

December 5, 2021
Second Sunday of Advent

We Gather In God's Presence

Prelude: "Advent Prayer" by Anthony Giamanco

Lighting the Candle of Peace

(the first Advent candle is lit)

Peace doesn't always mean being quiet.

We seek to be a people of peace,

living from a place of justice,

joining our voices with others

who want to give birth to a new way of being.

Peace calls out to us, so that we may help it become a reality.

God is our peace.

May we let God reconcile in places of conflict,

creating bridges where divisions have grown,

sewing all of creation into a new tapestry.

May peace be found in a manger and throughout the world.

(the second Advent candle is lit)

*Written by Eric Hebert-Daly.
Gathering, Advent/Christmas/Epiphany 2021-22,
page 69. Used with permission.*

Response VU 6 "A Candle Is Burning" vs. 2

A candle is burning, a candle of peace,

a candle to signal that conflict must cease:

for Jesus is coming to show us the way;

a message of peace humbly laid in the hay.

Birthdays, Celebrations, and Life and Work of the Congregation – see last page ...

Call to Worship

Come God

Come with the angry and disenfranchised

Come with the bullies and tyrants

Come with the racists and bigots

Come with those who call you their enemy

Come and lead us to a place of peace

Come and lead us to you

Hymn VU 5 "All Earth Is Waiting"

All earth is waiting to see the Promised One,

and open furrows await the seed of God.

All the world, bound and struggling, seeks true liberty;

it cries out for justice and searches for the truth.

Thus says the prophet to those of Israel,

'A virgin mother will bear Emmanuel.'

One whose name is 'God with us', our Saviour shall be,

through whom hope will blossom once more

within our hearts.

Mountains and valleys will have to be made plain,
open new highways, new highways for our God,
who is now coming closer, so come all and see,
and open the doorways as wide as wide can be.

In lowly stable the Promised One appeared.
Yet, feel that presence throughout the earth today,
for Christ lives in all Christians and is with us now;
again, on arriving, Christ brings us liberty.

Opening Prayer (*unison*)

God of all moments, the chaotic and the peaceful, help us to uncover your great Shalom – in the breath of a tiny child. Help us to feel that Peace, deep in our souls. Help us, we pray, to share it with the world. Amen!

We Are Blessed By God

Anthem: “Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus” St. John’s College Choir, Cambridge
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JEEed0uWnDGs>

Time for the Young and the Young @ 

Hymn VU 577 “I’ve Got Peace Like a River”

I've got peace like a river, I've got peace like a river,
I've got peace like a river in my soul.

I've got peace like a river, I've got peace like a river,
I've got peace like a river in my soul.

I've got joy like a fountain, I've got joy like a fountain,
I've got joy like a fountain in my soul.

I've got joy like a fountain, I've got joy like a fountain,
I've got joy like a fountain in my soul.

I've got love like an ocean, I've got love like an ocean,
I've got love like an ocean in my soul.

I've got love like an ocean, I've got love like an ocean,
I've got love like an ocean in my soul.

Responsive Reading: Luke 1:68-79

Blessed be the God of Israel,

who has come to the people and set them free,

who has raised up for us a mighty saviour,

born of the house of the servant David.

Through the holy prophets of old

God promised to save us from our enemies,

from the hands of all who hate us,

to show the mercy promised to our ancestors,

to remember the holy covenant,

the oath God swore to our ancestors Abraham and Sarah,

to set us free from the hands of our enemies,
**free to serve God without fear,
holy and righteous in God's presence,
all the days of our life.**

And you, child, will be called the prophet of the Most High,
for you will go before the Lord to prepare the way,
**to give the people knowledge of salvation
by the forgiveness of their sins.**

In the tender compassion of our God,
the dawn from on high shall break upon us,
**to shine on those who sit in darkness,
in the shadow of death,
and to guide our feet into the way of peace.**

Scripture:

In the fifteenth year of the reign of Emperor Tiberius, when Pontius Pilate was governor of Judea, and Herod was ruler of Galilee, and his brother Philip ruler of the region of Ituraea and Trachonitis, and Lysanias ruler of Abilene, ² during the high priesthood of Annas and Caiaphas, the word of God came to John son of Zechariah in the wilderness. ³ He went into all the region around the Jordan, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins, ⁴ as it is written in the book of the words of the prophet Isaiah,

“The voice of one crying out in the wilderness:

‘Prepare the way of the Lord,
make his paths straight.

⁵ Every valley shall be filled,
and every mountain and hill shall be made low,
and the crooked shall be made straight,
and the rough ways made smooth;

⁶ and all flesh shall see the salvation of God.”

*For those of you who are interested, the other readings for this week are: **Malachi 3:1-4;**
Philippians 1:3-11. You can look them up on www.biblegateway.com and search for the passage.....
in any translation you prefer (ie. King James – KJV, NKJV, NRSV, etc.)*

Meditation: “In Plane View”

Hymn VU 18 “There’s a Voice in the Wilderness”

There's a voice in the wilderness crying, a call from the ways untrod:
prepare in the desert a highway, a highway for our God!
The valleys shall be exalted, the lofty hills brought low;
make straight all the crooked places where God, our God, may go!

