

MIDWEEK OF ADVENT 3

OUR PEACE RESTS ON HIM ALONE

AS WE GATHER

During one of the busiest and most stressful times of the year, we pause this third week of Advent and consider the source of real and abiding peace. This harmony with both God and others comes to us neither through our exertions of control nor through our best-laid plans, but through the reign of our Mighty God come near to us in Jesus, His one and only Son. The fulfillment of our everlasting Father's perfectly executed plan to save the world is revealed to us in the straw of the Bethlehem manger and then, some thirty-three years later, in the wood and nails of Calvary's cross. Amid the disorder of our chaotic lives, our Prince of Peace gives us what the world can never give. Let us center our hearts and minds on our Wonderful Counselor, who freely gives His everything so that our peace may rest on Him alone.

PRELUDE

Variations on "Let the Earth Now Praise the Lord"

Robert Lind

HYMN 352 Let the Earth Now Praise the Lord

INVOCATION AND CALL TO WORSHIP

Isaiah 9:6; Philippians 4:7

Pastor: In the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

People: Amen.

Pastor: For to us a child is born, to us a son is given;

People: and the government will be upon His shoulders.

Pastor: And He will be called Wonderful Counselor,

People: Mighty God,

Pastor: Everlasting Father,

People: Prince of Peace.

Pastor: The peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

People: Amen.

PSALM

Psalm 126

Pastor: When the LORD brought back the captives to Zion,

People: we were like men who dreamed.

Pastor: Our mouths were filled with laughter,

People: our tongues with songs of joy.

Pastor: Then it was said among the nations, "The LORD has done great things for them."

People: The LORD has done great things for us, and we are filled with joy.

Pastor: Restore our fortunes, O LORD, like streams in the Negev.

People: Those who sow in tears will reap with songs of joy.

Pastor: He who goes out weeping, carrying seed to sow,

People: will return with songs of joy, carrying sheaves with him.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Pastor: The Lord be with you.

People: And also with you.

Pastor: Let us pray.

Stir up Your power, O Lord, and come, that by the light of Your Holy Word, we may be drawn to Jesus, who steps into the chaos of our world, that we may know the peace that rests on Him alone. We pray this in the name of Jesus Christ, our Prince of Peace, who lives and reigns with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

People: Amen.

HYMN 342 What Hope! An Eden Prophesied

OLD TESTAMENT READING

Isaiah 9:1-7

¹ Nevertheless, there will be no more gloom for those who were in distress. In the past he humbled the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, but in the future he will honor Galilee of the Gentiles, by the way of the sea, along the Jordan —

² The people walking in darkness have seen a great light; on those living in the land of the shadow of death a light has dawned. ³ You have enlarged the nation and increased their joy; they rejoice before you as people rejoice at the harvest, as men rejoice when dividing the plunder. ⁴ For as in the day of Midian's defeat, you have shattered the yoke that burdens them, the bar across their shoulders, the rod of their oppressor. ⁵ Every warrior's boot used in battle and every garment rolled in blood will be destined for burning, will be fuel for the fire. ⁶ For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders.

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And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. ⁷ Of the increase of his government and peace There will be no end. He will reign on David's throne and over his kingdom, establishing and upholding it with justice and righteousness from that time on and forever. The zeal of the LORD Almighty will accomplish this.

Pastor: O Lord, have mercy on us.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

EPISTLE

Romans 12:9-21

⁹ Love must be sincere. Hate what is evil; cling to what is good. ¹⁰ Be devoted to one another in brotherly love. Honor one another above yourselves. ¹¹ Never be lacking in zeal, but keep your spiritual fervor, serving the Lord. ¹² Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer. ¹³ Share with God's people who are in need. Practice hospitality. ¹⁴ Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse. ¹⁵ Rejoice with those who rejoice; mourn with those who mourn. ¹⁶ Live in harmony with one another. Do not be proud, but be willing to associate with people of low position. Do not be conceited. ¹⁷ Do not repay anyone evil for evil. Be careful to do what is right in the eyes of everybody. ¹⁸ If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone. ¹⁹ Do not take revenge, my friends, but leave room for God's wrath, for it is written: "It is mine to avenge; I will repay," says the Lord. ²⁰ On the contrary: "If your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink. In doing this, you will heap burning coals on his head." ²¹ Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.

Pastor: O Lord, have mercy on us.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

Please stand

HOLY GOSPEL

Matthew 10:34-39

³⁴ "Do not suppose that I have come to bring peace to the **earth**. I did not come to bring peace, but a sword. ³⁵ For I have come to turn "a man against his father, a daughter against her mother, a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law-- ³⁶ a man's enemies will be the members of his own household.' ³⁷ "Anyone who loves his father or mother more than me is not worthy of me; anyone who loves his son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me; ³⁸ and anyone who does not take his cross and follow me is not worthy of me.

