



## ADVENT DEVOTIONAL DECEMBER 25, 2017

### SCRIPTURE

#### PSALM 96

- 1 O sing to the LORD a new song;  
sing to the LORD, all the earth.
- 2 Sing to the LORD, bless his name;  
tell of his salvation from day to day.
- 3 Declare his glory among the nations,  
his marvelous works among all the peoples.
- 4 For great is the LORD, and greatly to be praised;  
he is to be revered above all gods.
- 5 For all the gods of the peoples are idols,  
but the LORD made the heavens.
- 6 Honor and majesty are before him;  
strength and beauty are in his sanctuary.

- 7 Ascribe to the LORD, O families of the peoples,  
ascribe to the LORD glory and strength.
- 8 Ascribe to the LORD the glory due his name;  
bring an offering, and come into his courts.
- 9 Worship the LORD in holy splendor;  
tremble before him, all the earth.
- 10 Say among the nations, "The LORD is king!  
The world is firmly established; it shall never be moved.  
He will judge the peoples with equity."
- 11 Let the heavens be glad, and let the earth rejoice;  
let the sea roar, and all that fills it;
- 12 let the field exult, and everything in it.  
Then shall all the trees of the forest sing for joy
- 13 before the LORD; for he is coming,  
for he is coming to judge the earth.  
He will judge the world with righteousness,  
and the peoples with his truth.

## DEVOTIONAL

**The Rev. Graham McWilliams, Minister, Comrie and Dundurn Parish Churches / Comrie, Perthshire, Scotland / Reformed Theology Focus**

Having come to this glorious day of Christmas, I'm sure that many of us have, through the time of Advent, sung our hearts out in praise celebrating the promise of God in Jesus, our Lord. And it is right that we have done so, for, as the psalmist affirms, God has accomplished "marvellous works among all the people" and our response must be to share this good news with those in whom we come into contact. We need to remember, however, that God's actions are worldwide as God brings forward His great plan for all creation, because most of what God is achieving we don't hear about.

Bad news sells newspapers, Good News doesn't. So let us not be dismayed by the reports of terror, violence, and crime—the rise in what we may consider ungodliness. These incidents are the local signs of our troubled times and the opportunities that lie at the heart of Christ's mission for us, today. Only when we are confident in proclaiming that "The Lord is King" will those who are caught up in these acts of aggression come to realize that there is more to life than personal gain—and turn to God for life's fulfilment.

Celebrating the birth of Christ gives humanity a new beginning, a renewed hope for the future. Today we may faithfully encounter many challenges, but at His return the bounties of our faith will overflow and the glory of the Lord will uplift us beyond our understanding. Rejoice. Amen.

## PRAYER

Faithful God, fulfiller of promises, open our eyes to Your goodness and lift our hearts beyond the immediate that we may experience a taste of Your eternal Kingdom. May our voices continue to sing of Your greatness and our lives reflect Your love of us today and in the year to come. Amen.

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