

SCRIPTURE READINGS:

Isaiah 40:1–11

Psalm 85:1–2, 8–13

2 Peter 3:8–15a

Mark 1:1–8

SELECTED READING AND THEME

Mark 1:1–8 – Peace

CALL TO WORSHIP / ADVENT LITANY

You may follow with your Advent wreath, candle lighting, and or Advent song.

In the bright heat of summer
we thirst for new life,
longing for peace with Creation
as it cries out in suffering.

Jesus, we wait again for you,
for the birth of your peace in us,
as we look forward to the story
of your birth, your coming to Earth.

PRAYER OF INVOCATION

We listen to hear your voice, O God:
speak to us your peace, we pray.
Look on us with kind eyes,
restore us, faithful Holy One.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

As the Judeans gathered at the Jordan,
and the inhabitants of Jerusalem entered the water,
so we come seeking forgiveness,
we come to turn around, back to you.

In the silence, we feel our sorrow,
our regret, for the ways we turned
from your way of peace.

Silence

Leave at least 1 minute, or 3–5 if appropriate.

We come to God seeking forgiveness,
turning back to God's way of peace.

WORDS OF ASSURANCE

And friends, God welcomes us back
into God's presence, to God's peace.
Know you are forgiven,
and live into that grace, transformed. Amen.

PRAYER OF ADORATION AND THANKSGIVING

Loving kindness and faithfulness
we find in you, Holy One,
and we are grateful.
Holiness and peace kiss
us when we are in your presence.
Thank you, Holy One,
we turn to you with our praise. Amen.

DISCIPLESHIP THOUGHT

To whose voices do we regularly listen?
How do we recognize God's voice, a voice of trustworthiness, when we hear it?

There is a kind of peace that is found in the assurance and the trust of integrity. A knowing beyond words that the path is right, the person/being is true, the word is faithful. And to be open to this peace, this capacity to discern integrity and trustworthiness, we must continually cultivate peace. Nurture it. Seek it. Turn and return to the river again and again. It is why we tell the sacred stories over and over, to return to the river of life. Some of these stories are life- and world-changing enough that we must take time to prepare to hear them again.

This is why we have a season like Advent in the rhythm of Christian community life. Waiting – *actively* waiting. Preparing. Nurturing a peacefulness from which to discern, recognize and trust what is good, holy, and true, when we encounter it. To be ready to be transformed, when the story is told.

OFFERTORY SENTENCE

We give what we can, seeking peace on Earth for all.

OFFERTORY PRAYER

May our gifts of money,
of time, of service,
bring peace – your peace – we pray,
Holy One. Amen.

PRAYER OF INTERCESSION

** You might leave silence, or sing a gentle chant/refrain/prayer for peace, between each of these prayers*

This week of Advent, we pray especially for peace,
for deep peace, on Earth.

We pray for an end to violence *

We pray for a living well with mental illness. *

We pray for reconciliation and healing of relationships. *

We pray for justice *

We pray for individuals and communities facing great change. *

We pray for our Earth *

We pray, O Holy One,
we pray today for peace.
May our lives enact our prayers. Amen.

COMMISSIONING AND BENEDICTION

Prophets cry out in the wilderness:
Prepare! Get ready! Pay attention!
The Holy One of peace arrives,
even now – open the gates!
Let peace come in.

As you prepare for the story
of Jesus' birth to be told again,
may you know God with you,
Holy One, Holy Peace. Amen.

HYMNS

Advent wreath/candle

Be still and know that I am God (adapted for Advent)

<http://lutheranmission.blogspot.com/2014/10/advent-song-for-candle-lighting-based.html>

Come we pray O God be with us
<https://brunswick.unitingchurch.org.au/worship/the-arts-in-worship/buc-song-project/>

Light one candle for hope
TiS.286

Isaiah 40:1–11

Comfort, comfort, all my people
Comfort, Comfort, O My People
Long ago, prophets knew
The grass withers
TiS.647 SA.25
NCH.101
TiS.283 SA.61
ATOK.337

Psalm 85:1–2, 8–13

Donna nobis pacem domine
Lift up your heads, you mighty gates
Love divine
(adapted words in *Pray The Story*, Sarah Agnew)
O breath of life come sweeping through us
Taizé TiS.713
TiS.267
TiS.217
TiS.409 AHB.322

2 Peter 3:8–15a

Emmanuel carol
O day of God draw near
ATFG.514
TiS.616 AHB.547

Mark 1:1–8

Be our Light
Come let us praise our God / A voice is heard
Dare to dream
Forty days and forty nights
God has spoken
Prepare the way of the Lord
DW p.130
ATW.430
Tune In.16
TiS.591 AHB.506
TiS.636 SA.39
Taizé