



ST. ANDREW'S
ANGLICAN CHURCH

SECOND SUNDAY OF CHRISTMAS
January 5, 2025

Processional Hymn

Please Stand



1 Pre - pare the way, O Zi - on, your Christ is draw - ing near!
2 He brings God's rule, O Zi - on; he comes from heaven a - bove.
3 Fling wide your gates, O Zi - on; your Sa - vior's rule em - brace.



Let ev - ery hill and val - ley a lev - el way ap - pear.
His rule is peace and free - dom, and jus - tice, truth, and love.
His tid - ings of sal - va - tion pro - claim in ev - ery place.



Greet One who comes in glo - ry, fore - told in sa - cred sto - ry.
Lift high your praise re - sound - ing, for grace and joy a - bound - ing.
All lands will bow be - fore him, their voic - es will a - dore him.



Oh, blest is Christ that came in God's most ho - ly name.

The Order for the Administration of the Lord's Supper

begins on page 105 in the
Book of Common Prayer

Celebrant For unto us a child is born,
People Unto us a son is given.

The Collect for Purity

Almighty God, to you all hearts are open, all desires known, and from you no secrets are hid: Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you, and worthily magnify your holy Name; through Christ our Lord. Amen.

The Summary of The Law

Hear what our Lord Jesus Christ says:

You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself. On these two commandments depend all the Law and the Prophets.

The Kyrie

Lord, have mercy upon us.

Christ, have mercy upon us.

Lord, have mercy upon us.

The Gloria *please stand*



1. Glo - ry to God in the high - est, and



peace to his peo - ple on earth. 2. Lord God, heaven - ly



King, al - mighty God and Fa - ther, we wor - ship you, we

give you thanks, we praise you for your glo - ry. 3. Lord Je - sus
 Christ, on - ly Son of the Fa - ther, Lord God, Lamb of God, 4. you
 take a - way the sin of the world: have mer - cy
 on us; 5. you are seat - ed at the right hand of the Fa - ther: re -
 ceive our prayer. 6. For you a - lone are the Ho - ly One,
 you a - lone are the Lord, 7. you a - lone are the Most
 High, Je - sus Christ, with the Ho - ly Spi - rit, in the
 glo - ry of God the Fa - ther. A - men.

The Collect of the Day *pg. 601*

Priest The Lord be with you.

People **And with your spirit.**

Priest Let us pray.

O God, who wonderfully created, and yet more wonderfully restored, the dignity of human nature: Grant that we may share the divine life of him who humbled himself to share our humanity, your Son Jesus Christ our Lord; who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

Old Testament Lesson

Jeremiah 31:7-14

⁷For thus says the Lord:

“Sing aloud with gladness for Jacob,
and raise shouts for the chief of the nations;

proclaim, give praise, and say,

‘O Lord, save your people,
the remnant of Israel.’

⁸Behold, I will bring them from the north country

and gather them from the farthest parts of the earth,
among them the blind and the lame,

the pregnant woman and she who is in labor, together;
a great company, they shall return here.

⁹With weeping they shall come,

and with pleas for mercy I will lead them back,

I will make them walk by brooks of water,

in a straight path in which they shall not stumble,

for I am a father to Israel,

and Ephraim is my firstborn.

¹⁰“Hear the word of the Lord, O nations,

and declare it in the coastlands far away;

say, 'He who scattered Israel will gather him,
and will keep him as a shepherd keeps his flock.'

¹¹For the Lord has ransomed Jacob
and has redeemed him from hands too strong for him.

¹²They shall come and sing aloud on the height of Zion,
and they shall be radiant over the goodness of the Lord,
over the grain, the wine, and the oil,
and over the young of the flock and the herd;
their life shall be like a watered garden,
and they shall languish no more.

¹³Then shall the young women rejoice in the dance,
and the young men and the old shall be merry.

I will turn their mourning into joy;
I will comfort them, and give them gladness for sorrow.

¹⁴I will feast the soul of the priests with abundance,
and my people shall be satisfied with my goodness,
declares the Lord."

Reader: The word of the Lord.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

Psalm 84

1 How lovely are your dwellings, *
O Lord God of hosts!

2 My soul has a desire and longing to enter into the courts of the Lord; *
my heart and my flesh rejoice in the living God.

