

Straight from the "Hart"

November 27, 2022

Advent Begins



Welcome to the Hartland United Methodist Church Service Script.

Affirmation of Faith for Advent (P – Pastor B – Congregation with Lay Leader)

P: We believe in God,

C: creator and lover of the earth, the origin and destiny of us all.

P: We believe in Jesus the Christ—

C: God coming to us in the fragile promise of a baby yet unborn— who emerges as the herald of hope,

P: God's hope in the face of despair, plunged into death and hell, he broke free the captives,

C: and is leading the way to the land of promise where justice and peace will flourish.

P: We believe in the Holy Spirit, who implants the seed of truth, brings us to birth as the body of Christ,

C: and empowers us to [make disciples for the transformation of the world].

P: We believe in the coming reign of God. Announced by John the Baptist, drawn near to us in Jesus, fulfilled in those raised from the waters, robed in righteousness,

C: and gathered into the joyous fulfilment of God's desire. For the coming of that day, on this day, we work and pray: Come, Lord Jesus, Come!

abr. and ad. from Nathan Nettleton, via Laughingbird.net

Advent Theme Snippets from a prophecy by the father of John the Baptist in Luke 1, and it is why our Advent image is of the sun breaking through the dark clouds...He says, "Blessed be to the Lord, for he has come to visit and set his people free. He remembers his sacred covenant: to rescue us from our enemies, granting us the privilege of serving God fearlessly and making us holy and acceptable in his presence as long as we live. [He does this by presenting] to his people the offer of salvation through the forgiveness of sins. All this will be because of the heartfelt tender mercies of God, by which the rising Sun will come to us from heaven to shine on those living in darkness, to guide us down the path of peace.

(Snippets from Luke 1:68-79 NIV, TLB, MSG)

Opening Prayer God of the ages, we give our lives to you. We praise you, for in the dawn of time you created the world, sending light by your Word to dispel darkness. In Jesus Christ, you began a new creation, sending him to be the Light of the world to drive away fear and despair, and to rule in peace and justice, holiness and love, and it is in his name that we pray. Amen.

(ad from portion of "Prayer of Thanksgiving and Intercession"
by Presbyterian Daily Prayer, USA, 20th c. in UM Book of Worship

Call to Worship

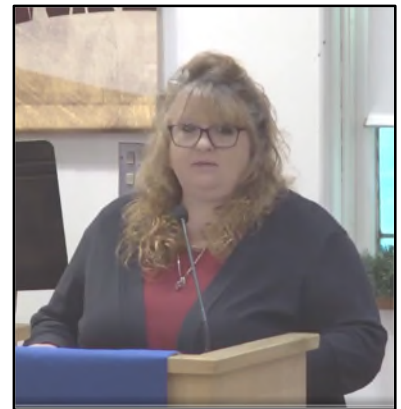
Lay Reader Lay aside expectations of being entertained, of being made comfortable, of being served. Enter this sacred space and time with an expectation of his coming, an expectation of hearing God speak to us a word for our lives that is new and renewing, an expectation of being challenged and changed and equipped to serve others.

Music Advent is a time of expectation, of anticipation of desires being fulfilled... of the coming of God's light, Jesus who comes to set us free from the darkness of sin and its power and enables us to live in his presence even now. Let's sing

Come, Thou Long Expected Jesus

Words: Charles Wesley, 1744 Music: Rowland Prichard, 1830
harm. from *The English Hymnal*, 1906

1. Come, thou long expected Jesus, born to set thy people free;
from our fears and sins release us, let us find our rest in thee.
Israel's strength and consolation, hope of all the earth thou art;
dear desire of every nation, joy of every longing heart.
2. Born thy people to deliver, born a child and yet a King,
born to reign in us forever, now thy gracious kingdom bring.
By thine own eternal spirit rule in all our hearts alone;
by thine all sufficient merit, raise us to thy glorious throne.



