

Ascent – the pilgrim psalms

January 22, 2017

Psalm 122 – “I rejoiced with those who said to me, “Let us go to the house of the LORD.” Our feet are standing in your gates, Jerusalem. Jerusalem is built like a city that is closely compacted together. That is where the tribes go up— the tribes of the LORD—to praise the name of the LORD according to the statute given to Israel. There stand the thrones for judgment, the thrones of the house of David. Pray for the peace of Jerusalem: “May those who love you be secure. May there be peace within your walls and security within your citadels.” For the sake of my family and friends, I will say, “Peace be within you.” For the sake of the house of the LORD our God, I will seek your prosperity.”

1. Why do you choose to go to church – or to not go? Is the attitude with which we go to church important?
2. What’s the big deal with the temple? With Jerusalem? Three passages to consider:
 - Acts 7 says *“The Most High does not live in houses made by human hands. As the prophet says: “Heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool.”*
 - Ephesians 2 - *Consequently, you are no longer foreigners and strangers, but fellow citizens with God’s people and also members of his household,²⁰ built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the chief cornerstone.²¹ In him the whole building is joined together and rises to become a holy temple in the Lord.²² And in him you too are being built together to become a dwelling in which God lives by his Spirit.*
 - Hebrews 12 - *“But you have come to Mount Zion, to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem. You have come to thousands upon thousands of angels in joyful assembly, to the church of the firstborn, whose names are written in heaven. You have come to God, the Judge of all, to the spirits of the righteous made perfect, to Jesus the mediator of a new covenant, and to the sprinkled blood that speaks a better word than the blood of Abel.”*
3. There are 4 great things going on in Jerusalem: community, worship, justice and intercessory prayers for “shalom.” How do these things bring us joy? Do we experience these things on Sunday morning? Is there anything that keeps us from experiencing them?
4. Psalm 122 closes with prayers for the peace of Jerusalem. How can we be praying specifically for the peace of Olympia CRC?

