



Advent Reflection for Saturday, December 11

Asa Swain

You can listen to the reading and reflection by clicking [here](#).

### 1 Peter 2:5-9

*like living stones, let yourselves be built into a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. For it stands in scripture: "See, I am laying in Zion a stone, a cornerstone chosen and precious; and whoever believes in him will not be put to shame." To you then who believe, he is precious; but for those who do not believe, "The stone that the builders rejected has become the very head of the corner," and "A stone that makes them stumble, and a rock that makes them fall." They stumble because they disobey the word, as they were destined to do. But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's own people, in order that you may proclaim the mighty acts of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.*

Several years ago in choir we sang a gospel song about how the stone that the builders rejected had become the chief cornerstone. It's comforting to think that sometimes the outcasts and the oddballs can be central to God's plan. As someone who often felt like an oddball as a child, I hope we can remember to always welcome the outsiders and the newcomers to our community.

One of the silver linings of this pandemic has been watching the rebuilding of Holy Apostles Church; so now it looks all shiny and new. It's wonderful to see the building be renewed and know that it can serve as a gathering place for generations to come. During the pandemic I've also felt heartened to see the community grow and expand through our online services. As much as I enjoy beautiful altars and stained glass windows, I enjoyed seeing more of my fellow congregants when we were all on zoom. I think a church is really about the people, not the physical building.

Finally, during these cold dark months with all this talk of buildings, I find myself thinking a lot about the homeless and the poor. It seems like a particularly hard time, which is why I am grateful to the Mothers for reaching out to our neighbors at PS15. With the cold weather and the looming fear of COVID, I know this is a difficult time for many people. I remind myself that I am lucky not to have to worry about finding work, paying rent, or where my next meal will come from. As God's chosen people, I hope we can remember the less fortunate among our neighbors.

Both physically and spiritually, as we walk towards the winter solstice, I pray that God can lead us out of the darkness and back into the light.

*Asa Swain was raised in the Episcopal Church in Newton, Massachusetts, and moved to New York City eight years ago. He lives in Prospect Park South with his fiancé Aleea and has been attending Holy Apostles since 2018. He enjoys singing in the choir, going hiking, and playing boardgames.*

