

Sermons

Seekers recognizes that any member of the community may be called upon by God to give us the Word, and thus we have an open pulpit with a different preacher each week. Sermons preached at Seekers, as well as sermons preached by Seekers at other churches or events, are posted here, beginning with the most recent.

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[“Invincible Summer” by John Morris](#)



Christmastide

January 2, 2022

Invincible Summer

Let the bells be silenced

Let the gifts be stillborn

Let cheer be muted

Let music be soundless

Violence stalks the land

Howard Thurman

That's a quote from one of the [Inward/Outward](#) readings this week, and that's about how I feel, a lot of the time.

We are in the midst of winter. It's a new calendar year, but the Earth has not renewed herself yet. For us in the northern hemisphere, in the United States, the days are short, the light feeble. And what a strange winter it's been – tornados, floods, brushfires. It's enough to make a person despair of anything ever getting better. But we also know about seasons. There's never yet been a winter without a spring. Somehow Mother Earth does bloom again, and we, her creatures, are released from the grip of frost and foreboding.

My own mood is very wintry, on this January 2nd. I have much to be grateful for each day, and I have led a privileged and grace-filled life. But what turns my spirit cold inside is what I see happening to our country. There is every chance that I, that every one of us, is going to lose some of the most precious privileges – we like to call them “rights” – that we have always enjoyed. I'm not an especially patriotic person. I think the U.S. has done some things very well, others very poorly. But I truly never thought that our long, slow path toward equality at the ballot box – just to take one instance – would be reversed, with the express intent of

allowing one political party to gain power illegitimately. To be honest, I thought I would die before anything truly drastic happened to the U.S. – which is the sort of comfort a white male can take, surveying his own enviable position.

Well, it hasn't worked out that way. The bell is tolling, a lot sooner than I expected.

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[“Broken Halos” by Larry Rawlings](#)



Christmastide

December 25, 2021

Good morning. I usually start off by saying “if you remember one thing I’ve said today, then I’ve done my job.” So I’ll start off by saying: AA’S Third Step says, “Made a decision to turn my will and my life over to the care of God.” My will

is my thoughts and my life are my actions.

A week ago Saturday, I said goodbye to one of my dogs. His name was Empty. It was a sad moment for me, but my conscience is clear. It was his time, and that was the last act of love that we did for him. Two other dogs that I had been caring for also received the last act of love this year. Both Toby and Pepper are now gone, and I miss all three of those dogs.

Community-wise this year, Brenda's father, Margreta's husband, Rosa's mother, and Oswaldo's sister have all passed on. Collectively, they will all be missed and not forgotten.

Today I am fully vaccinated, and no, I don't know what's in it. Neither this vaccine or the ones that I had as a child. Nor do I know the 11 secret herbs and spices at KFC, or the ingredients in hot dogs or CocaCola's secret recipe or other treatments for cancer, AIDS, arthritis or vaccines for children.

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[“Waiting Together” by Marjory Bankson](#)



Advent 4

December 19, 2021

In our lectionary text for today, we pick up the story of Mary and Elizabeth at its dramatic climax: the six-months -along baby in Elizabeth's womb "jumps for joy" when Mary arrives on Elizabeth's doorstep, newly pregnant by the holy spirit's divine intervention.

Both women are given prophetic speech by Luke. First Elizabeth, who says (in a loud voice), "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb! But why am I so favored, that the mother of the Messiah should come to me?"

Elizabeth's question is rhetorical – she already knows that Mary is carrying "the Messiah." Earlier in chapter 1, Luke has told us that Elizabeth and her husband, Zachariah, were both from priestly families – thus linking them to their Jewish clan heritage. We also know that they were well beyond the age of bearing children and that Elizabeth felt the deep disgrace of being barren. Most likely, they both considered her

barrenness a judgment against them.

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[“The Joy of Our Salvation” by David Lloyd](#)

Advent 3

December 12, 2021



We're in the midst of a pandemic virus with seemingly no end to its mutations. At the same time, we are experiencing epidemics of addiction and deaths from opioids and from firearm violence. Our political partisanship has risen to levels dangerous to our representative democracy. Our nation continues to experience racial injustice and violence against racial, ethnic, and religious minorities but may not have the will to examine our history to see what brought us to this state and what we can do about it. And threatening us over everything else is the dangerous impact of climate change. We

want, we need, we pray to be delivered from all this, to be saved from all this.

Are you feeling joyous this Advent? Advent was originally a 40-day fast beginning on November 12, much like the 40-day fast of Lent. It was a time of penitence in preparation for Christmas. Fortunately, in the ninth century Advent was reduced to four weeks. That reduction of penitential time alone should make us joyous! Today, the third Sunday of Advent, is Gaudete Sunday in Roman Catholicism, the Anglican church, and the Protestant churches. Many churches light a rose-colored candle in their Advent wreath on Gaudete Sunday. In Latin, *Gaudete* means "rejoice," which is the first word of the introit in the Mass for today, coming from the Philippians text we heard.

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["Community " by Sandra Miller](#)

Advent 2

December 5, 2021



Holy One, may the words of my mouth and the meditations of my heart express my love for you and be pleasing to you, and those in this community whose ears and hearts receive them.

I offer a rendering of Philippians 1:3-11, which captured my imagination, and called me in many directions.

"I thank the Holy One every time I remember you, constantly praying with joy in every one of my prayers for all of you, because of your sharing in the gospel from the day that you came to believe until now. I am confident of this, that those who began good works among you will bring it to completion by the time of your taking leave of the corporal world, through your faith in the teachings of Jesus. It is right for me to think this way about all of you, because you hold me in your heart. All of you share in God's grace, in living with any afflictions that beset you, and in confirmation of the gospel. For God is my witness, how I love all of you with the compassion of Jesus, who becomes Christ in the story yet to come. And this is my prayer, that your love may overflow more and more with knowledge and full insight to help you determine what is best, so that in the day of Christ you may be at peace in your heart, having produced the harvest of

living true to your inner being, the gifts of Wisdom, and through Jesus Christ, who paves the road to love of the Holy One.”

You may have noticed that this is not exactly the text offered in any version of the Bible you've read. In my usual audacious manner, I have rewritten the Word, hopefully keeping the spirit of the message that it has delivered for millennia, yet attempting to bring it closer to the Word that helps me to grow and understand it. I hope that I have not offended or alienated anyone, and maybe even offered the possibility of doing the same in your own receiving of the Word.

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[← Previous](#) [1](#) ... [30](#) [31](#) [32](#) ... [282](#) [Next](#) →