

Announcements for December 17, 2017

For: Rev. Escandell

Our annual **CHRISTMAS LUNCHEON** will take place today in the Fellowship Hall immediately following worship. All are invited to join in the fellowship and spirit of the Christmas season!

The **PRAYER QUILT MINISTRY** will gather here at the church on Tuesday, December 19. The Quilt Ministry meets on the first and third Tuesdays of each month from 1:30-3:30 p.m. on the second floor. For more information, contact Shirley Pippin at 956-358-0591.

The sanctuary will be open for **MID-WEEK ADVENT PRAYER** from noon to 1 p.m. during the last Thursday of Advent Season on December 21. If you feel a need for spiritual prayer/meditation in the coming days, a quiet place is available.

Our **CHRISTMAS EVE “CANDLELIGHT SERVICE”** will be celebrated next Sunday in the Sanctuary at 6 p.m.

Please note: the **CHURCH OFFICE WILL BE CLOSED** December 25-26 and January 1-2, 2018.

Additional Liturgy for December 17, 2017

For: Lita

Call to Confession

Trusting in the love and goodness of God, let us confess our sin.

Prayer for Illumination

It's time to hear God's Word read and proclaimed. Let us pray:

Holy One, giver of life and light, as your word is read and proclaimed, illumine our hearts and minds, that by the power of the Holy Spirit, our lives may reflect God's glory. Amen.

Old Testament

Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-10a (NRSV)

The spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me,
because the LORD has anointed me;
he has sent me to bring good news to the oppressed,
to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives,
and release to the prisoners;
² to proclaim the year of the LORD's favor,
and the day of vengeance of our God;
to comfort all who mourn; ³ to provide for those who mourn in Zion—
to give them a garland instead of ashes,
the oil of gladness instead of mourning, the mantle of praise instead of a faint
spirit.
They will be called oaks of righteousness,
the planting of the LORD, to display his glory.

⁴ They shall build up the ancient ruins,
they shall raise up the former devastations;
they shall repair the ruined cities, the devastations of many generations.

⁸ For I the LORD love justice,
I hate robbery and wrongdoing;
I will faithfully give them their recompense,
and I will make an everlasting covenant with them.

⁹ Their descendants shall be known among the nations,
and their offspring among the peoples;
all who see them shall acknowledge
that they are a people whom the LORD has blessed.

¹⁰ I will greatly rejoice in the LORD,
my whole being shall exult in my God.

Invitation to the Offering

All that we have is the Lord's. All that we may become and receive is in God's hands. For the sake of the joy that is ours when our bonds grow deep with others, let us give generously for the well-being of the world.

Offertory Prayer

Gracious God, thank you for the privilege of sharing what we have with others, of giving ourselves away in love, and of receiving the gifts that others share with us. With our whole being, spirit and soul and body, we rejoice in you. Through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.