

- **Advent**- 4 weeks leading up to Christmas when we prepare our hearts for arrival of Jesus
- **Will use Revised Common Lectionary readings** – selection of Bible passages tied to Christian calendar
- **Today's readings:**
  - Isaiah 11:1-10
  - Psalm 72:1-7, 18-19
  - Romans 15:4-13
  - Matthew 3:1-12



## Background

- Prophecy given around 735/734BC to people of Judah (Southern Kingdom of Israel)
- Syria and Ephraim (Northern Kingdom of Israel) actively pressuring Judah to join them in opposing Assyria - routed Judah previously killing 120k men; see 2Kings 16 and 2Chronicles 28
- Judah being led by wicked king Ahaz who doesn't seek the Lord and actively worships other gods
  - 2Kings 16.2-4: Ahaz was twenty years old when he became king, and he reigned in Jerusalem sixteen years. Unlike David his father, **he did not do what was right in the eyes of the Lord his God**. He followed the ways of the kings of Israel and even **sacrificed his son in the fire**, engaging in the detestable practices of the nations the Lord had driven out before the Israelites. He **offered sacrifices and burned incense at the high places**, on the hilltops and under every spreading tree.



# Messiah King's competence to lead

- **Spirit of wisdom and understanding** – speaks to ability to make just judgments
  - **Wisdom** – knowing what to do in a given situation
  - **Understanding** – ability to discern what is important/to see to the heart of an issue
- **Spirit of counsel and might** – speaks to ability to create plans and to carry those plans out
  - **Counsel** – not advice, but plans/strategies
  - **Might** – strength



# Messiah King's character to lead

- **Spirit of the knowledge and fear of the Lord** – speaks to relationship with Yahweh
  - **Knowledge of the Lord** – personal relationship with God
  - **Fear of the Lord** – reverence/awe
- **Righteousness will be His belt and faithfulness the sash around His waist** – belts/sashes hold things together
  - **Righteousness** – conformity to a standard
  - **Faithfulness** – trustworthiness, absolute dependability





- **In that day the Root of Jesse will stand as a Banner for the peoples**
  - **Banner** – signal pole; decorated pole/staff held high to lead troops into battle; also served as as a rallying point to which soldiers could return in order to regroup and receive instructions
- **The nations will rally to Him**
  - **Rally** – to seek with care
- **His resting place will be glorious –**
  - literally – refers to physical space where someone can recoup from tiredness
  - figuratively – to be in a satisfied and content state



## Jesus is our Banner

- **John 3.15:** the Son of Man must be **lifted up**, that everyone who believes may have eternal life in him.
- **John 12.32:** And I, when I am **lifted up** from the earth, will draw all people to myself.”

## Jesus offers us rest if we ‘rally’ to Him

- Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light.

## Jesus moves towards us

- Emmanuel – God with us
- I came to seek and save the lost

