

RESET YEAR OF REFLECTION, PRAYER AND WORSHIP

Welcome to Year B (Lectionary year B that is).

Throughout this year of reflection (December 3, 2017 through November 25, 2018), study, prayer, and worship we as pastors, have chosen to follow the Lectionary readings for the year as the basis for our Sunday preaching schedule.

We've copied and adapted the explanatory note provided in Worship Source Book 2nd edition, regarding the Lectionary.

"A lectionary is a schedule of Scripture readings arranged and intended for proclamation during worship. The Revised Common Lectionary is a three-year schedule prepared by the Consultation on Common Texts (www.commontexts.org), an ecumenical consultation of liturgical scholars and denominational representatives from the United States and Canada who produce liturgical texts for use in common by North American Christian churches.

The three years (designated A, B, and C) include several Scripture readings for each Sunday: an Old Testament reading; a psalm, preferably sung, which serves as a congregational response to the Old Testament reading; a reading from one of the New Testament epistles; and, finally, a reading from one of the four gospels—Matthew in Year A, Mark in Year B, and Luke in Year C.

Readings from the gospel of John are included in all three years. Over the three years, at least one reading from each book of the Bible is included. When used regularly, the lectionary functions in a way similar to the historic Reformed use of the Heidelberg Catechism: a disciplined approach to covering the range of Scripture."

December 3 we enter Year B.

Here is our schedule of worship services throughout Advent and entering into Epiphany.

December 3, 9:30 a.m. Advent 1
Isaiah 64:1-9; Psalm 80:1-7,17-19;
Mark 13:24-37

December 10, 9:30 a.m. Advent 2
Isaiah 40:1-11; Psalm 85:1-2, 8-13;
Mark 1:1-8

December 10, 5 p.m. Connect Night -
"Carols, Children, and Chili"

December 17, 9:30 a.m. Advent 3
Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11; Psalm 126,
1 Thessalonians 5:16-24;
John 1:6-8, 19-28

December 17, 6 p.m.
Service of Lessons and Carols.

December 24, 9:30 a.m. Advent 4
2 Samuel 7:1-11,16;
Psalm 89:1-4, 19-26; Romans 16:25-27;
Luke 1:26-38

December 25, Christmas Day, 9:30 a.m.
Isaiah 52:7-10; Psalm 98;
Hebrews 1:1-4, John 1:1-14

December 31, 9:30 a.m.
Isaiah 60:1-6; Psalm 72:1-7, 10-14;
Ephesians 3:1-12; Matthew 2:1-11



Advent

" *Emmanuel: God with Us*", is the theme we've chosen for Advent. In the season of Advent we celebrate the fact that God is on the move. God is coming to be with God's people. We celebrate the coming of God to his people in 1st century Palestine in the person of Jesus Christ. We anticipate the return of Jesus. As we hope and pray, God is with us. And God is coming to make all things new! So we celebrate what God has done in and through Jesus and we hope for the complete fulfillment of all God's promises to renew all things. We have not been abandoned by God. Any sense of loneliness is countered by God's presence in the Holy Spirit and Jesus' promise to return.

God's people are confidently hoping, living out this hope by embodying the life our Lord taught us to live, in the power of the Holy Spirit given to us. As we read the Gospel stories which Mark, Luke, and John wrote about the beginnings of Jesus' first arrival, we will be encouraged to live faithfully as his followers.

Worship Staffing during this year of reflection will see some adjustments. Paul Herrema will continue on as choir director but will give up his current worship planning responsibilities. He will be available as a consultant to the two worship planners. Jan Musch and Marilyn McLaughlin will continue their responsibilities as worship planners and coordinators.

What will our worship services look like in the coming year?

Much like we now experience with significant differences. The choir will serve as will the worship team. Exactly how they will serve each week remains to be seen. We anticipate the fuller use of members' gifts. As we use the lectionary we have the opportunity to employ the wide range of resources that are available to interact with as we plan worship services, resources that help us engage the gifts of the worshipping community.

We ask for your prayers, your suggestions, and your encouragement as we proceed through the coming year. We're very aware of what Paul writes to us in Ephesians 3 where he reminds us that God is able to do more than we can imagine. Our prayer is that God will be honored and glorified in worship during this year.

Your Pastors, John Groen and Ryan Boes