



The Shepherd's Voice

by Fr. Joe Rees

November 26, 2013

“Be Alert!”

"Therefore be on the alert, for you do not know which day your Lord is coming."—Jesus.

Mt. 24:42.

As we transition from Christ the King Sunday, the end of our church year, and move to Advent this Sunday in preparation for the coming of the Messiah at His Nativity, we are reminded to *stay alert*. Be ready. It's our calling to be ready for the coming of the Lord Jesus in power and victory. Yes, our calling. We are to hear His voice and know that He's calling us to be 'at one' with Him, ready to take our place in the joys of heaven. Are you ready?

What would you have to do to be ready? Some would say I haven't had time yet to finish my 'bucket list'! Wait, I'm not ready since I have so much going on right now in my life. I think I might have to do a 'yard sale' or unload a whole bunch of stuff to charities to be ready! When the Lord comes again, none of the material 'things' of this world will matter much. Every one of us will see Him when He comes to take charge of all the earth. All the lesser kings of this world will bow down in homage to the King of kings, Jesus. There will be no other way. No other ruler. No other despot. No others...period. Jesus will be the One we have to deal with at that very moment. So what then is most important to do over these next weeks of our lives to be ready for His Coming Again?!

First, enjoy Thanksgiving Day...not so much for the surfeit of food and delicacies that in the richness of our culture most of us will enjoy, but instead, for the true offering of Thanks To God that we will give for the freedom we enjoy here in this great land of plenty. Give thanks mostly for the

freedom God has given us through His Son Jesus Christ who takes away our sins and gives us eternity in heaven. In fact, that is the most important offering we can give...thanking the Lord Jesus for what He has done and continues to do for us! Giving of thanks in prayer to Him is what makes us 'alert' and ready to receive Him at His Coming. If every day was spent in absolute awareness of all the blessings God has given us, we'd be thanking Him all the time and made one with Him in the joy that He has in giving His love to us.

Spend time this Thanksgiving Day in thanking the Lord. Please, it's time spent with Him that He really appreciates and understands is our heartfelt thanksgiving for His blessings to us. Spend time with the Lord Jesus, either in the quiet of your prayer closet or around the table with family. Let the whole family know that you are thanking the Lord for His great and wonderful provisions for our lives. Talk about Him openly to others and say a blessing that you've received this past year at the dinner table or in the living room. Give thanks for one another, those special loves in your life, the people who really care about you, those you journey with through life and appreciate so much. Yes, turn off the TV and other devices and share real talk with one another. Share in thanksgiving of your lives, thanking God for them. This will really make you ready for the Coming of the Lord.

A person I knew said to me one time, I always want to be ready and say to my wife how much I appreciate her and thank her openly each day so that if I were to die suddenly she would know that I really loved her. In fact, the man had a massive heart attack and died instantly. He was ready.

She knew how much he loved her. She was forever grateful for his often 'over-the-top' graces of thanks he had offered to her. She took them all as jewels of memory that continued to shine in her heart.

Thanking the Lord and spending some time with Him, at our Thanksgiving Day service at 10:30am, will warm His heart and ours. He will have those jewels of memory about us so that when He comes again He'll see us, recognize us, receive us with arms wide open and rejoice over us with thanksgiving. We receive His abundant blessings because we thank Him for our salvation. We thank Him for our lives hid within Christ and He in us, and for the joy we share in fellowship with the Body of Christ, His Church. Being this 'alert and ready', He will escort us to the ban-

quet table of heaven where the eternal Thanksgiving Dinner will thrill us with the delicacies of His love and the joy of friends for eternity.

As we go into Advent then, let us be 'alert' to the opportunities to "thank Him" with over-the-top worship, praise, and rejoicing in the Savior who holds each of our lives in the palms of His hands. So many of my prayers end with "thank you Lord, I love you dearly!" Thank you Lord for our parish family that loves you dearly. Thank you for each member of our church who faithfully look to you and are alert to Your coming again.

Happy Thanksgiving to all!

