

Week 4: Peace



Opening prayer

As we light our candle today, we pray for our troubled world, so full of conflict. Lord, help us to be a people of peace.

(Light the first, second, third and fourth candle on your Advent wreath. If you have white Christmas candle light this one too.)

Scripture

And in the same region there were shepherds out in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. And an angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were filled with great fear. And the angel said to them, "Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, who is Christ the Lord. And this will be a sign for you: you will find a baby wrapped in swaddling cloths and lying in a manger." And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying,

"Glory to God in the highest,
and on earth peace among those with whom he is pleased!"

(Luke 2: 8-14)

Reflection

"Fear not." With these beautiful words the angel of the Lord greets the shepherds and the heavenly host sing of peace on earth.

In our war-torn world, awash with division, many people are afraid. We see the suffering caused by conflict in the Middle East, Ukraine and other places.

But today we can also hope for restoration and healing, for the baby lying in the manger is the Prince of Peace.

This Christmas let us pray that that we will commit to God's vision of a just peace and seek to build a world where no one need be afraid of violence, oppression or poverty.

For discussion

- When you picture peace, what images come to mind?
- What steps can we take to make a just peace a reality?
- Jesus is born amongst the oppressed and those in poverty. How does that impact our celebration of Christmas?

Closing prayer

We listen to your word
as it whispers in our hearts:
“Do not be afraid.”

Welcome, Lord, prince of peace.

Grant us the courage
to build peace in our homes,
our local community and our world.

Welcome, Lord, prince of peace.

Lead us in your ways,
as together we make a change
and share your peace with all.

Welcome, Lord, prince of peace.

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