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SERVICE OF THE WORD

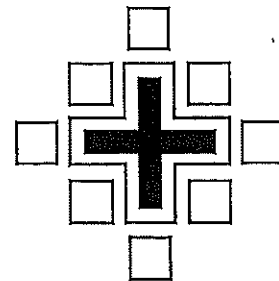
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Fourth Sunday in Advent

December 24, 2023



INTROIT *Ps. 19:1, 4c, 5–6; antiphon: Is. 45:8a, b*

Shower, O heavens, from above, and let the clouds
rain down | righteousness;*

let the earth open, that salvation and righteousness may | bear fruit.

The heavens declare the glory of God, and the sky above
proclaims his | handiwork.*

In them he has set a tent | for the sun,
which comes out like a bridegroom leaving his | chamber,*
and, like a strong man, runs its | course with joy.

Its rising is from the end of the heavens, and its circuit to the | end of them,*
and there is nothing hidden | from its heat.

Glory be to the Father and | to the Son*

and to the Holy | Spirit;

as it was in the be- | ginning,*

is now, and will be forever. | Amen.

Shower, O heavens, from above, and let the clouds rain down | righteousness;*

let the earth open, that salvation and righteousness may | bear fruit.

COLLECT OF THE DAY

Stir up Your power, O Lord, and come and help us by Your might, that the sins
which weigh us down may be quickly lifted by Your grace and mercy; for You live
and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

GRADUAL *Zech. 9:9; Ps. 118:26, alt.*

Rejoice greatly, O daughter of | Zion.*

Shout aloud, O daughter of Je- | rusalem.

Behold, your king is com- | ing to you;*

righteous and having sal- | vation.

Blessèd is he who comes in the name | of the Lord.*

From the house of the Lord we | bless you.

DAILY READINGS

December 24: Is. 44:21–45:13, 20–25; Rev. 12:1–17; 25: Is. 49:1–18; Matt. 1:1–17; 26: Is. 49:22–26;
50:4–51:8, 12–16; Matt. 1:18–25; 27: Is. 51:17–52:12; Matt. 2:1–12; 28: Is. 52:13–54:10; Matt. 2:13–23;
29: Is. 55:1–13; Luke 1:1–25; 30: Is. 58:1–59:3, 14–21; Luke 1:26–38.

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Old Testament Reading: 2 Samuel 7:1–11, 16

¹Now when the king lived in his house and the LORD had given him rest from all his surrounding enemies, ²the king said to Nathan the prophet, “See now, I dwell in a house of cedar, but the ark of God dwells in a tent.” ³And Nathan said to the king, “Go, do all that is in your heart, for the LORD is with you.”

⁴But that same night the word of the LORD came to Nathan, ⁵“Go and tell my servant David, ‘Thus says the LORD: Would you build me a house to dwell in? ⁶I have not lived in a house since the day I brought up the people of Israel from Egypt to this day, but I have been moving about in a tent for my dwelling. ⁷In all places where I have moved with all the people of Israel, did I speak a word with any of the judges of Israel, whom I commanded to shepherd my people Israel, saying, ‘Why have you not built me a house of cedar?’” ⁸Now, therefore, thus you shall say to my servant David, ‘Thus says the LORD of hosts, I took you from the pasture, from following the sheep, that you should be prince over my people Israel. ⁹And I have been with you wherever you went and have cut off all your enemies from before you. And I will make for you a great name, like the name of the great ones of the earth. ¹⁰And I will appoint a place for my people Israel and will plant them, so that they may dwell in their own place and be disturbed no more. And violent men shall afflict them no more, as formerly, ¹¹from the time that I appointed judges over my people Israel. And I will give you rest from all your enemies. Moreover, the LORD declares to you that the LORD will make you a house. . . .

¹⁶And your house and your kingdom shall be made sure forever before me. Your throne shall be established forever.’”

Epistle: Romans 16:25–27

²⁵Now to him who is able to strengthen you according to my gospel and the

preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery that was kept secret for long ages ²⁶but has now been disclosed and through the prophetic writings has been made known to all nations, according to the command of the eternal God, to bring about the obedience of faith—²⁷to the only wise God be glory forevermore through Jesus Christ! Amen.

Holy Gospel: Luke 1:26–38

²⁶In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a city of Galilee named Nazareth, ²⁷to a virgin betrothed to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. And the virgin’s name was Mary. ²⁸And he came to her and said, “Greetings, O favored one, the Lord is with you!” ²⁹But she was greatly troubled at the saying, and tried to discern what sort of greeting this might be. ³⁰And the angel said to her, “Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. ³¹And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus. ³²He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. And the Lord God will give to him the throne of his father David, ³³and he will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end.”

³⁴And Mary said to the angel, “How will this be, since I am a virgin?”

³⁵And the angel answered her, “The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be called holy—the Son of God. ³⁶And behold, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son, and this is the sixth month with her who was called barren. ³⁷For nothing will be impossible with God.” ³⁸And Mary said, “Behold, I am the servant of the Lord; let it be to me according to your word.” And the angel departed from her.