O Zion, that bringest good tidings, get thee up to the heights and sing!
Proclaim to a desolate people the coming of their King.
Like the flowers of the field they perish, like grass our works decay;
the power and pomp of nations shall pass, like a dream, away.

But the word of our God endureth, whose arm is ever strong;
God stands in the midst of nations, and soon will right the wrong.
God shall feed the flock like a shepherd, the lambs so gently hold;
to pastures of peace will lead them, and bring them safe to fold.

There's a voice in the wilderness crying, a call from the ways untrod:
prepare in the desert a highway, a highway for our God!
The valleys shall be exalted, the lofty hills brought low;
make straight all the crooked places where God, our God, may go!

We Respond To God's Grace

Invitation to Invest in God's Mission

The world is crying out, "Where is the God of peace?" By offering our gifts, we give our answer. The impact of what we offer, through this church and through Mission & Service, loudly proclaim that the God of peace is active in this church and around the world. Please be generous.

Offertory Hymn "Bless Our Hands" *to tune Good King Wencaslas*

Bless our hands to do your work, bless the gifts we're bearing.
May your love and grace be known in the way we're sharing.
Peace and hope and joy and love – these are gifts worth giving.
These be ours to pass along when in Christ we're living.

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Prayer of Dedication

God of peace, complete in us the good work you have started. As you refine us, melt our cold hearts, mould our lives, and nurture us into the good stewards you would have us be. May giving these gifts be a part of that process. Amen.

Prayers of Thanksgiving and Intercession & The Lord's Prayer (VU 959)

God of Love, "A voice cries in the wilderness: prepare the way of the Lord!" Yet we need you, by your Holy Spirit, to prepare a way in our hearts and minds and lives.

Prepare among us the path of peace. Grant the peace that comes in following your ways, in practicing justice and righteousness, in sharing our gifts for your sake. We pray for the peoples of this world, that they may be reconciled one to another and learn to live in peace. Especially we pray this week for the people of Myanmar and Thailand.

Prepare among us the path of joy.

We pray for those whose spirits need to be buoyed up and who have forgotten childhood's gift of taking delight in the simple pleasures of life, which come from you, Extravagant God. We pray for Your church that it may be a joy giving light in the darkness. Especially we pray for Sprucedale-Providence Pastoral Charge as they search for a new spiritual leader.

Prepare among us the path of love.

We pray for all who need to be embraced by love:

all who are cramped and narrowed in spirit;

all who have lost the ability to trust;

all who ache for a sign they are cherished, or even noticed by someone;

all who struggle with a lifetime burden of being told they are not good enough.

Prepare among us, O God, the path of hope.

We pray for those in need of hope today:

all who mourn the death of a loved one; the friends and families of David Gill.

all who grieve a loss in their lives;

all who are worried for a friend;

all who are overwhelmed by illness or disability, especially we pray for:

Cecil Jenkins, Marleen Parish, Marlene Smith, Mac Toner, and their loved ones and caregivers, and those known only in the silence of our own hearts

O God of hope, peace, joy and love, we honour you now and always, through Jesus, your Anointed One, who taught us to pray, singing,

Our Father in heaven,

hallowed be your name,

Your kingdom come,

your will be done on earth as in heaven.

Give us today our daily bread.

Forgive us our sins

as we forgive those who sin against us.

Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil

for the kingdom, the power, and the glory are

yours, now and forever.

Amen.

Hymn VU 44 "It Came Upon the Midnight Clear"

It came upon the midnight clear, that glorious song of old,

from angels bending near the earth to touch their harps of gold,

'Peace on the earth, good will to all, from heaven's all-gracious King!'

The world in solemn stillness lay to hear the angels sing.

Still through the cloven skies they come with peaceful wings unfurled;

and still their heavenly music floats o'er all the weary world;

above its sad and lowly plains they bend on hovering wing,

and ever o'er its Babel sounds the blessed angels sing.

Yet with the woes of sin and strife the world has suffered long;

beneath the angel strain have rolled two thousand years of wrong;

and warring humankind hears not the love song which they bring.

O hush the noise, and cease your strife, to hear the angels sing.

For, lo! the days are hastening on, by prophets seen of old,

when with the ever-circling years shall come the time foretold,

when peace shall over all the earth its ancient splendours fling,

and the whole world send back the song which now the angels sing.

Commissioning and Benediction

Prepare the way of the Lord.

Fill in the valleys, bring the mountains down low.

Make the crooked path straight and the rough way smooth.

Set your feet on the pathways of our God,
and may God walk them with you,
as guide and companion.

Amen.

Sung Response: VU 45 "Joy Is Now in Every Place" vs.4

Now and ever may we find
your good news to fill our mind:
peace and love to humankind,
O hear us, bless us, holy Jesus.

Postlude: "Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming" Geistliche Kirchengesang
Arr. by Bernadine Johnson

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Dorchester:

Just a friendly reminder of our drive-by socking happening this afternoon at the church from 1:00 p.m. to 2:30 p.m.

Union:

ALL:

Lectionary Readings for next week: (December 12, 2021, Advent 3)

Zephaniah 3:14-20; Isaiah 12:2-6; Philippians 4:4-7; Luke 3:7-18