3 Indeed, the sparrow has found her a house, and the swallow a nest where she may
lay her young, *

- even your altars, O Lord of hosts, my King and my God.
- 4 Blessed are they who dwell in your house; *
they will be always praising you.
- 5 Blessed is the one whose strength is in you, *
in whose heart are your ways,
- 6 Who going through the valley of misery uses it for a well; *
indeed, the early rains fill the pools with water.
- 7 They will go from strength to strength, *
and the God of gods shall be seen by them in Zion.
- 8 O Lord God of hosts, hear my prayer; *
hearken, O God of Jacob.
- 9 Behold, O God, our defender, *
and look upon the face of your Anointed.
- 10 For one day in your courts *
is better than a thousand;
- 11 I would rather be a door-keeper in the house of my God *
than dwell in the tents of ungodliness.
- 12 For the Lord God is a light and defense; *
the Lord will give grace and honor, and no good thing shall he withhold from
those who live a godly life.
- 13 O Lord God of hosts, *
blessed is the one who puts his trust in you.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit; as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.

New Testament Lesson

Ephesians 1:3-14

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, ⁴ even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him. In love ⁵ he predestined us for adoption to himself as sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will, ⁶ to the praise of his glorious grace, with which he has blessed us in the Beloved. ⁷ In him we have redemption through his blood, the

forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace, ⁸ which he lavished upon us, in all wisdom and insight ⁹ making known to us the mystery of his will, according to his purpose, which he set forth in Christ ¹⁰ as a plan for the fullness of time, to unite all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth.

¹¹In him we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to the purpose of him who works all things according to the counsel of his will, ¹² so that we who were the first to hope in Christ might be to the praise of his glory. ¹³In him you also, when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and believed in him, were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit, ¹⁴ who is the guarantee of our inheritance until we acquire possession of it, to the praise of his glory.

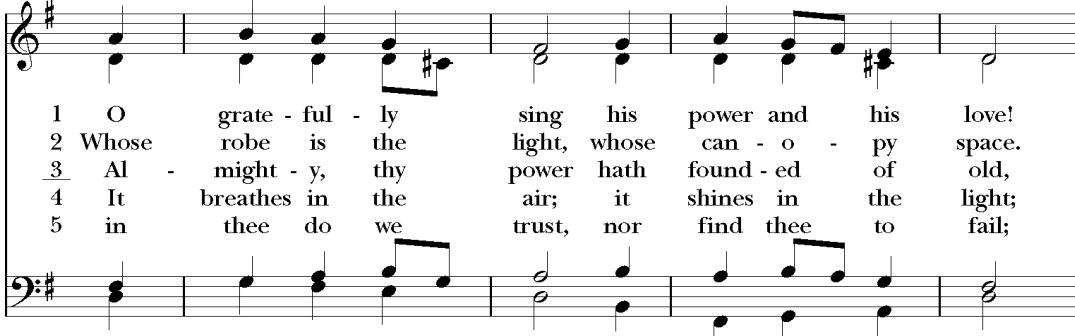
Reader: The word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

Gradual Hymn *Please Stand*



1 O wor - ship the King, all glo - rious a - bove!
2 O tell of his might! O sing of his grace!
3 The earth, with its store of won - ders un - told,
4 Thy boun - ti - ful care, what tongue can re - cite?
5 Frail chil - dren of dust, and fee - ble as frail,



1 O grate - ful - ly sing his power and his love!
2 Whose robe is the light, whose can - o - py space.
3 Al - might - y, thy power hath found - ed of old,
4 It breathes in the air; it shines in the light;
5 in thee do we trust, nor find thee to fail;

1 Our shield and de-fend-er, the An-cient of Days,
 2 His char-iots of wrath the deep thun-der-clouds form,
 3 hath stab-lished it fast by a change-less de-cree,
 4 it streams from the hills, it de-scends to the plain,
 5 thy mer-cies, how ten-der! how firm to the end!

1 pa-vil-ioned in splen-dor, and gird-ed with praise.
 2 and dark is his path on the wings of the storm.
 3 and round it hath cast, like a man-tle, the sea.
 4 and sweet-ly dis-tills in the dew and the rain.
 5 Our Ma-ker, De-fend-er, Re-deem-er, and Friend!

The Holy Gospel

Luke 2:22-40

Priest: The Holy Gospel of Our Lord Jesus Christ, according to Luke.

