

## **Sunday Worship on December 7, 2025**

(CCLI: License Number #3156883) (Welcoming Elder: Kevin Johnston)

### **We Gather**

- Welcome and Announcements
- Responsive Call to worship (See the insert)
- Light the candle of hope
- BOP 119 Hope of a star (vs. 2)
- Praise song BOP 115 Hail to the Lord's Anointed
- Prayer for Worship and the Lord's Prayer
- Words of Assurance
- Praise song 344 The wise may bring their learning (Music BOP 468)
- Prayer for children

### **We listen**

- Sung prayer for illumination (BOP 445 Open our eyes, Lord)
- First reading: Matthew 3:1-12
- Second reading: Psalm 72:1-7, 18-19 (Refrain 2)
- Third reading: Isaiah 11:1-10
- Sermon: **The fear of the Lord and the peace we long for**
- Praise song BOP 117 Herald! Sound the note of judgement
- Prayer for people

### **We Respond**

- Offering, Doxology (BOP 321 Praise to the Lord, the Almighty vs.1) & Dedication
- Song for the Journey BOP 113 Comfort, comfort for my people

### **We Serve**

- Benediction
- A Sung Blessing

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### **Responsive Call to Worship** (See the insert)

- Light the candle of hope
- BOP 119 Hope of a star (vs. 2)

### **Praise song – BOP 115 Hail to the Lord's. Anointed**

### **Prayer of Adoration**

God of wisdom and understanding, of peace and promise, you are the Giver of life, and you live in us. You have welcomed us as your children and called us to live out your image with hospitality toward each other. In Jesus Christ, you offer us living water to wash away our sin and sorrow, and call us back to paths of justice and righteousness.

With the Holy Spirit, you baptize us for service and life in community, refreshing us each day with your presence and purpose.

Glory and honour and praise be yours, Creator, Christ and Holy Spirit, this day and every day, now and evermore.

**Prayer of confession (Unison)**

**God of peace and promise, we confess that we have taken your commitment to us for granted. We assume what we do is acceptable to you, yet we tend to judge others without compassion. We have been slow to welcome others, especially if their cultures or convictions differ from ours. You call us to repentance, but we resist acknowledging what needs to change in our hearts or our habits. Forgive our self-satisfied attitudes, and challenge us with your vision of a peaceable kingdom where all can be made new.**

**Heavenly Father, hear us, as we offer the Prayer that Jesus taught us:** (The Lord's Prayer:)

**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.**

**Words of Assurance**

Receive the Good News in peace. With great mercy, God forgives what we have confessed and offers us new life in Christ. Receive the peace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and be at peace with God, be at peace with yourself and be at peace with one another.

**May the Peace of Christ be with you.** *(Let us bless each other with the peace of the Lord.)*

**Praise song BOP 344 The wise may bring their learning (Music BOP 468)**

**Prayer for the children**

**Sung prayer for illumination (BOP 445 Open our eyes, Lord)**

- First reading: Matthew 3:1-12
- Second reading: Psalm 72:1-7, 18-19 (Refrain 2)
- Third reading: Isaiah 11:1-10

**“This is the word of the Lord / Thanks be to God.”**

**Sermon: The fear of the Lord and the Peace we long for**

Sisters and brothers in Christ, grace and peace to you from the ONE who came, who comes, and who will come again.

Today, we enter the second week of Advent, the week of peace.  
Not the fragile peace the world negotiates, but the deep, restoring peace that only God can give.  
And into this longing, Isaiah gives us a beautiful vision of the coming Messiah, Jesus Christ.

Brief summary of **Isaiah 11:1-3, “A shoot shall come out from the stock of Jesse, ... The spirit of the Lord shall rest on him, ... His delight shall be in the fear of the Lord.”**

This one phrase, **His delight shall be in the fear of the Lord**, carries the heart of Advent peace.

Because the peace we long for does not begin on earth. It begins in the heart of the KING JESUS.

Isaiah describes the world like a cut-down forest. Stumps everywhere.  
Israel’s hope looked dead. The world’s violence felt overwhelming. Justice was crooked. The powerful crushed the weak. The vulnerable were ignored.

To this, Isaiah points out one small tiny hope.

**“But from that stump, a shoot will arise.”**

A KING will come. And the first thing we are told about him is not his power, not his strategy, not his miracles.

But, his heart. That is **“He delights in the fear of the Lord.”**

**“Fear of the Lord”** does not mean terror. It means deep reverence, joyful obedience, a heart fully aligned with God. It means Jesus delights in God’s will, God’s ways, and God’s character.

And because he delights in the Father, he brings peace that reflects the Father.

Christ’s peace is not sentimental. It’s not emotional peace.

But, it is holy. It is rooted in God’s righteousness, God’s wisdom, and God’s justice.

Advent peace flows from a King whose heart is perfectly submitted to God. Peace comes from the heart of our Messiah, King, Jesus Christ.

**V3-4, “He shall not judge by what his eyes see, .... But with righteousness he shall judge the poor, and decide with equity for the meek of the earth.”**

Where Christ reigns, injustice cannot survive. Oppression loses its power. The poor are lifted. The viceless are heard. The meek are protected.

