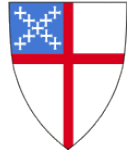


**The Lessons Appointed for Use on
The Third Sunday of Advent
Year A**



The Collect of the Day *Read together*

Stir up your power, O Lord, and with great might come among us; and, because we are sorely hindered by our sins, let your bountiful grace and mercy speedily help and deliver us; through Jesus Christ our Lord, to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit, be honor and glory, now and for ever. Amen.

Prayer for the Poor and Neglected *Read together*

Almighty and most merciful God, we remember before you all poor and neglected persons whom it would be easy for us to forget: the homeless and the destitute, the old and the sick, and all who have none to care for them. Help us to heal those who are broken in body or spirit, and to turn their sorrow into joy. Grant this, Father, for the love of your Son, who for our sake became poor, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

A Reading from the Book of Isaiah (35:1-10)

1The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad, the desert shall rejoice and blossom; like the crocus
2it shall blossom abundantly, and rejoice with joy and singing. The glory of Lebanon shall be given
to it, the majesty of Carmel and Sharon. They shall see the glory of the Lord, the majesty of our
God. 3Strengthen the weak hands, and make firm the feeble knees. 4Say to those who are of a fearful
heart, "Be strong, do not fear! Here is your God. He will come with vengeance, with terrible
recompense. He will come and save you." 5Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears
of the deaf unstopped; 6then the lame shall leap like a deer, and the tongue of the speechless sing
for joy. For waters shall break forth in the wilderness, and streams in the desert; 7the burning sand
shall become a pool, and the thirsty ground springs of water; the haunt of jackals shall become a
swamp, the grass shall become reeds and rushes. 8A highway shall be there, and it shall be called
the Holy Way; the unclean shall not travel on it, but it shall be for God's people; no traveler, not
even fools, shall go astray. 9No lion shall be there, nor shall any ravenous beast come up on it; they
shall not be found there, but the redeemed shall walk there. 10And the ransomed of the Lord shall
return, and come to Zion with singing; everlasting joy shall be upon their heads; they shall obtain
joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

Reader The Word of the Lord
People **Thanks be to God**

Canticle 15 The Song of Mary *Read responsively by whole verse*

My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord, my spirit rejoices in God my Savior; *
for he has looked with favor on his lowly servant.

From this day all generations will call me blessed: *
the Almighty has done great things for me, and holy is his Name.

He has mercy on those who fear him *
in every generation.

He has shown the strength of his arm, *
he has scattered the proud in their conceit.

He has cast down the mighty from their thrones, *
and has lifted up the lowly.

He has filled the hungry with good things, *
and the rich he has sent away empty.

He has come to the help of his servant Israel, *
for he has remembered his promise of mercy,

The promise he made to our fathers, *
to Abraham and his children for ever.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit; *
as it was in the beginning, is now and will be for ever. Amen.

A Reading from the Letter of James (5: 7-10)

7Be patient, therefore, beloved, until the coming of the Lord. The farmer waits for the precious crop from the earth, being patient with it until it receives the early and the late rains. 8You also must be patient. Strengthen your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is near. 9Beloved, do not grumble against one another, so that you may not be judged. See, the Judge is standing at the doors! 10As an example of suffering and patience, beloved, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord.

Reader The Word of the Lord
People **Thanks be to God**

THE GOSPEL

Celebrant The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, according to Matthew (11:2-11)
People **Glory to You, Lord Christ**

2When John heard in prison what the Messiah was doing, he sent word by his disciples 3and said to him, "Are you the one who is to come, or are we to wait for another?" 4Jesus answered them, "Go and tell John what you hear and see: 5the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the poor have good news brought to them. 6And blessed is anyone who takes no offense at me." 7As they went away, Jesus began to speak to the crowds about John: "What did you go out into the wilderness to look at? A reed shaken by the wind? 8What then did you go out to see? Someone dressed in soft robes? Look, those who wear soft robes are in royal palaces. 9What then did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet. 10This is the one about whom it is written, 'See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way before you.' 11Truly I tell you, among those born of women no one has arisen greater than John the Baptist; yet the least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he.

Celebrant The Gospel of the Lord
People **Praise to You, Lord Christ**