People: Glory to you, Lord Christ.

And when the time came for their purification according to the Law of Moses, they brought him up to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord²³ (as it is written in the Law of the Lord, “Every male who first opens the womb shall be called holy to the Lord”)²⁴ and to offer a sacrifice according to what is said in the Law of the Lord, “a pair of turtledoves, or two young pigeons.”²⁵ Now there was a man in Jerusalem, whose name was Simeon, and this man was righteous and devout, waiting for the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit was upon him.²⁶ And it had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord's Christ.²⁷ And he came in the Spirit into the temple, and when the parents brought in

the child Jesus, to do for him according to the custom of the Law, ²⁸ he took him up in his arms and blessed God and said,

²⁹“Lord, now you are letting your servant depart in peace,
according to your word;

³⁰for my eyes have seen your salvation

³¹ that you have prepared in the presence of all peoples,

³²a light for revelation to the Gentiles,
and for glory to your people Israel.”

³³And his father and his mother marveled at what was said about him. ³⁴And Simeon blessed them and said to Mary his mother, “Behold, this child is appointed for the fall and rising of many in Israel, and for a sign that is opposed ³⁵(and a sword will pierce through your own soul also), so that thoughts from many hearts may be revealed.”

³⁶And there was a prophetess, Anna, the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was advanced in years, having lived with her husband seven years from when she was a virgin, ³⁷and then as a widow until she was eighty-four. She did not depart from the temple, worshiping with fasting and prayer night and day. ³⁸And coming up at that very hour she began to give thanks to God and to speak of him to all who were waiting for the redemption of Jerusalem.

³⁹And when they had performed everything according to the Law of the Lord, they returned into Galilee, to their own town of Nazareth. ⁴⁰And the child grew and became strong, filled with wisdom. And the favor of God was upon him.

Priest: The Gospel of the Lord.

People: Praise to you, Lord Christ

The Sermon

The Ven. Seth Brooker

The Nicene Creed

**We believe in one God,
the Father, the Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
of all that is, visible and invisible.**

We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,
the only-begotten Son of God,
eternally begotten of the Father,
God from God, Light from Light,
true God from true God,
begotten, not made,
of one Being with the Father;
through him all things were made.
For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven,
was incarnate from the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary,
and was made man.
For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;
he suffered death and was buried.
On the third day he rose again in accordance with the Scriptures;
he ascended into heaven
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead,
and his kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,
who with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified,
who has spoken through the prophets.
We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church.
We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.
We look for the resurrection of the dead,
and the life of the world to come. Amen.

The Prayers of the People

Let us pray for the Church and for the world, saying,
“hear our prayer.”

For the peace of the whole world, and for the well-being and unity of the people of God.

Reader Lord, in your mercy:

People Hear our prayer.

For Steve Wood, our Archbishop, and Jacob Worley, our Bishop, and for all the clergy and people of our Diocese and Congregation.

We pray for Saint George Anglican Church, Fairbanks, Ak.

In our diocesan cycle of prayer we pray for Bishop Ordinary Cascadia Diocese, The Rt. Rev. Jacob Worley and Bishop of Yangon and Archbishop of Myanmar, The Most Rev. Stephen Than Myint Oo

Reader Lord, in your mercy:

People Hear our prayer.

For all those who proclaim the Gospel at home and abroad; and for all who teach and disciple others.

Reader Lord, in your mercy:

People Hear our prayer.

For our brothers and sisters in Christ who are persecuted for their faith.

Reader Lord, in your mercy:

People Hear our prayer.

For our nation, for those in authority, and for all in public service especially Joe Biden, President-Elect Donald Trump, Mike Dunleavy, and Dave Bronson.

Reader Lord, in your mercy:

People Hear our prayer.

For all those who are in trouble, sorrow, need, sickness, or any other adversity.

Reader Lord, in your mercy:

People Hear our prayer.

For all those who have departed this life in the certain hope of the resurrection, in thanksgiving let us pray.

Reader Lord, in your mercy:

People Hear our prayer.

Priest: Heavenly Father, grant these our prayers for the sake of Jesus Christ, our only Mediator and Advocate, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

The Confession and Absolution of Sin

Let us humbly confess our sins to Almighty God.

