

Candle Lighting - Peace

Reader A Isaiah 11 describes the Kingdom of God as a place of peace where hatred and violence are not just tucked under the rug, but swept away all together. In today's terms, that scripture *could* sound like this:

Reader B The wolf shall live with the lamb,
People Israel and Palestine will tear down their wall.

Reader A The leopard shall lie down with the kid,
People Black lives and poor lives will matter to all.

Reader B The calf and the lion will feed together,
People Democrats and Republicans will work together in harmony,
Reader A and a little child shall lead them
People And without fear, the Church will lead them.

Reader B Today we light the candle of peace as a prayer, a protest, and a reminder of God's prayer for this world. Starting first with the candle of hope, we light the candle of peace to symbolize God's ever-increasing light.

(Light two blue candles at this time)

And as this light burns and grows, we will wait, eagerly, longing for the birth of a child and for the peace only love can bring. May peace light up the world. *Amen.*

Officiant Let us pray.

God of hope and peace, you created the world and it was good. However, we have forgotten what that looks like and have walked too far from Eden to even remember how to get home. As we eagerly anticipate the birth of your Son, we ask that you will instill your burning energy for peace within our bones, for our world so desperately needs it. We so desperately need it. We also ask that you would guide our feet, so that maybe one day we will stumble back to the gates of Eden, back home, with you, once more. Gratefully we pray, *Amen.*

Hymn #76 ~ On Jordan's bank the Baptist's cry

Liturgy of the Word

Officiant Blessed be God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.
People And blessed be God's kingdom, now and for ever. Amen

Officiant and People

Almighty God, to you all hearts are open, all desires known, and from you no secrets are hid: Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you, and worthily magnify your holy Name; through Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

Trisagion *(sing 3 times)*

Holy God,
Holy and Mighty,
Holy Immortal One.
Have mercy upon us.

Collect of the Day

Officiant The Lord be with you.
People And also with you.
Officiant Let us pray.

Merciful God, who sent your messengers the prophets to preach repentance and prepare the way for our salvation: Give us grace to heed their warnings and forsake our sins, that we may greet with joy the coming of Jesus Christ our Redeemer; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. *Amen.*

First Reading

Baruch 5:1-9

Take off the garment of your sorrow and affliction, O Jerusalem, and put on forever the beauty of the glory from God. Put on the robe of the righteousness that comes from God; put on your head the diadem of the glory of the Everlasting; for God will show your splendor everywhere under heaven. For God will give you evermore the name, "Righteous Peace, Godly Glory." Arise, O Jerusalem, stand upon the height; look toward the east, and see your children gathered from west and east at the word of the Holy One, rejoicing that God has remembered them.

For they went out from you on foot, led away by their enemies; but God will bring them back to you, carried in glory, as on a royal throne. For God has ordered that every high mountain and the everlasting hills be made low and the valleys filled up, to make level ground, so that Israel may walk safely in the glory of God. The woods and every fragrant tree have shaded Israel at God's command. For God will lead Israel with joy, in the light of his glory, with the mercy and righteousness that come from him.

Reader Hear what the Spirit is saying to God's people.
People Thanks be to God.

Canticle 16

Read responsively by whole verse

The Song of Zechariah

Blessed be the Lord, the God of Israel;
he has come to his people and set them free.

*He has raised up for us a mighty savior,
born of the house of his servant David.*

Through his holy prophets he promised of old,
that he would save us from our enemies,
from the hands of all who hate us.

*He promised to show mercy to our fathers
and to remember his holy covenant.*

This was the oath he swore to our father Abraham,
to set us free from the hands of our enemies,

*Free to worship him without fear,
holy and righteous in his sight
all the days of our life.*

You, my child, shall be called the prophet of the Most High,
for you will go before the Lord to prepare his way,

*To give his 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 dwell in darkness and the
shadow of death,
and to guide our feet into the way of peace.*

Second Reading

Philippians 1:3-11

I thank my God every time I remember you, constantly praying with joy in every one of my prayers for all of you, because of your sharing in the gospel from the first day until now. I am confident of this, that the one who began a good work among you will bring it to completion by the day of Jesus Christ. It is right for me to think this way about all of you, because you hold me in your heart, for all of you share in God's grace with me, both in my imprisonment and in the defense and confirmation of the gospel. For God is my witness, how I long for all of you with the compassion of Christ Jesus. And this is my prayer, that your love may overflow more and more with knowledge and full insight to help you to determine what is best, so that in the day of Christ you may be pure and blameless, having produced the harvest of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ for the glory and praise of God.

Reader Hear what the Spirit is saying to the Church.

People Thanks be to God.