The true peace is not the absence of conflict or trouble. It is the presence of righteousness. **The true peace is sleeping Jesus in a boat in the middle of a storm. <<PIC>>**

This is why Jesus came to us. This is why Jesus will come again. And this is why Jesus calls the church to follow him in holiness and mercy.

When we walk in the fear of the Lord, we become instruments of his peace. What we need is to be with him. Just stay close to this sleeping Jesus in the storm.

**V6, “The wolf shall live with the lamb, the leopard shall lie down with the kid, ... and a little child shall lead them.”**

These are natural enemies. But, in Isaiah’s vision, they are now living together. Predators transformed into gentle companions.

**FEAR DISSOLVED.** Violence replaced with tenderness.

This is the peace that God brings to us. Not simply managing enemies, but transforming them.

**In Christ, old hostility loses its grip.**

**In Christ, hearts soften.**

**In Christ, wounds begin to heal.**

**In Christ, even impossible relationships can be redeemed.**

Advent reminds us that Christ came to restore broken creation, including our brokenness.

**V10, “On that day the root of Jesse shall stand as a signal to the people; the nations shall inquire of him, and his dwelling shall be glorious.”**

The peace of Christ is not private.

It shines. It draws. It invites. It expands.

And this is where we come in.

We cannot create peace by our own effort. But we can receive the peace of Christ. And we can carry it into our homes, our church, and our community.

**We carry peace when we choose forgiveness instead of resentment.**

**We carry peace when we speak gently instead of reacting harshly.**

**We carry peace when we pray for enemies, seek justice, and protect the weak.**

**We carry peace when our delight is, like Christ, in the fear of the Lord.**

Look inside your heart. And look around your surroundings, life situations, friends, family members, and community.

We are hungry for peace. The world is hungry for peace.

Our homes long for peace. Our hearts are aching for peace.

**The good news of Advent is here.**

**Peace does not depend on our strength.**

**Peace begins in Christ. And Christ is already with us.**

As we wait for him, as we follow him, and as we walk in his ways, his peace grows in us, his peace grows through us, and his peace grows around us.

Jesus Christ is the One who delights in the fear of the Lord.

And through him, the peace we long for becomes the peace we begin to live.

This is the message of the Lord for us today.

**Let us pray.**

Gracious God, you are our Prince of Peace. Thank you for the holy vision in Isaiah. A world reconciled, restored, and made whole.

Shape our hearts to delight in your ways, just as Christ delighted in the fear of the Lord. Where we are anxious, give us your calm. Where we are wounded, bring your healing. Where we are divided, give us your unity. Make us instruments of peace we long for, and let the light of Christ shine through us in all we do and say. In Jesus Christ, holy name, we pray. Amen.

**Praise song BOP 117 Herald! Sound the note of judgement**

**Prayer for the people:**

God of mercy and compassion, you see every corner of the world and every corner of the human heart. Today, we pray for peace in our homes, in our relationships, and in our world.

We continue to pray for Hong Kong and other places with wars, violence, fear, and loss. Have mercy upon them. Protect the innocent. Turn hearts toward justice. Bring leaders to wisdom and courage. Let the peace of Christ take root where hatred and conflict have grown for so long.

We pray especially for those who are among us today.

The weary, tired, anxious, unsettled, sick, and all going through hard times of life. Bring your peace in our hearts. Let your peace guide our lives and walk with us. Heal those who are ill. Comfort those we are grieving. Strengthen caregivers and care-seekers. Provide for those in financially struggle. Restore relationships that feel strained or broken. Bring us close to you.

Make our church a resting place of your peace, a community where compassion grows, where truth is spoken in love, and where all are welcomed in the name of Jesus Christ. Pour out your glory upon us as we worship you. Guide us our steps. Lead us to walk in the path of peace.

We pray in the beautiful name of Jesus Christ, the Prince of Peace. Amen.

**Invitation to the offering:**

In the season of Advent, we are waiting for the One who brings peace. And we respond by offering our lives back to him.

When we give, we are saying, “Lord, we trust your kingdom more than our own security. We long for your peace more than the comfort of this world.” Our offering becomes part of his work of healing, justice, mercy, and hope.

As we give our offerings, let us glorify God.

*(BOP #79, Praise God with songs)(words are on the screen)*

**Offering prayer:**

Lord of all peace, every gift we have comes from your generous hand. Receive now what we bring – our money, our hearts, our time, our willingness to follow, and our focus and our desires. Use them to build your kingdom, to comfort the hurting, to lift the lowly, and to spread the peace of Christ from our family, to our church, and to our communities, and to the whole world. Make our offering a reflection of the One who gave everything for us. In Jesus’ precious name, we pray. Amen.

**Song for the Journey – BOP 113 Comfort, Comfort for my people**

Now, it is our time to be sent to the world where God called us to be.

As we move from this moment of worship into the week ahead, may the peace of Christ go before you and stay with you. The world around us may feel restless and divided, but the One who delights in the fear of the Lord walks with you. Let his wisdom guide your decisions, his gentleness shape your words, and his strength steady your heart. As you follow him, may your life shine with the peace he came to give – a peace strong enough to heal wounds, soften enemies, and bring light into the darkest places.

**Benediction:** May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, And the Love of God, our Father, And the intimate fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with us all, now and always. Amen.