



TO BE HIS LIGHT THAT TRANSFORMS LIVES

*Second Sunday of Advent*  
December 5, 2021

### Thoughts of Preparation

The ancient Hebrew concept of peace, rooted in the word "*shalom*," means wholeness, completeness, soundness, health, safety and prosperity, carrying with it the implication of permanence.

— *Susan Perlman*

We have this revolutionary commandment: "You have heard that it was said, 'You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.' But I say to you, Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, so that you may be children of your Father in heaven..." (Matthew 5:43–45). These are the most radical, political, and revolutionary words ever uttered. They fulfill the vision of nonviolence, of work for justice and disarmament, of universal compassion and unconditional forgiveness, and of trust in the God of peace. Few discuss this commandment, but I believe it sums up Christianity. But we've done our best to avoid and disobey it. -- *John Dear, founder, The Beatitudes Center for the Nonviolent Jesus.*

Before you speak of peace, you must first have it in your heart.

— *St. Francis of Assisi*

### Welcome

**Prelude**                      "*O Come, O Come Emmanuel*"                      (*Wilber Held*)

### Tower Bell

#### **\*Unison Call to Worship**

**Holy God, we long for Your peace, and trust in Your promise; we hear Your call to turn toward You, to change our lives and welcome You in. Meet us here and fill our minds with Your wisdom and our hearts with Your peace, that our worship together may open us to the challenge of Your dream of wholeness for all. In the Name of the One who is coming, we pray. Amen!**

#### **\*Invocation**

Lighting the Second Candle of Advent:  
**PEACE/SHALOM**

“Come Now, O God of Hope...”

The image shows a musical score for a cantata. It consists of two staves of music in 3/4 time, with a key signature of one flat (B-flat). The first staff is labeled 'Cantor:' and has three lines of lyrics. The second staff has two lines of lyrics. The lyrics are in English and Korean. The music is written in a simple, melodic style with a treble clef and a key signature of one flat.

Cantor: 1. O - so - sȯ o - so - sȯ, pyong - hwa - ui̇ - im - guṁ,  
2. Come now, O God of hope, make us one bod - y.  
3. Come now, O God of peace, make us one bod - y.

u - ri - ga han - mom i - ru - ge ha - so - sȯ.  
Come, O Lord Je - sus, re - con - cile your peo - ple.  
Come, O Lord Je - sus, re - con - cile your peo - ple.

Jesus said: “Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled, and do not let them be afraid” (John 14:27). Paul the Apostle said: “Do not worry about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.” (Philippians 4:6-7). It would seem anxiety, fear, and worry are common--and that God will remove these things, when we will meet God in prayer and service!

## Scripture Lesson

From the Hebrew Apocrypha: Baruch 5:5-9

*A prophecy traditionally attributed to Jeremiah or his scribe Baruch--but dated by modern Biblical scholarship to c. 200-100 BCE. These verses appear to be a parallel source (with Isaiah) of the "prepare the way" prophecy at John the Baptizer's advent in Luke 3 (part two of today's Gospel reading).*

Arise, O Jerusalem, stand upon the height; look towards 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.

## Anthem

*"Comfort Ye"*

*(G.F. Handel)*

Comfort ye, comfort ye My people, saith your God; speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem; and cry unto her, that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned. The voice of him that crieth in the wilderness:-Prepare ye the way of the Lord: make straight in the desert a highway for our God.

## Gathering Together in Prayer Silent Prayer—Pastoral Prayer

### Lord's Prayer

*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.*

### Offertory Invitation

In this season suspended between hope and fulfillment, let us never forget what God has done. May we be overwhelmed by God's mercy, which flows in wave after wave, beyond our understanding or deserving. We begin to understand that God does not judge--no matter how much we do, and want God to--but God only loves, and gives. Living in that divine Love, we live it out now through our giving.

### Offertory

*"See Amid the Winter's Snow" (Dan Forrest)*

See amid the winter's snow  
Born for us on earth below,  
See the tender lamb appears,  
Promised from eternal years.

