

September 2011-May 2012

# Revelation For the Church

The Very Rev. Loren Fox



a church community with a heart for the world

---

## Method

- We will generally cover one section per month—rather than verse by verse.
- We will start with and focus on the current text, and when appropriate explore themes or patterns that emerge in several places in the whole book.
- We will address interpretation of prophecy and apocalyptic writing issues as needed to support our task.
- There will be occasional worksheets for you, not as homework, but as a bonus opportunity to work with the Scripture in your own setting and at your own pace.

## Background

- John, the Apostle, has been exiled to Patmos
- Written late in the first century between AD 90 and 100, near to the same time as the three epistles, and presumably after the Gospel
- Opposition and prosecution were rising as authorities began to elevate the status of the emperor in Rome

## Observations

- Revelation is not only prophecy, but apocalyptic writing—very colorful and vivid in its use of word pictures
- The book moves to a crescendo
- Use of Old Testament Imagery & Themes
- Starts and finishes with the Church
- Movement into the Temple
- Contrast of Judgment and Salvation
- God's Authority in the face of humanity's sinfulness and chaos
- Blessings are found in 1:3, 14:13, 16:15, 19:9, 20:6, 22:7, and 14

## **Application to the Church**

- This is a book written to the Church for the Church.
- The circumstances of opposition, persecution, and a divided Church are similar to what we face today.
- As we will see, the richness of Revelation calls us to develop a rich faith today, one that is anchored in the whole of the Biblical drama.

## **An Overview of the Revelation (with chapters)**

- Addressing the Seven Churches (1-3)
- Establishing the Vision at the Throne (4-5)
- First View of Judgment and Salvation (6-7)
- Second View of Judgment and Salvation (8-14)
- Third View of Judgment: A New Egypt (15-16)
- Fourth View of Judgment: A New Babylon (17-18)
- Third View of Salvation: A New King (19-20)
- Fourth View of Salvation: A New Jerusalem (20-21)
- Addressing the Faithful: A Wedding Feast (22)

## **Lenten Series**

- Asking every member of the parish to participate in a six-week Lenten small group for Bible reflection and prayer—that'll be 30-40 groups. Some groups for men, some for ladies, some for shut-ins, some for youth, some for couples, some for those who work during the day, and some for those who do not go out after dark....one group for everyone!
- The groups will use materials I write from Revelation—to be discussions and reflections, not classes or teachings.
- I will preach on the week's material each Sunday after the groups have looked at the Word.
- Our goal will be to consider what God might be saying to us as individuals and as a parish, in the midst of our 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary, and in preparation for the years to come.
- There are 40+/- individuals here today—if each of us here agreed to lead a group, we might just have enough leaders to form sufficient groups for the whole parish!
- Therefore, during the year, I will be highlighting small group skills and strategies—to help all of us however God might call us to participate in the various groups.