanks be to God.*]

**WEDNESDAY IN THE THIRD WEEK OF ADVENT
December 18** (PSALM 119:49-72 BCP 767)

**FIRST LESSON** A reading from the Book of Isaiah [9:8-17]

The Lord sent a word against Jacob,
   and it fell on Israel;
and all the people knew it—
   Ephraim and the inhabitants of Samaria—
   but in pride and arrogance of heart they said:
‘The bricks have fallen,
   but we will build with dressed stones;
the sycomores have been cut down,
   but we will put cedars in their place.’
So the Lord raised adversaries against them,
   and stirred up their enemies,
the Arameans in the east and the Philistines in the west,
   and they devoured Israel with open mouth.
For all this, his anger has not turned away;
   his hand is stretched out still.

The people did not turn to him who struck them,
   or seek the Lord of hosts.
So the Lord cut off from Israel head and tail,
   palm branch and reed in one day—
elders and dignitaries are the head,
   and prophets who teach lies are the tail;
for those who led this people led them astray,
   and those who were led by them were left in confusion.
That is why the Lord did not have pity on their young people,
   or compassion on their orphans and widows;
for everyone was godless and an evildoer,
   and every mouth spoke folly.
For all this, his anger has not turned away;
   his hand is stretched out still.

—Here ends the Lesson (*or* Reading).
[*OR* The Word of the Lord. *Thanks be to God.*]

**SECOND LESSON** A reading from the Second Letter of Peter [2:1-10a]

False prophets also arose among the people, just as there will be false teachers among you, who will secretly bring in destructive opinions. They will even deny the Master who bought them—bringing swift destruction on themselves. Even so, many will follow their licentious ways, and because of these teachers the way of truth will be maligned. And in their greed they will exploit you with deceptive words. Their condemnation, pronounced against them long ago, has not been idle, and their destruction is not asleep.

For if God did not spare the angels when they sinned, but cast them into hell and committed them to chains of deepest darkness to be kept until the judgement; and if he did not spare the ancient world, even though he saved Noah, a herald of righteousness, with seven others, when he brought a flood on a world of the ungodly; and if by turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah to ashes he condemned them to extinction and made them an example of what is coming to the ungodly; and if he rescued Lot, a righteous man greatly distressed by the licentiousness of the lawless (for that righteous man, living among them day after day, was tormented in his righteous soul by their lawless deeds that he saw and heard), then the Lord knows how to rescue the godly from trial, and to keep the unrighteous under punishment until the day of judgement —especially those who indulge their flesh in depraved lust, and who despise authority.

—Here ends the Lesson (*or* Reading).
[*OR* The Word of the Lord. *Thanks be to God.*]

**THURSDAY IN THE THIRD WEEK OF ADVENT
December 19** (PSALM 50 BCP 654)

**FIRST LESSON** A reading from the Book of Isaiah [9:18—10:4]

Wickedness burned like a fire,
   consuming briers and thorns;
it kindled the thickets of the forest,
   and they swirled upwards in a column of smoke.
Through the wrath of the Lord of hosts
   the land was burned,
and the people became like fuel for the fire;
   no one spared another.
They gorged on the right, but still were hungry,
   and they devoured on the left, but were not satisfied;
they devoured the flesh of their own kindred;
Manasseh devoured Ephraim, and Ephraim Manasseh,
   and together they were against Judah.
For all this, his anger has not turned away;
   his hand is stretched out still.

Ah, you who make iniquitous decrees,
   who write oppressive statutes,
to turn aside the needy from justice
   and to rob the poor of my people of their right,
that widows may be your spoil,
   and that you may make the orphans your prey!
What will you do on the day of punishment,
   in the calamity that will come from far away?
To whom will you flee for help,
   and where will you leave your wealth,
so as not to crouch among the prisoners
   or fall among the slain?
For all this, his anger has not turned away;
   his hand is stretched out still.

—Here ends the Lesson (*or* Reading).
[*OR* The Word of the Lord. *Thanks be to God.*]

**SECOND LESSON** A reading from the Second Letter of Peter [2:10b-16]

Bold and willful, they are not afraid to slander the glorious ones, whereas angels, though greater in might and power, do not bring against them a slanderous judgement from the Lord. These people, however, are like irrational animals, mere creatures of instinct, born to be caught and killed. They slander what they do not understand, and when those creatures are destroyed, they also will be destroyed, suffering the penalty for doing wrong. They count it a pleasure to revel in the daytime. They are blots and blemishes, reveling in their dissipation while they feast with you. They have eyes full of adultery, insatiable for sin. They entice unsteady souls. They have hearts trained in greed. Accursed children! They have left the straight road and have gone astray, following the road of Balaam son of Bosor, who loved the wages of doing wrong, but was rebuked for his own transgression; a speechless donkey spoke with a human voice and restrained the prophet’s madness.