Silence

Almighty God, Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,
maker and judge of us all:

We acknowledge and lament our many sins and offenses,
which we have committed by thought, word, and deed
against your divine majesty,
provoking most justly your righteous anger against us.

We are deeply sorry for these our transgressions;
the burden of them is more than we can bear.

Have mercy upon us,

Have mercy upon us, most merciful Father;

for your Son our Lord Jesus Christ's sake,
forgive us all that is past;
and grant that we may evermore serve and please you in newness of life,
to the honor and glory of your Name;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Almighty God, our heavenly Father, who in his great mercy has promised forgiveness of sins to all those who sincerely repent and with true faith turn to him, have mercy upon you, pardon and deliver you from all your sins, confirm and strengthen you in all goodness, and bring you to everlasting life; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

The Comfortable Words

Hear the Word of God to all who truly turn to him.
Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.
Matthew 11:28

God so loved the world, that he gave his only-begotten Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life.
John 3:16^t

The saying is trustworthy and deserving of full acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners.
1 Timothy 1:15

If anyone sins, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous. He is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world.
1 John 2:1-2^t

The Peace

Celebrant The Peace of the Lord be always with you.

People **And with your spirit.**

For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sake he became poor, so that you by his poverty might become rich.

2 CORINTHIANS 8:9

The Offertory Hymn *Please Stand*

How lovely is thy dwelling place,
O Lord of hosts, to me!
My thirsty soul desires and longs
within thy courts to be;
my very heart and flesh cry out,
O living God for thee.

Beside thine altars, gracious Lord,
the swallows find a nest;
how happy they who dwell with thee
and praise thee without rest,
and happy they whose hearts are set
upon the pilgrim's quest.

They who go through the desert vale
will find it filled with springs,
and they shall climb from height to
height
till Zion's temple rings
with praise to thee, in glory throned,
Lord God, great King of kings.

One day within thy courts excels
a thousand spent away;
how happy they who keep thy laws
nor from thy precepts stray,
for thou shalt surely bless all those
who live the words they pray.

Doxology

Unison

Praise God from whom all blessings flow. Praise Him, all creatures

here be - low. Al - le - lu - ia! Al - le - lu - ia! Praise

Him a - bove, ye heav'n-ly host. Praise Fa - ther, Son, and

Ho - ly Ghost. Al - le - lu - ia! Al - le - lu - ia!

Al - le - lu - ia! Al - le - lu - ia! Al - le - lu - ia!

The Sursum Corda

Celebrant The Lord be with you.

People And with your spirit.

Celebrant Lift up your hearts.

People **We lift them up to the Lord.**
Celebrant Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
People **It is right to give him thanks and praise.**

It is right, our duty and our joy, always and everywhere to give thanks to you, Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth.

Because you gave Jesus Christ, your only Son, to be born for us; who, by the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary his mother, was made truly man, yet without the stain of sin, that we might be cleansed from sin and given the right to become your children.

Therefore we praise you, joining our voices with Angels and Archangels and with all the company of heaven, who for ever sing this hymn to proclaim the glory of your Name:

The Sanctus



The Prayer of Consecration

Please kneel or stand.

All praise and glory is yours, O God our heavenly Father, for in your tender mercy, you gave your only Son Jesus Christ to suffer death upon the Cross for our redemption. He made there, by his one oblation of himself once offered, a full, perfect, and sufficient sacrifice, oblation, and satisfaction, for the sins of the whole world; and he instituted, and in his Holy Gospel commanded us to continue, a perpetual memory of his precious death and sacrifice, until his coming again.

So now, O merciful Father, in your great goodness, we ask you to bless and sanctify, with your Word and Holy Spirit, these gifts of bread and wine, that we, receiving them according to your Son our Savior Jesus Christ's holy institution, in remembrance of his death and passion, may be partakers of his most blessed Body and Blood.

For on the night that he was betrayed, our Lord Jesus Christ took bread; and when he had given thanks, he broke it,* and gave it to his disciples, saying, "Take, eat; this is my Body, which is given for you: Do this in remembrance of me."

Likewise, after supper, Jesus took the cup, and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them, saying, "Drink this, all of you; for this is my Blood of the New Covenant, which is shed for you, and for many, for the forgiveness of sins: Whenever you drink it, do this in remembrance of me."

