

Worship Service
Sunday December 04, 2016
2nd Sunday of Advent

Theme: Jesus brings Peace that passes understanding

WE GATHER IN THE PRESENCE OF GOD

Gathering Song: **“Come and Fill Our Hearts”** (music available)

Come and fill our hearts with your peace.
You alone, O Lord, are holy.
Come and fill our hearts with your peace.
Alleluia!

Welcome and Sharing of the peace
(We greet each other saying, **“The Peace of Christ be with you”**)

Call to Worship:

One: Let us glorify God for endless mercy.
Many: We sing to God's name.
One: Rejoice, all peoples!
Many: We praise God with every voice!
One: Now may the God of hope fill us all with joy and peace and
the power of the Holy Spirit.

Hymn: **“Hark the Glad Sound”** BoP#118

WE ARE RENEWED IN GOD'S GRACE

Prayers of Adoration and Confession:

God of wisdom and understanding,
of power and might,
of insight and knowledge,
of joy and of delight;
you are the giver of life and you live in us,
you are the living water that purifies us,
you are the voice that calls us from our wanderings and our isolation and
that sets us on a new path.
You baptize us for service and life in community and you refresh each
soul. Glory and honour and praise be to you this day and always.

You judge with righteousness, you are equitable and gracious, you are forgiving and kind. Hear us now as we confess to you our sins.

**God of new beginnings,
of grace and of forgiveness,
we confess that we sin against you
and one another by what we say and do,
and by what we neglect and what preoccupies us.
Too often we follow old paths and habits
and we fail to live as those who receive new life.
We do not make full use of the gifts of your Spirit,
and we waste our talents and opportunities.
Help us to live in the newness of life that we have been given, renew us
and make straight our paths and create in us clean hearts.
For we ask this in the name of Jesus Christ, who was and who is and who is
to come. Amen.**

Words of Assurance:

Anyone who is in Christ is a new creation; the old life is gone, the new life has come. Know that you are forgiven and forgive one another, and be at peace.

Song (Solo): "Comfort, Comfort You My People"

Lighting of the Advent Candles (George McMillan)

Song: "**Dawning Light of Our Salvation**"

1. Long in darkness Israel wandered;
Long in mortal shadows, we
Walked in bondage and self-pity,
Trod in paths of sin and grief.
In the prophets' words He told us,
Long the God of Israel spoke;
He alone in strength would save us
From the hands of all our foes.

Refrain:
Every valley be exalted!
Every mountain be made plane!
Crooked ways repent and straighten;

All creation bend in praise!

2. He shall raise a mighty Savior;
Born of David's lineage, He
Comes in cov'nant love to claim us
From our sins to set us free.
Light to those who dwell in darkness
Life to those from death who flee
Joy unto the earth, and gladness,
To your pathways dawning peace!

Refrain

3. Jesus, Lord, and mighty Savior,
David's Son and yet his King,
Dawning light of our salvation,
Of your saving pow'r we sing!
Stand, Oh lame, and dance ye broken,
Know the Savior's healing grace;
Come, Oh deaf and hear him singing;
Turn, Oh blind, behold his face!

Refrain

Words: Wendell Kimbrough (c) 2012 Wendell Kimbrough
Music: Bruce Benedict, (c) 2012 Cardiphonia

Youth message: "People get ready"

Youth Song: "**Come, Lord Jesus**"

1 Come, Lord Jesus,
come, Lord Jesus,
come, Lord Jesus:
come and be born in our hearts.

2 Come, O Prince of Peace,
come, O Prince of Peace,
come, O Prince of Peace,
come and be born in our hearts.

3 Our hearts are open,
our hearts are open,
our hearts are open:

come and be born in our hearts.

4 Come, Immanuel,
come, Immanuel,
come, Immanuel:
come and be born in our hearts.

Words and Music: Carey Landry (c) 1976

GOD SPEAKS TO US FROM HIS WORD

Prayer for Understanding:

Holy God, your scriptures were written for our learning and through the comfort of your words we find hope. And by the power of your Holy Spirit, you help us to interpret and understand what you are saying to the church today. Quiet in us any voice but yours and let us hear your good news again with fresh and expectant ears. Amen.

The Reading of Scripture:

Psalm 72:1-7, 18-19
Isaiah 11:1-11

The Word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God!