Theme

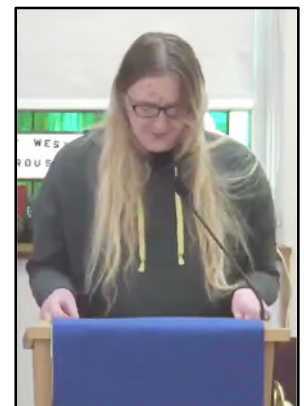
Someone warned that "we dare not [lose Christmas in all of its beautiful and praiseworthy expressions]. They are extensions of Christmas, but at the same time, they are not at its heart. Jesus did not come to give us a sentimental holiday. He came to save us from sin. He didn't come because we are nice people, but because we are lost people; and because if he hadn't come, we could never have

found our way home. If we let ... the holy day become just a holiday — well, it will be as if the shepherds leaving the manger had told their friends, ‘We’ve just seen the cutest little baby boy!’ (and nothing more than that). and as if the wise men had sent a congratulatory "It's a Boy!" birth card rather than having traveled weeks, maybe months -- in order to bring their gold, frankincense and myrrh.” (J Kalas, former President of Asbury College)

But we are so easily distracted from the holy to the holly, aren’t we? From the sacred sign to the sale sign. What began as following the example of the magi, sharing gifts as an expression of our love for God and for each other because we are filled with God's love for all, -- and for all he has done --- but too often we have turned it around from the joy of giving to “This is what I want” lists (from “Santa Claus”), and it isn’t just for kids these days either, is it? And sometimes goes even beyond that to an obsession -- where Christmas is no longer about expressing love at all, but about getting the most perfect gift possible.

And the market feeds into our obsessions, creating all kinds of new combinations of things. Here are some older ones that didn’t quite catch on – a swimsuit that carried enough charge in it to keep your MP3 player charged. Pants that were so wired with keyboard and etc it gave new meaning to the word laptop computer – a media streaming screen built into your belt buckle so when you are traveling on a plane, you can just look down and watch your own movie -- but some people might wonder why you are looking there so much... Some combinations remind us of that old Sesame Street song, One of these things is not like the other – they don’t belong together. And yet – it was only a few decades ago that the combination of the word “personal” and “computer” would have been laughable because computers would have filled a whole basement. But some innovators didn’t laugh and now many people carry computers around in their pockets, and they even make phone calls. Think about that!

Intro to Responsive Reading History teaches us that the future belongs to people who can see connections where others see only contrasts. In one place, Isaiah *poetically* writes about the coming of the Messiah and when that happened, that world would see wolves living with lambs, leopards resting with goats, calf and lion and yearling together – led by a child. The cow will feed with the bear... the infant will play safely by the cobra’s den, for all will be filled with the knowing God and his ways on



[Zion] his holy mountain -- [in the kingdom of God], -- all will know him as much as --- as the waters cover the sea. Writing amid the threat of war and exile, Isaiah's vision of God's global future is based on connecting things that others see as completely separate.

Responsive Reading (L – Lay Reader, C – Congregation)

L: There's a day coming when the mountain of God's house will be established as the world's highest [most important] of the mountains, solid, towering over all the hills, and all the nations will stream to it to worship the Lord.

C: Many peoples will say, "Come, let's go up the mountain of the Lord, to the temple of the God of Jacob. He will teach us his ways, so that we can live the way we're made."

L: Zion's the source of revelation. The law will go out from Zion. God's message comes from Jerusalem. The Lord will settle international disputes fairly.

C: He'll make things right between many peoples.

L: All the nations will convert swords into plowshares and spears into pruning hooks,

C: weapons of war into implements of peace.

L: No more will nation fight against nation. All wars will stop. All military training will end.

C: Come, descendants of Jacob let's live in the light of God.

Isaiah 2:2-5 (NIV, TLB, MSG)

Intro to Candles Pastor Kathy Findley writes that when living in Africa near the equator, you don't sit and watch the sunset. You'll never hear, "It's getting dark." It happens without warning. It gives new meaning to the phrase, "Night fell." But in the same way that night instantly falls, dawn also comes with very little warning. The sky doesn't begin to brighten while you gradually watch the sun rise. The sun leaps up at you, right out of the darkness.

