



Monday, December 2, 2013

READ- The Psalter: Psalm 72:1-7, 18-19

One of the “royal psalms” which discusses the scope and responsibility of an unknown Jewish king, this is the only royal psalm which emphasizes the king’s responsibility to rule justly and to show compassion for the poor and needy.

REFLECT-

- Do you think those in positions of power in our community are genuinely concerned with doing what is best for the people? Do their actions show a concern for the poor and needy? Is that the responsibility of government or that of the church? Is it the church’s responsibility to hold those in power accountable?

PRAY-

Lord, today I pray for the leaders in my community, nation and the world that they will always do what is just and have compassion for the poor and oppressed. Amen.

Tuesday, December 3, 2013

READ- Old Testament: Isaiah 11:1-10

The prophet Isaiah holds out a glimmer of hope for a people who have been “cut off” from their homeland and their identity with only a stump of their previous glory left. He predicts that in the future there will come a great king who is a descendent of David who will rule with power and justice and bring a time of peace and stability.

REFLECT-

- Christians see Jesus as the fulfillment of this prophecy. Going verse by verse, in what ways do you see that Christ was, is and will be the king described here?

PRAY-

God, thank you for the words of your prophets that help us to better understand the nature of Christ’s reign as King of Kings, Lord of Lords, and Prince of Peace. Amen.

Wednesday, December 4, 2013

READ- The Epistle: Romans 15:4-13

Paul is writing to encourage the Roman church members to “live in harmony” with one another, not bickering over differences between Jewish and Gentile believers. He emphasizes that Jesus is Lord of both groups and all are dependant upon his mercy for salvation.

REFLECT-

- Are there persons in our congregation who may have different viewpoints or perspectives with whom you have difficulty? What are the areas of common ground in the faith you might find with those persons? What can you do to improve you relationship with those persons?

PRAY-

Father, help me to keep first in mind that all those who claim Christ as their savior are my brothers and sisters and teach me to learn to love them and live in peace with them. Amen.

Thursday, December 5, 2013

READ- The Gospel: Matthew 3:1-12

John the Baptist had no idea who the Messiah would be or when he would arrive – yet he clearly had received a prophetic word from God and was effective in making it heard. He expected a Messiah of judgment and punishment; yet Christ came offering love and mercy.

REFLECT-

- John understood the importance of repentance – of turning away from our sinful ways and living differently to prepare ourselves to meet the Messiah. What would John the Baptist say to you about the way you live your life today?

PRAY-

O God, I ask forgiveness for all the ways in which I’ve not done your will. Give me strength and courage to live in the ways Jesus taught us. Amen.

Friday, December 6, 2013

ACT-

Focus Verse: Romans 15:5

May the God of steadfastness and encouragement grant you to live in harmony with one another, in accordance with Christ Jesus.

The phrase “in harmony” brings to mind a musical blending of notes that complement one another. God created each of us an individuals with unique gifts and skills that are intended to blend together to do the work of the Kingdom. Living “in harmony” does not mean we are all alike or that we always agree on all things. Yet as the body of Christ, we can live “in harmony” with one another to accomplish Christ’s work in the world. What can you do as you go about your day today that will allow your gifts and skills to blend with those of other believers to love God and your neighbors? Draw on God’s “steadfastness and encouragement” as a wellspring of love and compassion to share with others.