Sermon: Jesus Will Deliver

In chapters 9 and 10 of Isaiah, God said it was His plan to cut down the trees of Assyria and Israel
Of Assyria, He says: **“See, the Lord, the LORD Almighty, will lop off the boughs with great power. The lofty trees will be felled, the tall ones will be brought low. He will cut down the forest thickets with an ax; Lebanon will fall before the Mighty One.”**
Isaiah 10:33-34

And of Israel and Judah He declared: **“So the LORD will cut off from Israel both head and tail, both palm branch and reed in a single day... Surely wickedness burns like a fire; it consumes briars and thorns, it sets the forest thickets ablaze, so that it rolls upward in a column of smoke.”** Isaiah 9:14 & 18

These trees bore significant symbolism of the power and majesty of those two nations. And God was saying that He was going to use an ax and go through

the forests of their power and He was going to cut it all down. When He finished with them, there would be nothing left of their pride and power.

But then – in the devastation that was left behind he was going to graft a shoot into one of the stumps left behind and grow a brand new tree. **“A shoot will come up from the stump of Jesse; from his roots a Branch will bear fruit.”** Isaiah 11:1

This Jews were very familiar with the imagery of trees in that day as Olive trees in particular were an important and valuable tree for people in that region. Olive trees were a source of food, medicine, fuel, and a base for the anointing oil they used in anointing their kings, priests and prophets. Spiritually, the oil of that tree represented peace, faithfulness, endurance and... new life.

- The tree symbolized new life and was indestructible.
- They could grow in almost any soil and flourish in great heat with little water.
- Most Olive trees can live to 500 years, and some are believed to be over 1000 years old.
- “New sprouts and trees will emerge from the olive tree stump roots, even if the trees are cut down.”
- Even if the grove catches on fire a good Olive Tree Grower can graft an olive shoot into the stump of that tree and grow a new tree in its place.

In Isaiah 11, God is declaring that - in the devastation left behind after the destruction of Assyria and Israel...

- a branch would grow out of the stump of Jesse.
- a branch would be grafted into the tree that had been cut down and destroyed.

So what was this branch?

Or more to the point - WHO was this branch?

Well – it was the Messiah. It was Jesus.

The prophecies about the coming Messiah started in Isaiah 7 where we learned that a virgin would conceive and give birth to a son and we would call His name Immanuel. Then in Isaiah 9 God told us this child would minister in Galilee and that He would be a great ruler and leader of His people. And that this Messiah would be a light to those walking in the shadow of death. And now here in Isaiah 11 we're told this Messiah would be like a great tree growing out of the stump of Jesse.

Things were about to change with the advent of Jesus the Messiah and the change would be one that would bring about a peace that God's people had never seen before.

The Messiah was going to be one of an entirely different character than they had seen before. His way of ruling would be remarkably different.

A Messiah is to come and when he comes he will bring about a total and radical transformation where people's lives will take on a different character. All this as the following verses point to will be forged by an anointing by the Spirit of the Lord.

Jesus comes to turn lives and situations around so that those who look to God will be satisfied.

***And the Spirit of the Lord will rest on him—
the Spirit of wisdom and understanding,
the Spirit of counsel and might,
the Spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord.
3 He will delight in obeying the Lord.
He will not judge by appearance
nor make a decision based on hearsay.
4 He will give justice to the poor
and make fair decisions for the exploited.
The earth will shake at the force of his word,
and one breath from his mouth will destroy the wicked.
5 He will wear righteousness like a belt
and truth like an undergarment.***

His reign will also bring about a new atmosphere where people will live in peace with each other.

That is the picture Isaiah paints in verses 5-11 where he describes violent animals living together with helpless animals.

***6 In that day the wolf and the lamb will live together;
the leopard will lie down with the baby goat.
The calf and the yearling will be safe with the lion,
and a little child will lead them all.
7 The cow will graze near the bear.
The cub and the calf will lie down together.
The lion will eat hay like a cow.
8 The baby will play safely near the hole of a cobra.
Yes, a little child will put its hand in a nest of deadly snakes without harm.***

***9 Nothing will hurt or destroy in all my holy mountain,
for as the waters fill the sea,
so the earth will be filled with people who know the Lord.***

This coming Messiah also represents perfect peace in our world, our hearts and lives and our church. All this perfect peace is made possible by the glorious presence and power of the God of all people with whom alone peace is made possible. Amen.

Hymn of Response: **“All the Earth is Waiting”** BoP#109

Prayers of God’s People, concluding with the Lord’s Prayer

WE BRING OUR GIFTS

Work and Witness of our Church

A Time of Giving

Sung Response: **“Praise God, from Whom all Blessings Flow”** BoP#79

WE LEAVE WITH CHRIST’S PEACE

The Benediction

Recessional Hymn: **“Hark! The Herald Angels Sing”** BoP#139