

the highest heaven, and on earth peace among those whom he favours!’¹⁵ When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, ‘Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us.’¹⁶ So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger.¹⁷ When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child;¹⁸ and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them.¹⁹ But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart.²⁰ The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

New Revised Standard Version of the Bible - Copyright 1989 by the Division of Christian Education of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the USA, and used by permission. All rights reserved.

Pew Reflections

The Birth of our Lord – Christmas Day – Sunday 25 December 2022

- Isaiah 9.2-7; Psalm 96;
Titus 2.11-14; Luke 2.1-14 (15-20)

The angel says: *Do not be afraid*. The phrase is used throughout the Bible – in the Hebrew Scriptures, in the Apocrypha and in the New Testament. God does not want us to be timid, afraid, anxious or troubled. God wants us, as the birth of Jesus shows, to come closer. Perfect love casts out fear (1 John 4.18), and today God surrounds us with perfect love in the birth of the Baby at Bethlehem.

- Pray this week that you may show perfect love to all you encounter.
- Give thanks for the work and witness of the Council of Anglican Provinces of Africa.

Text: Robert McLean

© Anglican Board of Mission, 2022



HOLY INNOCENTS ANGLICAN CHURCH BELAIR

Readings - Sunday 25 December - Christmas Day

Sentence

The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; for to us a child is born, to us a son is given. *Isaiah 9.2, 6*

Collect

God Most High,
whose eternal Word chose a dwelling among us,
that we might live in your presence:
grant us a spirit of wisdom to know how rich is the glory you have given us, and how great is the hope to which we are called in the Word made flesh;
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God for ever and ever. Amen.

First Reading: Isaiah 62.6-12

Upon your walls, O Jerusalem,
I have posted sentinels;
all day and all night
they shall never be silent.
You who remind the Lord,
take no rest,
and give him no rest
until he establishes Jerusalem
and makes it renowned throughout the earth.
The Lord has sworn by his right hand
and by his mighty arm:
I will not again give your grain
to be food for your enemies,
and foreigners shall not drink the wine
for which you have laboured;
but those who garner it shall eat it
and praise the Lord,
and those who gather it shall drink it
in my holy courts.
Go through, go through the gates,

prepare the way for the people;
build up, build up the highway,
clear it of stones,
lift up an ensign over the peoples.

The Lord has proclaimed
to the end of the earth:
Say to daughter Zion,
'See, your salvation comes;
his reward is with him,
and his recompense before him.'
They shall be called, 'The Holy People,
The Redeemed of the Lord';
and you shall be called, 'Sought Out,
A City Not Forsaken.'

For the word of the Lord, Thanks be to God.

Psalm 97

The Lord is king; let the earth rejoice:
let the multitude of islands be glad.

Clouds and darkness are round about him:
**righteousness and justice
are the foundation of his throne.**

Fire goes before him:
and burns up his enemies on every side.

His lightnings light the world:
the earth sees it and quakes.

The mountains melt like wax before his face:
from before the face of the Lord of all the earth.

The heavens have proclaimed his righteousness:
and all peoples have seen his glory.

They are ashamed, all those who serve idols
and glory in mere nothings:
all gods bow down before him.

Zion heard and was glad,
and the daughters of Judah rejoiced:
because of your judgements, O God.

For you, Lord, are most high over all the earth:
you are exalted far above all gods.

The Lord loves those that hate evil:
**the Lord guards the life of the faithful,
and delivers them from the hand of the ungodly.**

Light dawns for the righteous:
and joy for the true of heart.

Rejoice in the Lord, you righteous:
and give thanks to his holy name.

2nd Reading: Titus 3.4-8a

But when the goodness and loving-kindness of God our Saviour appeared, he saved us, not because of any works of righteousness that we had done, but according to his mercy, through the water of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit. This Spirit he poured out on us richly through Jesus Christ our Saviour, so that, having been justified by his grace, we might become heirs according to the hope of eternal life. The saying is sure. I desire that you insist on these things, so that those who have come to believe in God may be careful to devote themselves to good works; these things are excellent and profitable to everyone.

For the word of the Lord, Thanks be to God.

Gospel Reading: Luke 2.1-20

¹ In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered. ² This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. ³ All went to their own towns to be registered. ⁴ Joseph also went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to the city of David called Bethlehem, because he was descended from the house and family of David. ⁵ He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. ⁶ While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. ⁷ And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn. ⁸ In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. ⁹ Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. ¹⁰ But the angel said to them, 'Do not be afraid; for see—I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people:

¹¹ to you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, who is the Messiah, the Lord. ¹² This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger.' ¹³ And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying, ¹⁴ 'Glory to God in