Therefore, O Lord and heavenly Father, according to the institution of your dearly beloved Son our Savior Jesus Christ, we your humble servants celebrate and make here before your divine Majesty, with these holy gifts, the memorial your Son commanded us to make; remembering his blessed passion and precious death, his mighty resurrection and glorious ascension, and his promise to come again.

And we earnestly desire your fatherly goodness mercifully to accept this, our sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving; asking you to grant that, by the merits and death of your Son Jesus Christ, and through faith in his Blood, we and your whole Church may obtain forgiveness of our sins, and all other benefits of his passion.

And here we offer and present to you, O Lord, ourselves, our souls and bodies, to be a reasonable, holy, and living sacrifice. We humbly pray that all who partake of this Holy Communion may worthily receive the most precious Body and Blood of your Son Jesus Christ, be filled with your grace and heavenly benediction, and be made one body with him, that he may dwell in us, and we in him.

And although we are unworthy, because of our many sins, to offer you any sacrifice, yet we ask you to accept this duty and service we owe, not weighing our merits, but pardoning our offenses, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

By him, and with him, and in him, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, all honor and glory is yours, Almighty Father, now and for ever. **Amen.**

The Lord's Prayer

And now as our Savior Christ has taught us, we are bold to pray:

Our Father, who art in heaven,

hallowed be thy Name,

thy kingdom come,

thy will be done,

on earth as it is in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread.

And forgive us our trespasses,

as we forgive those

who trespass against us.

And lead us not into temptation,

but deliver us from evil.

For thine is the kingdom,

and the power, and the glory,

for ever and ever. Amen.

The Fraction

Celebrant Alleluia. Christ our Passover Lamb has been sacrificed, once for all upon the Cross.

People Therefore let us keep the feast. Alleluia.

The Prayer of Humble Access

We do not presume to come to this your table, O merciful Lord,
trusting in our own righteousness,
but in your abundant and great mercies.

We are not worthy so much as to gather up
the crumbs under your table;
but you are the same Lord
whose character is always to have mercy.

Grant us, therefore, gracious Lord,
so to eat the flesh of your dear Son Jesus Christ,
and to drink his blood,
that our sinful bodies may be made clean by his body,
and our souls washed through his most precious blood,
and that we may evermore dwell in him, and he in us. Amen.

The Ministration of Communion

All Christians who have been baptized in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit are welcome to receive Holy Communion. To receive the bread, place one hand in the other with palms facing up. If you wish to only receive the bread, please cross your arms over your chest when the chalice bearer comes to you with the wine. Anyone may come forward to request a blessing from the priest, or prayers for healing.

Communion Hymn

Chorus

Bless the Lord oh my soul

Oh my soul

Worship His Holy name

Sing like never before

Oh my soul

I'll worship Your Holy name

1.The sun comes up
It's a new day dawning
It's time to sing Your song again
Whatever may pass
And whatever lies before me
Let me be singing
When the evening comes

Bless the Lord oh my soul
Oh my soul
Worship His Holy name
Sing like never before
Oh my soul
I'll worship Your Holy name

2.You're rich in love
And You're slow to anger
Your name is great
And Your heart is kind
For all Your goodness
I will keep on singing
Ten thousand reasons
For my heart to find

Bless the Lord oh my soul
Oh my soul
Worship His Holy name
Sing like never before
Oh my soul
I'll worship Your Holy name

3.And on that day
When my strength is failing
The end draws near
And my time has come
Still my soul will
Sing Your praise unending
Ten thousand years
And then forevermore

Bless the Lord oh my soul
Oh my soul
Worship His Holy name
Sing like never before
Oh my soul
I'll worship Your Holy name

Bless the Lord oh my soul
Oh my soul
Worship His Holy name
Sing like never before
Oh my soul
I'll worship Your Holy name

The Post Communion Prayer p. 121

Let us pray.

Almighty and everliving God,
we thank you for feeding us, in these holy mysteries,
with the spiritual food of the most precious Body and Blood
of your Son our Savior Jesus Christ;
and for assuring us, through this Sacrament, of your favor and
goodness towards us:
that we are true members of the mystical body of your Son,
the blessed company of all faithful people;
and are also heirs, through hope,
of your everlasting kingdom.
And we humbly ask you, heavenly Father,
to assist us with your grace,
that we may continue in that holy fellowship,
and do all the good works that you have prepared for us to walk in;
through Jesus Christ our Lord,
to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit,
be all honor and glory, now and for ever. Amen.

