

## *Thoughts & Prayers ~ December 6, 2018*

### *Prayer of the Day*

Lord Jesus Christ, give ear to our prayers, and lighten the darkness of our hearts by your gracious visitation; for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.  
(Gregorian Sacramentary, 6th Century)

### *Prayer Concerns*

Tib Lumdsen (Iredell Memorial)  
Anita Johnson (Health concerns)

## *Thoughts on the Readings*

### *The Common Thread*

Troubles are a part of life. Stuff happens. But in the midst of every storm, God is present. His love brings us peace and real quiet. Even in the storms of sin and the disquiet they bring, God brings still peace through his forgiveness. His salvation is near to sinners who fear, love, and trust him. So, we need not be anxious about anything, but may rest in the peace that passes all understanding, the peace that comes through a knowledge of Christ Jesus. As great as John the Baptist was, in the midst of his troubles, Jesus needed only to remind him of who he is.

### *First Reading - Zephaniah 3:14-20*

“He will quiet you.” The Lord does not promise us peace through the removal of troubles. He promises to quiet us, to give us peace, through his love. He goes through troubles with us; he is in our midst. The day is coming when all our enemies and fears and judgments will be removed. The people of the Lord do not wait for that day to rejoice; they exult in the promise itself.

### *Second Reading - Philippians 4:4-7*

The world is a desperate place. There are wars, financial difficulties, sickness, death—and when we are dealing with these problems, there are people who protest our faith in God. Yet the peace of God rules in the hearts of his people, despite the problems of the world. For we know that we may set our anxieties to the side and ask God for help. Our loving Father is ever ready to answer his children’s prayers and give them perfect peace, his peace, a pass that surpasses all understanding. Indeed, who would be at peace in this world except those whose hearts and minds are kept in Christ Jesus?

### *Gospel - Luke 7:18-28, 29-35*

What do we go out to see? A conqueror? A king? One who will give us a life of ease and plenty? These are the things that the world seeks now—and always has sought. Yet this is not what they will find in either Jesus or his cousin. There is much to take offense in these two. Their associates and way of life, not to mention what they had to say, were occasion for great umbrage. So it remains today. But blessed is the one who does not take offense at this statement: Jesus is the long-awaited Messiah.