Hymn #56 ~ O come, O come, Emmanuel (vs. 1 & 5)

Holy Gospel

Luke 3:1-6

Deacon The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Luke.

People Glory to you, Lord Christ.

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, during the high priesthood of Annas and Caiaphas, the word of God came to John son of Zechariah in the wilderness. He went into all the region around the Jordan, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins, 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. 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; and all flesh shall see the salvation of God.’”

Deacon The Gospel of the Lord.

People Praise to you, Lord Christ.

Sermon

The Rev. Dcn. Winnie Cook

Nicene Creed

We believe in one God,
the Father, the Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
of all that is, seen and unseen.

We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,
the only Son of God,
eternally begotten of the Father,
God from God, Light from Light,
true God from true God,
begotten, not made,
of one Being with the Father.
Through him all things were made.

For us and for our salvation
he came down from heaven:
by the power of the Holy Spirit
he became incarnate from the Virgin Mary,
and was made man.

For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;
he suffered death and was buried.
On the third day he rose again
in accordance with the Scriptures;

he ascended into heaven
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead,
and his kingdom will have no end.
We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son.
With the Father and the Son he is worshiped and glorified.
He has spoken through the Prophets.
We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church.
We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.
We look for the resurrection of the dead,
and the life of the world to come. Amen.

Prayers of Intercession

Deacon Loving God, through the gift of prayer
you teach us to hold one another in our hearts.

Hear now our prayers:

Reader for the leaders and people of every nation: *(Please pray)*

for the church and all who serve the Lord: *(Please pray)*

for those who suffer in sorrow and affliction: *(Please pray)*

for refugees and travelers far from home: *(Please pray)*

for all who are in prison or facing trial: *(Please pray)*

for those who sit in darkness, or in the shadow of death: *(Please pray)*

Gracious God, this is our prayer:
that your love will overflow more and more
in our lives, in your church, and in all the world,
until all may know the compassion of Christ Jesus,
our Savior and Lord, in whose name we pray. **Amen.**

A Prayer for the Power of the Spirit among the People of God

God of all power and love, we give thanks for your unfailing presence and the hope you provide in times of uncertainty and loss. Send your Holy Spirit to enkindle in us your holy fire. Revive us to live as Christ's body in the world: a people who pray, worship, learn, break bread, share life, heal neighbors, bear good news, seek justice, rest and grow in the Spirit. Wherever and however we gather, unite us in common prayer and send us in common mission, that we and the whole creation might be restored and renewed, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Confession of Sin

Deacon Saints, let us trust in God's love for us and confess our sin, confident in God's mercy.

Deacon and People

Refining God, you have sent us prophets and we have not listened.
We have not always determined what is best
or made way for your reign of peace
in our lives, our church, and our society.
Forgive us, we pray, and renew your covenant within us,
for the sake of Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

Priest

Almighty God have mercy on you, forgive you all your sins through our Lord Jesus Christ, strengthen you in all goodness, and by the power of the Holy Spirit keep you in eternal life. *Amen.*

Peace

Officiant The peace of the Lord be always with you.
People And also with you.

Offertory

Officiant

Walk in love, as Christ loved us and gave himself for us,
an offering and sacrifice to God.

Doxology

Praise God from whom all blessings flow;
Praise him all creatures here below;
Praise him above, ye heavenly host;
Praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost. Amen.

The Lord's Prayer

Officiant The Lord be with you.
People And also with you.
Officiant Let us pray.

Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy Name,
thy kingdom come,
thy will be done,
on earth as it is in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those
who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom,
and the power, and the glory,
for ever and ever. Amen.

The General Thanksgiving

**Almighty God, Father of all mercies,
we your unworthy servants give you humble thanks
for all your goodness and loving kindness
to us and to all whom you have made.
We bless you for our creation, preservation,
and all the blessings of this life;
but above all for your immeasurable love
in the redemption of the world by our Lord Jesus Christ;
for the means of grace, and for the hope of glory.
And, we pray, give us such an awareness of your mercies,
that with truly thankful hearts we may show forth your praise,
not only with our lips, but in our lives,
by giving up ourselves to your service,
and by walking before you
in holiness and righteousness all our days;
through Jesus Christ our Lord,
to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit,
be honor and glory throughout all ages. Amen.**

Blessing

May the Sun of Righteousness shine upon you and scatter the darkness from before your path; and the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be among you, and remain with you always. *Amen.*

Hymn ~ O Come Divine Messiah

Dismissal

Deacon Alleluia, alleluia. The one who began a good work in you
will bring it to completion by the day of Jesus Christ.

Go in peace to prepare the way of the Lord!

People Thanks be to God. Alleluia, alleluia.

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