

ADVENT DEVOTIONAL DECEMBER 16, 2013

The Rev. Anthony Hita '13, Pastor, Stahlstown United Methodist Church in Stahlstown, Pa.

SCRIPTURE

REVELATION 3:7-13

7 "And to the angel of the church in Philadelphia write:

These are the words of the holy one, the true one, who has the key of David, who opens and no one will shut, who shuts and no one opens:

8 "I know your works. Look, I have set before you an open door, which no one is able to shut. I know that you have but little power, and yet you have kept my word and have not denied my name. 9 I will make those of the synagogue of Satan who say that they are Jews and are not, but are lying — I will make them come and bow down before your feet, and they will learn that I have loved you. 10 Because you have kept my word of patient endurance, I will keep you from the hour of trial that is coming on the whole world to test the inhabitants of the earth. 11 I am coming soon; hold fast to what you have, so that no one may seize your crown. 12 If you conquer, I will make you a pillar in the temple of my God; you will never go out of it. I will write on you the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, the new Jerusalem that comes down from my God out of heaven, and my own new name. 13 Let anyone who has an ear listen to what the Spirit is saying to the churches."

DEVOTIONAL

From an increased attendance in churches, to the general attitude of giving and cheer, the Christmas season is a time when doors open that are seldom open other times. Rather than focusing on how the door may be shut throughout the year, bemoaning those who come only at Easter and Christmas, we have an opportunity in the season to show the grace and love that God has already made known to us in Christ—a love that is available to everyone all year around. Somewhere out there this Yuletide, a door is open that was previously closed, and Christ is being born as if for the first time in someone's heart. For those of us who claim the name of Jesus, let us pick up our gifts and go in perseverance, and see what doors Christ is opening in our midst today.

PRAYER

Lord Jesus, to whom all hearts are known: The doors you open cannot be shut, and the doors you close cannot be opened. Grant us this day the grace to not throw ourselves against closed doors, and the wisdom to find the doors you are opening. May we who claim your name have open hearts, open minds, and open doors to proclaim your love and light into all the darkness of this world. Amen.

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