The Blessing

The peace of God, which passes all understanding, keep your hearts and minds in the knowledge and love of God, and of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord; and the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be among you, and remain with you always. Amen.

Sending Hymn

1 O for a thou - sand tongues to sing my dear Re - deem - er's praise,
2 My gra - cious Mas - ter and my God, as - sist me to pro - claim
3 Je - sus! the Name that charms our fears and bids our sor - rows cease;
4 He speaks; and, lis - tening to his voice, new life the dead re - ceive,
5 Hear him, ye deaf; ye voice - less ones, your loos - ened tongues em - ploy;

1 the glo - ries of my God and King, the tri - umphs of his grace!
2 and spread through all the earth a - broad the hon - ors of thy Name.
3 'tis mu - sic in the sin - ner's ears, 'tis life and health and peace.
4 the mourn - ful bro - ken hearts re - joice, the hum - ble poor be - lieve.
5 ye blind, be - hold, your Sa - vior comes; and leap, ye lame, for joy!

6 Glory to God and praise and love
be now and ever given
by saints below and saints above,
the Church in earth and heayen.

The Dismissal

Priest Let us go forth in the Name of Christ, Alleluia Alleluia

People Thanks be to God, Alleluia Alleluia

Holiday message from Archbishop Steve Wood:

Happy New Year!

I wonder what New Year resolutions you've made for 2025?

I've one resolution. It has been my resolution for most of my adult life. It is not unique to me. It is from 1 Corinthians 2.2, *"For I resolved to know nothing while I was with you except Jesus Christ and Him crucified."* This single verse encapsulates both the ground of my salvation and the ongoing focus of my work as your Archbishop.

How am I to attain this resolution, this goal of knowing Christ and Him crucified? I am not left to wonder. Scripture lays out quite clearly how I attain to maturity in Christ:

1. A commitment to Bible reading.
2. A commitment to the community of faith.
3. A commitment to regular worship, especially centered around the Lord's Supper.
4. A commitment to prayer.
5. A commitment to regular, generous, and at times sacrificial, giving to the work of the gospel in both my local parish and the global church.

These practices have become a deeply rooted rhythm of my life. So deeply rooted that they have become unconscious actions. However, I will confess, I was not naturally inclined to any of these commitments. My heart had to be converted to them. I will also add that I remain faithful to these practices because even now it would be easy to neglect one or more and then find myself in a state of spiritual torpor.

Central though, is Bible reading. In fact, without Scripture we would not know of these practices - and more importantly, we would not know the content and substance of The Faith. And so, regularly and methodically I move through several chapters of Scripture each day.

You will not be surprised to know that I often hear any number of reasons why folks do not ("can not") find the time for daily Bible reading. Hearing this line of reasoning one too many times John Piper once said something along the lines of *"one of the great uses of Twitter and Facebook will be to prove at the Last Day*

that the neglect of Scripture reading and prayerlessness was not from lack of time.” I typically do not argue the point. People do what they want to do.

Bible Reading Plans for 2025

If you begin this year looking for a Bible reading plan or a devotional, what should you consider as you choose a plan/devotional? I’d suggest that you aim to read the actual Bible, not someone telling you their opinion or thought on some matter. Far too many devotional books are the words of the author, not the Word of Life. With this in mind, here are a few options for you to consider:

A Bible Reading Plan

Shortly after we married Jacqui introduced me to a Bible reading method called, “*Beginnings*.” On the first day of using this plan you read one chapter from Genesis 1 (the creation story), Ezra 1 (the return of Israel from the Babylonian captivity), Matthew 1 (the birth of Jesus), and Acts 1 (the birth of the church). Each of these chapters marks a beginning. Each following day then continues in succession, i.e., Genesis 2, Erza 2, Matthew 2, Acts 2, and so on. If you miss a day (or a few days) simply pick up where you left off.

I have followed this plan in continued repetition for almost 40 years. I prefer it because I prefer to read the actual words of the Bible. I am also consistently surprised at how often the texts will interrelate and illuminate one another. I’ve added to this plan one chapter a day from both the Psalms and Proverbs (conveniently there are 31 chapters in Proverbs matching the 31 days of the month). When I reach the end of a particular section I begin that section again while continuing to read the other sections in their order.