Love in Christ,
Fr. Joe

Sunday Servers

December 1, 2013	Advent 1	8:30 a.m. Service	10:15 a.m. Service
First Reader	Isaiah 2:1-5	Robbin Gates	Alex Teixeira
Psalm Reader	Psalm 122	Trish Stewart	Jim Livingston
Second Reader	Romans 13:8-14	Judy Gillease	Pat Richardson
Intercessor		Bill Laitinen	Frances Slaughter
Lay Euch. Ministers		Dick Phelps, Jane Rost	Carolyn Blumberg, Richard Rieder
Acolytes		Bill Laitinen	Frances S (C); Dasiahmarie V (T1); Zachary J (T2)
Welcomers		Paula Sholly, Myrna Lipnicke	Margaret Olsen, Anna Teixeira
Ushers		Dick Sholly, Chris Corey	Jim Livingston, JR Fox, April Knowles
Vestry Person of Day	Jackie Lansing		
Healing Ministers		Jan Simon, Thor Strom	John & Liz Gerhart
Announcer		Myrna Lipnicke	Petey Seibold
Counters			Cline Handy & Michael Murphy

Thanksgiving at Grace

10:30 a.m.— Thanksgiving Service

Noon—Thanksgiving Dinner—We'll do the Turkeys, you bring a thanksgiving dish to share with your church family. Everyone is welcome!!

Smile!

SMILE! We are having our pictures professionally done for the new pictorial directory at Grace. The photographer will be here on December 5, 6, & 7th You will be called to make an appointment or check our website for a link to make your appointment online.

Pledge Cards

If you haven't already done it, please turn in your anonymous pledge card on Sunday so we can have some basis on which to plan next year's budget.

This Week at Grace

November 26, - December 3, 2013

Tues. November 26

11:30 a.m. Rector's Bible Study
4:30 p.m. Healing prayer and Eucharist at CHC
7:00 p.m. Fr. Joe's Teaching on Revelation

Wed. November 27

8:30 a.m. Morning Prayer & Eucharist
9:30 a.m. Staff Meeting
7:00 p.m. Choir Practice

Thurs. November 28

10:30 a.m. Thanksgiving Day Service
Noon Thanksgiving Dinner at Grace

Fri. November 29

Church office Closed
10:00 a.m. Morning Prayer at CHC
6:30 p.m. Evening Prayer & Healing

Sat. November 30

8:00 a.m. Men's Fellowship
10:00 p.m. Praise Team rehearsal

Sun. December 1

1st Sunday of Advent

7:30 a.m. Spoken Eucharist Service
8:30 a.m. Holy Eucharist with choir
9:45 a.m. Coffee & Fellowship
10:00 a.m. Nursery opens
10:15 a.m. Children's Church
10:15 a.m. Holy Eucharist with praise team

Mon. December 2

6:30 a.m. Men's Prayer

Tues. December 3

11:30 a.m. Rector's Bible Study
4:30 p.m. Healing prayer and Eucharist at CHC
6:30 p.m.- Traditions of Advent
around the world

Angel Tree Ministry

We still have the names of children of incarcerated parents available for you to buy gifts for the child. We will have a party for the children as they come to pick up their gifts on December 15th. Your financial help with the party is needed. See Tina Murphy for more information.

Bible Readings this Week

Isaiah 2:1-5

Psalms 122

Romans 13:8-14

Luke 21:5-19

We are using the English Standard Version of the Bible and the Lectionary from the Book of Common Prayer (Year A)

Upcoming Events

Nov. 27 Choir Rehearsal—7:00 p.m.
Nov. 28 Thanksgiving Service at Grace, 10:30am
Nov. 28 Thanksgiving Dinner at Grace, 11:30am
Nov. 29 Church Office Closed.
Nov. 30 Decorate the church, 10am
Dec. 3 Traditions of Advent & potluck
Dec. 5,6 & 7-Pictures taken for new directory.
Dec. 10 Traditions of Advent & potluck
Dec. 15 Angel Tree Party—2:00pm
Dec. 17 Traditions of Advent & Potluck
Dec. 22 Children's Christmas program & Party
Dec. 24 Christmas Eve services—5 & 10 pm
Dec. 25 Christmas Day service—10:00am
Dec. 25-Jan 2—Office closed. The staff will check messages and emails if you need to contact the church.

Traditions of Advent Around the World

Join with the John & Myrna Lipnicke, Dick & Paula Sholly and Dick & Linnie Phelps as they share their experiences of Advent and Christmas in other countries on December 3rd and December 10th.

Donna Brayton will share her beautiful story of Christmas in England on December 17th. Potluck dinner will be at 6:30 p.m. and there will be a special Advent dish to represent the country being presented by the team. Bring a dish to share and join them in this special time of the beauty of the season in other parts of the world.

Grace Anglican Church

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