³⁹ Whoever finds his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for my sake will find it.

Pastor: O Lord, have mercy on us.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

READINGS RESPONSE

Pastor: In many and various ways, God spoke to His people of old by the prophets.

People: **But now in these last days, He has spoken to us by His Son.**

HYMN **353** Jesus Came, the Heavens Adoring

1 Jesus came, the heav'ns adoring,
 Came with peace from realms on high;
 Jesus came to win redemption,
 Lowly came on earth to die;
 Alleluia! Alleluia!
 Came in deep humility.

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- 2 Jesus comes again in mercy
When our hearts are worn with care;
Jesus comes again in answer
To an earnest, heartfelt prayer;
Alleluia! Alleluia!
Comes to save us from despair.
- 3 Jesus comes to hearts rejoicing,
Bringing news of sins forgiv'n;
Jesus comes with words of gladness,
Leading souls redeemed to heav'n.
Alleluia! Alleluia!
Hope to all the world is giv'n.
- 4 Jesus comes in joy and sorrow,
Shares alike our hopes and fears;
Jesus comes, whate'er befalls us,
Cheers our hearts and dries our tears;
Alleluia! Alleluia!
Comforts us in failing years.

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SERMON

Please stand

APOSTLES' CREED

I believe in God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth.

And in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died and was buried. He descended into hell. The third day He rose again from the dead. He ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty. From thence He will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy Christian Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

OFFERING

"Emmanuel"

M.W. Smith
arr. By Lloyd Larson

MAGNIFICAT

934 My Soul Now Magnifies the Lord

- 1 My soul now magnifies the Lord;
My spirit leaps for joy in Him.
He keeps me in His kind regard,
And I am blest for time to come.**
- 2 For He alone who shows such might
Has done amazing things to me.
His mercy flows; His name like light
Remains in time perpetually.**

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**3 His arm is strong; His strength is great.
He scatters those of proud intent
And casts them down from high estate,
Then gives the low His nourishment.**

**4 He feeds the hungry as His own;
The wealthy leave with empty hands.
He gives His help to Israel;
His gracious promise always stands.**

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VVPKL-GBOIT-LYVDV-EKAFZ*

PRAYER

Pastor: O Lord, support us all day long, till the shadows lengthen and the evening comes and the busy world is hushed and the fever of life is over and our work is done. Then, in Your mercy, grant us a safe lodging and holy rest and peace at the last. Lord, Jesus Christ.

People: Give us Your peace.

Pastor: O God our Father, by Your mercy and might the world turns safely into darkness and returns again to light. We place into Your hands our unfinished tasks, our unsolved problems, and our unfulfilled hopes, knowing that only what You bless will prosper. To Your great love and protection we commit each other and all those we love, knowing that You alone are our sure defender. Lord, Jesus Christ.

People: Give us Your peace.

Pastor: Keep watch, dear Lord, with those who watch or work or weep this night, and give Your angels charge over those who sleep. Tend the sick, give rest to the weary, comfort the afflicted, soothe the suffering, bless the dying—and all for Your love's sake. Lord, Jesus Christ.

People: Give us Your peace.

Pastor: Look down, O Lord, from Your heavenly throne, and illuminate this night with Your celestial brightness, that by night as by day Your people may glorify Your holy name; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

People: Amen.

LORD'S PRAYER

Pastor: Lord, remember us in Your kingdom and teach us to pray:

People: 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 forever and ever. Amen.

PRAYER FOR PEACE

Pastor: O God, from whom come all holy desires, all good counsels, and all just works,

People: give to us, Your servants, that peace which the world cannot give,

Pastor: that our hearts may be set to obey Your commandments and also that we, being defended from the fear of our enemies,

People: may live in peace and quietness;

Pastor: through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

People: Amen.

BENEDICTION

Isaiah 9:6b

Pastor: His name shall be called

People: Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

Pastor: Go forth then, children of God, living securely in Him and in harmony with one another, rejoicing in His presence and knowing His perfect peace. The blessing of almighty God—the Father, the ✠ Son, and the Holy Spirit—be with you and remain with you always.

People: Amen.

HYMN 333 Once He Came in Blessing

POSTLUDE

“People, Look East”

setting by Lloyd Larson

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Serving at Chapel

Preacher:	Adam Rouse
Liturgist:	Ellory Glenn
Acolyte:	Grace Meyer
Organist:	Ryan Meyer