Devotionals

Far and away my favorite devotional is the one written by Nicky & Pippa Gumbel (*The Alpha Course*). This is the devotional that Jacqui uses. I’ve recommended it to many. Each day you will read sections of Scripture from the Old Testament, the New Testament, and Wisdom literature (Psalm/Proverbs), ultimately reading through the Bible over the course of the year. A brief commentary explaining the

text follows accompanied by prayer. You can read more about this and download the app: <https://bible.alpha.org/en>

A second devotional option is from Alistair Begg's *Truth for Life*. Besides being one of my favorite preachers, his devotional presents a text from the Bible and then he explains it and offers a practical application to your life. This devotional is also available electronically at this link: <https://www.crosswalk.com/devotionals/truth-for-life>

A third option is from Anne Graham Lotz (Billy Graham's daughter). Her devotional is similar to the one written by Alistair Begg and follows the same pattern: a biblical text, a bit of commentary, and a brief application. You can find her devotional here: <https://www.crosswalk.com/devotionals/joy-of-my-heart-with-anne-graham-lotz>

Finally, if you would like something that follows the seasonal calendar of the church, I recommend *Eighth Day Prayers*. A newer devotional, written by members of the ACNA, *Eighth Day Prayers* includes a Biblical text, a bit of reflection on the text, and a Scripture-based prayer to conclude your devotional time. You can find out more here: <https://eighthdayprayer.org>

A Closing Thought and Prayer

James Montgomery Boice, the scholar, pastor, and author of many books about the Bible, wrote that the great issue of our day would not be the authority of the Bible, but its sufficiency. Would we trust it to be all that we need for life and godliness?

The question remains, is the Bible sufficient for you?

Resolve with me to read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest the Word.

Blessed Lord, who caused all holy Scriptures to be written for our learning: Grant us so to hear them, read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest them, that we may embrace and ever hold fast the blessed hope of everlasting life, which you have given us in our Savior Jesus Christ; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

Yours in Christ,

++Steve 

This Week At St. Andrew's

Wednesday, January 8th

6:30 pm Bible Study

Friday, January 10th

6:00 am Family Game Night

Sunday, January 12th

2:45 pm Sunday School – All Ages

2:45 pm Adult Ed.

4:00 pm Worship Service

How I Spent My Summer Sabbatical

or

How I Learned To Stop Hurrying and Love The Sabbath

Over the next three weeks in our Adult Ed class, Fr. Seth will share lessons learned from his sabbatical, what he did over the three months, and what he's learned about the Anglican Church over the past year. Sundays at 2:45.

WORSHIP HELPERS WANTED

If you are interested in assisting our worship together on Sundays by serving as a Reader, Usher/Greeter, Lay Eucharistic Minister, or Acolyte, please let Fr. Seth know ASAP as he is working on the Servers' schedule for the first quarter of the year. And let him know if you currently serve and have specific scheduling requests.

FAMILY GAME NIGHT

Bring your favorite board or card game and an appetizer or dessert to share and spend a winter evening together with your church family.

Friday, January 10 from 6 PM to ?

Save the Date

We will have an After Service Potluck Sunday January 19th

SAINT ANDREW'S ANGLICAN CHURCH

3230 LAKE OTIS PARKWAY

ANCHORAGE, AK 99508

(907) 868-2555

www.staac.church

HEAD OF THE CHURCH

OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST

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THE RT. REV. JACOB WORLEY

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THE VEN. SETH BROOKER

MUSICIAN

MR. GEORGE BARKER

SENIOR WARDEN

MS. MEREDITH MONTGOMERY

JUNIOR WARDEN

MR. GEORGE BARKER

MINISTERS

ALL THE PEOPLE OF ST. ANDREW'S

SERVING TODAY

LEM

Sarah Welty

LECTOR

Lieza Wilcox

ACOLYTE

Janna Wilcox

USHER

Pete and Katie Nolan

THANK YOU FOR JOINING US IN THIS CELEBRATION OF HOLY COMMUNION. IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS ABOUT ST. ANDREW'S, OR ARE EVER IN NEED OF PASTORAL CARE, PLEASE CONTACT FATHER SETH AT (907) 868-2555 OR VIA

E-MAIL: SETHBROOKER@GMAIL.COM