

Readings for Sunday, December 9, 2018
2nd Sunday of Advent
Woodbury United Methodist Church

A reading from the prophet Malachi:

The LORD Almighty answers, "I will send my messenger to prepare the way for me. Then the Lord you are looking for will suddenly come to his Temple. The messenger you long to see will come and proclaim my covenant."

²But who will be able to endure the day when he comes? Who will be able to survive when he appears? He will be like strong soap, like a fire that refines metal. ³He will come to judge like one who refines and purifies silver. As a metalworker refines silver and gold, so the LORD's messenger will purify the priests, so that they will bring to the LORD the right kind of offerings. ⁴Then the offerings which the people of Judah and Jerusalem bring to the LORD will be pleasing to him, as they used to be in the past.

The first reading is the "Canticle of Zechariah" from Luke 1:

"Let us praise the Lord, the God of Israel! He has come to the help of his people and has set them free. ⁶⁹He has provided for us a mighty Savior, a descendant of his servant David. ⁷⁰He promised through his holy prophets long ago ⁷¹that he would save us from our enemies, from the power of all those who hate us. ⁷²He said he would show mercy to our ancestors and remember his sacred covenant.⁷³⁻⁷⁴With a solemn oath to our ancestor Abraham he promised to rescue us from our enemies and allow us to serve him without fear, ⁷⁵so that we might be holy and righteous before him all the days of our life. ⁷⁶"You, my child, will be called a prophet of the Most High God. You will go ahead of the Lord to prepare his road for him, ⁷⁷to tell his people that they will be saved by having their sins forgiven.

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⁷⁸Our God is merciful and tender. He will cause the bright dawn of salvation to rise on us ⁷⁹ and to shine from heaven on all those who live in the dark shadow of death, to guide our steps into the path of peace.”

The second Gospel reading is from Luke 3:

It was the fifteenth year of the rule of Emperor Tiberius; Pontius Pilate was governor of Judea, Herod was ruler of Galilee, and his brother Philip was ruler of the territory of Iturea and Trachonitis; Lysanias was ruler of Abilene, ²and Annas and Caiaphas were High Priests. At that time the word of God came to John son of Zechariah in the desert. ³So John went throughout the whole territory of the Jordan River, preaching, “Turn away from your sins and be baptized, and God will forgive your sins. ⁴As it is written in the book of the prophet Isaiah: “Someone is shouting in the desert. ‘Get the road ready for the Lord; make a straight path for him to travel! ⁵Every valley must be filled up, every hill and mountain leveled off. The winding roads must be made straight, and the rough paths made smooth. ⁶The whole human race will see God's salvation!”

This is the word of God for the people of God. **Thanks be to God.**