

Fourth Sunday of Advent

Year B

20th December 2020

Violet/Blue

Prayer of the Day

Gracious God,
whose eternal Word took flesh among us
when Mary placed her life at the service of your will:
prepare our hearts for his coming again
and keep us steadfast in hope,
that we may be ready for the coming of his kingdom;
for his sake, who live and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

A reading from the second book of Samuel,

Chapter 61 beginning at Verse 1

¹Now when the king was settled in his house, and the LORD had given him rest from all his enemies around him, ²the king said to the prophet Nathan, "See now, I am living in a house of cedar, but the ark of God stays in a tent." ³Nathan said to the king, "Go, do all that you have in mind; for the LORD is with you."

⁴But that same night the word of the LORD came to Nathan: ⁵Go and tell my servant David: Thus says the LORD: Are you the one to build me a house to live in? ⁶I have not lived in a house since the day I brought up the people of Israel from Egypt to this day, but I have been moving about in a tent and a tabernacle. ⁷Wherever I have moved about among all the people of Israel, did I ever speak a word with any of the tribal leaders of Israel, whom I commanded to shepherd my people Israel, saying, "Why have you not built me a house of cedar?" ⁸Now therefore thus you shall say to my servant David: Thus says the LORD of hosts: I took you from the pasture, from following the sheep to be prince over my people Israel; ⁹and I have been with you wherever you went, and have cut off all your enemies from before you; and I will make for you a great name, like the name of the great ones of the earth. ¹⁰And I will appoint a place for my people Israel and will plant them, so that they may live in their own place, and be disturbed no more; and evildoers shall afflict them no more, as formerly, ¹¹from the time that I appointed judges over my people Israel; and I will give you rest from all your enemies. Moreover the LORD declares to you that the LORD will make you a house.

¹⁶Your house and your kingdom shall be made sure forever before me; your throne shall be established forever. [NRSV 2 Samuel 7:1-11, 16]

Hear the word of the Lord, ***thanks be to God***

Song of Mary

My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord:
My spirit rejoices in God my Saviour,

For you, Lord, have looked with favour on your lowly servant:
From this day all generations will call me blessed.

You, the Almighty, have done great things for me:
and holy is your name.

You have mercy on those who fear you:
from generation to generation.

You have shown strength with your arm:
and scattered the proud in their conceit,

Casting down the mighty from their thrones:
and lifting up the lowly.

You have filled the hungry with good things:
and sent the rich away empty.

You have come to the aid of your servant Israel:
to remember the promise of mercy,

The promise made to our forebears:
to Abraham and his children for ever.

A reading from the letter of Paul to the Romans,

Chapter 16 beginning at Verse 25

²⁵ Now to God who is able to strengthen you according to my gospel and the proclamation of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery that was kept secret for long ages ²⁶ but is now disclosed, and through the prophetic writings is made known to all the Gentiles, according to the command of the eternal God, to bring about the obedience of faith - ²⁷ to the only wise God, through Jesus Christ, to whom be the glory forever! Amen.

[NRSV Romans 16:25-27]

Hear the word of the Lord, ***thanks be to God.***

The Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Luke,

Chapter 1 beginning at verse 26

Glory to you Lord Jesus Christ.

²⁶ In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, ²⁷ to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. ²⁸ And he came to her and said, "Greetings, favored one! The Lord is with you." ²⁹ But she was much perplexed by his words and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. ³⁰ The angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. ³¹ And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus. ³² He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give to him the throne of his ancestor David. ³³ He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end." ³⁴ Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I am a virgin?" ³⁵ The angel said to her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be holy; he will be called Son of God. ³⁶ And now, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son; and this is the sixth month for her who was said to be barren. ³⁷ For nothing will be impossible with God." ³⁸ Then Mary said, "Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word." Then the angel departed from her.

[NRSV Luke 1:26-38]

This is the Gospel of the Lord, ***praise to you Lord Jesus Christ.***

Sentence

This child will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High. He will reign over the house of Jacob for ever, and of his kingdom there will be no end.