

Memorize & Ponder

Dec 4, 2016 – Advent 2 / Communion

Memorize & Ponder Text – Matt 3:3
(Full Readings – Ps 72:1-7 & Matt 3:1-12)
Week of Nov 27 – Dec 4, 2016

The Mad Man in the Wilderness

Matthew 3:3 (NRSV)

This is the one of whom the prophet Isaiah wrote when he said, “The voice of one crying in the wilderness, ‘Prepare the way of the Lord, and make his paths straight.’”

*Throughout the Christian year of 2016-17, from Advent to Advent, we will be focusing on the theme of ‘Flourishing in the Fulfillment of God’s Promises.’ Our Scripture readings and Memorize & Ponder texts will be taken mostly from the gospel of Matthew. His focus in telling the stories of Jesus is on the fulfillment of God’s promises to creation recorded in the Hebrew Scriptures. This is a Jewish Jesus, God’s promised Messiah. But the ways God’s promises were fulfilled in Jesus scandalized most people of his day (and perhaps of ours?) with their apparent foolishness. We invite you to **listen** for what the Spirit is saying in the text, then **question** how those insights might change the ways you see things and act in the world. Share your thoughts during the week on the meaning the Spirit creates for you in this text by posting a comment on our website – www.brentwoodpc.ca.*

Ponderings for the Friends of Jesus

Let us hold fast to the confession of our hope without wavering, for he who has promised is faithful. And let us provoke one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together ... (Hebrews 10:23-25a)

A Word for the Friends of Jesus to Ponder = Wilderness

As I have been getting a sense
in my pondering about the dominant themes
in Matthew’s particular interpretation
of the work and witness of Jesus as the Christ,
these words from NT Wright
strike me as worth remembering
in our reading of this Gospel this coming year:

Matthew insists throughout his work that we see in Jesus, even when things are at their darkest, the fulfillment of Scripture. This is how Israel’s redeemer was to appear; this is how God would set about liberating his people and bringing justice to the whole world. No point in arriving in comfort when the world is in misery; no point having an easy life when the world suffers violence and injustice! If he is to be Emmanuel, God-with-us, he must be with us where the pain is.

NT Wright, *Matthew: 25 Studies for Individuals and Groups* (2009)

Introduced by a mad man ranting in the wilderness,
offensive to many of the respectable leaders of his day,
what are we to make of this person, Jesus,
in whom and through whom the Creator of all
reconciled and restored his creation
to its original dynamic of flourishing peace?.

Gratitude for Grace Noticed this Week

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