Hail, thou ever blessed morn,  
Hail redemption's happy dawn,  
Sing through all Jerusalem  
"Christ is born in Bethlehem."

Lo, within a manger lies  
He who built the lofty skies,  
He, who throned in light sublime,  
Sits amid the cherubim.

Sacred infant, all divine,  
What a tender love was thine,  
Thus to come from highest bliss,  
Down to such a world as this.

## Scripture Lesson

From the Gospels: Luke 1:68-80; 3:1-6

*Part One: The father of John the Baptizer, Zechariah (a Temple priest in Jerusalem), gives this prophecy upon John's miraculous birth. Part Two: John's "preparing the way" ministry begins c. 26 CE, echoing the prophecies of Isaiah and Baruch up and down the Jordan River valley.*

“Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, for he has looked favorably on his people and redeemed them. He has raised up a mighty savior for us in the house of his servant David, as he spoke through the mouth of his holy prophets from of old, that we would be saved from our enemies and from the hand of all who hate us. Thus he has shown the mercy promised to our ancestors, and has remembered his holy covenant, the oath that he swore to our ancestor Abraham, to grant us that we, being rescued from the hands of our enemies, might serve him without fear, in holiness and righteousness before him all our days. And you, child, will be called the prophet of the Most High; for you will go before the Lord to prepare his ways, to give knowledge of salvation to his people by the forgiveness of their sins. By the tender mercy of our God, the dawn from on high will break upon us, to give light to those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace.”

The child grew and became strong in spirit, and he was in the wilderness until the day he appeared publicly to Israel.

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.’”

**Sermon**        You Want *WHAT?*...Peace? Be Careful What You Ask For!  
Pastor Barry Bordenkircher

**\*Hymn #154**        “*O Come, O Come, Emmanuel*” (*Veni Emmanuel*)  
(see last page)

**\* Benediction**

May the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. (*Philippians 4:7*)

And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in one body. And be thankful. (*Colossians 3:15*)

Now may the Lord of peace himself give you peace at all times in every way. The Lord be with you all. (*2 Thessalonians 3:16*)

**Postlude**        “*Praise Ye The Lord of Hosts*”        (*Saint Saens*)

**Worship Notes**

The “Call to Worship” was written by Rev. Susan A. Blain, in *To Dream God’s Dream: Service Prayers for the Second Sunday of Advent*, from the United Church of Christ’s Worship Ways website ([ucc.org/worship/worship-ways/year-a/ace/advent-service-prayers.html](http://ucc.org/worship/worship-ways/year-a/ace/advent-service-prayers.html)).

The Offertory “Dedication” was written by Joanna Harader and posted on Spacious Faith ([spaciousfaith.com](http://spaciousfaith.com)), adapted.

**Today’s Worship Leaders:**

Preaching Today: Rev. Barry Bordenkircher

Liturgist: Rose Wendling

Organist: Michael Sullivan

Choral Director: Dobin Park

Thanks to all the musicians and to Michael Sullivan and Dobin Park for assisting with filming and to Dobin Park for film editing.

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## 154 O Come, O Come, Emmanuel

*Unison*

1 O come, O come, Em - man - u - el, and ran - som cap - tive  
 2 O come, thou Day - spring, come and cheer our spir - its by thine  
 3 O come, thou Wis - dom from on high, and or - der all things;  
 4 O come, De - sire of na - tions, bind all peo - ples in one

Is - ra - el, that mourns in lone - ly ex - ile here, un -  
 ad - vent here; dis - perse the gloom - y clouds of night, and  
 far and nigh; to us the path of knowl - edge show, and  
 heart and mind; bid en - vy, strife and quar - rels cease; fill

*Refrain (Harmony)*

til the Son of God ap - pear.  
 death's dark shad - ows put to flight. Re - joice! Re - joice! Em -  
 cause us in her ways to go.  
 the whole world with heav - en's peace.

man - u - el shall come to thee, O Is - ra - el!