—Here ends the Lesson (*or* Reading).
[*OR* The Word of the Lord. *Thanks be to God.*]

**FRIDAY IN THE THIRD WEEK OF ADVENT
December 20** (PSALM 40 & 54 BCP 640)
*Most Fridays of the year are days of special devotion (BCP 17).*

**FIRST LESSON** A reading from the Book of Isaiah [10:5-19]

Ah, Assyria, the rod of my anger—
   the club in their hands is my fury!
Against a godless nation I send him,
   and against the people of my wrath I command him,
to take spoil and seize plunder,
   and to tread them down like the mire of the streets.
But this is not what he intends,
   nor does he have this in mind;
but it is in his heart to destroy,
   and to cut off nations not a few.
For he says:
‘Are not my commanders all kings?
Is not Calno like Carchemish?
   Is not Hamath like Arpad?
   Is not Samaria like Damascus?
As my hand has reached to the kingdoms of the idols
   whose images were greater than those of Jerusalem and Samaria,
shall I not do to Jerusalem and her idols
   what I have done to Samaria and her images?’

When the Lord has finished all his work on Mount Zion and on Jerusalem, he will punish the arrogant boasting of the king of Assyria and his haughty pride. For he says:
‘By the strength of my hand I have done it,
   and by my wisdom, for I have understanding;
I have removed the boundaries of peoples,
   and have plundered their treasures;
   like a bull I have brought down those who sat on thrones.
My hand has found, like a nest,
   the wealth of the peoples;
and as one gathers eggs that have been forsaken,
   so I have gathered all the earth;
and there was none that moved a wing,
   or opened its mouth, or chirped.’

Shall the axe vaunt itself over the one who wields it,
   or the saw magnify itself against the one who handles it?
As if a rod should raise the one who lifts it up,
   or as if a staff should lift the one who is not wood!
Therefore the Sovereign, the Lord of hosts,
   will send wasting sickness among his stout warriors,
and under his glory a burning will be kindled,
   like the burning of fire.
The light of Israel will become a fire,
   and his Holy One a flame;
and it will burn and devour
   his thorns and briers in one day.
The glory of his forest and his fruitful land
   the Lord will destroy, both soul and body,
   and it will be as when an invalid wastes away.
The remnant of the trees of his forest will be so few
   that a child can write them down.

—Here ends the Lesson (*or* Reading).
[*OR* The Word of the Lord. *Thanks be to God.*]

**SECOND LESSON** A reading from the Second Letter of Peter [2:17-22]

These are waterless springs and mists driven by a storm; for them the deepest darkness has been reserved. For they speak bombastic nonsense, and with licentious desires of the flesh they entice people who have just escaped from those who live in error. They promise them freedom, but they themselves are slaves of corruption; for people are slaves to whatever masters them. For if, after they have escaped the defilements of the world through the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they are again entangled in them and overpowered, the last state has become worse for them than the first. For it would have been better for them never to have known the way of righteousness than, after knowing it, to turn back from the holy commandment that was passed on to them. It has happened to them according to the true proverb,
‘The dog turns back to its own vomit’,
and,
‘The sow is washed only to wallow in the mud.’

—Here ends the Lesson (*or* Reading).
[*OR* The Word of the Lord. *Thanks be to God.*]

**SATURDAY, December 21
Holy Day: ST THOMAS THE APOSTLE** (BCP 237)
The psalm and second lesson are from the Daily Office Lectionary for the Holy Day.
[Psalm 23](http://bible.oremus.org?passage=Psalm+23) & [121](http://bible.oremus.org?passage=Psalm+121)
[Isaiah 10:20-27](http://bible.oremus.org?passage=Isaiah+10:20-27)
[1 Peter 1:3-9](http://bible.oremus.org?passage=1+Peter+1:3-9) **SUNDAY, December 22**
**The Fourth Sunday of Advent**(BCP 212)
[Psalm 24 & 29](http://satucket.com/lectionary/Psalm24%2629.html)
[Isaiah 42:1-12](http://bible.oremus.org?passage=Isaiah+42:1-12)
[Ephesians 6:10-20](http://bible.oremus.org?passage=Ephesians+6:10-20)

**NOTE ABOUT THE PSALTER SELECTIONS LISTED:**
In an effort to pray a majority of the 150 psalms every few months, those referenced above are appointed for mornings in *The Book of Common Prayer* during Advent.