That that is how God's dawn will break upon us. The Bible says: Suddenly, the Lord you are seeking will come to his Temple. (Malachi 3) and "Those who had dwelled in the land of the shadow of death [and darkness], upon them hath the light shined." (Isaiah 60)

The Advent season is expecting the Light of Christ to come upon us who live in a dark world. It is a remembering – a reliving – of his coming at the original Christmas. It is experiencing his coming to us again this Christmas season... and

it is, as the candles will be emphasizing this year -- anticipating His final coming to us. Week by week, we add more light to our dark world -- first the attributes that Christ brings: hope, peace, joy love; and then Christ himself. It all happens right on cue: we choreograph our candles and readings and sermons and hymns. By the time we light the Christ candle, we should be fully enlightened... our darkness dispelled. And it will then be said of us: "The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light." (Isaiah 60)

If it were only so simple. Light 4, 5 candles and we are done! Such declarations can so easily fall flat, become just words, just candles, just empty symbols without any power to change our lives. Even the most elaborate Advent celebrations, held in magnificent cathedrals or enormous super churches, will not necessarily bathe us with the glorious light of salvation that will end the darkness that surrounds each of us and all of us.

Even in all the Advent festivities and the glorious harmonies of the hymns, we still face the fragileness of our relationships, the disappointments of our lives, the turmoil of our existence, and all the fears that life heaps upon us. Nevertheless, the HOPE of Advent is that we successfully respond to the invitation offered at the end of the Responsive Reading. "Come, let us walk in the light of the Lord." This is what true Advent is about -- the expectation that God's light will come to us in our darkness, and we will walk in the that light all the way home.

Music So let's begin our Advent Candles by singing the first verse (not the refrain) of

O Come, O Come Emmanuel

1. O Come, O Come Emmanuel, and ransom captive Israel,
that mourns in lonely exile here until the Son of God appear.

Advent Candles (L1 Lay Reader – 1, L2 – Lay Reader 2, **PC – Pastor with Congregation**)

L1: God of justice and peace, healing and comfort, we see all that is wrong and wonder where you are

L2: We are a broken people, we cannot hear or see each other and are unable to work together for our common good.

L1: Our nations are filled with conflict and violence. The earth suffers and cries out for help, longing for redemption.

L2: People, long for God's presence. Say with the prophet Isaiah:

PC: If only You would rip open the heavens and come down to earth—

(Isaiah 64:1a, VOICE)

L2: On this first Sunday of Advent, we light this candle of hope to remind us of our longing that God will come into the world, bringing peace and justice, comfort and healing.

[L1: lights candle one as the above line is being read].

♪ Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.



Music The longing expected and prayed for in Isaiah is also expressed in this musical prayer that we too will find justice, peace, comfort, and healing in our lives... Let's sing

Fill My Cup, Lord (2x)

Words and Music: Richard Blanchard, 1959 arr. by Eugene Clark, 1971
© 1959 by Richard Blanchard, © 1964 Sacred Songs

Fill my cup, Lord, I lift it up, Lord,
Come and quench this thirsting of my soul,
Bread of heaven, feed me till I want no more,
fill my cup, fill it up and make me whole.
(Repeat)

[Prayers]

Music And on those days Jesus comes and fills and overflows our hearts, or even in the expectation of his presence, we have to honor his presence by honoring his name – let's prepare our hearts for prayer by singing....

Jesus, Name Above All Names

Words & Music: Naida Hearn, 1974 © 1974 Scripture in Song (Integrity)

Jesus, name above all names, beautiful Savior,
glorious Lord --- .
Emmanuel, God is with us,
blessed Redeemer, living Word.
(Repeat)

Pastor's Prayer God of all hope, as we enter into the Advent season this year, remind us of what is truly important in our lives. Jesus and his disciples instructed us in Scriptures to "Be alert!" Yet we so easily become complacent and forgetful. Keep our eyes open to your arrival. Inspire us to live each day as fully as we are

able. May we embody your kingdom with faithfulness and joy. You have entrusted to us the responsibility of exemplifying the love, forgiveness, justice, compassion and peace that are signs of your reign in your kingdom.

Let our focus be on preparing our hearts and homes for your coming — not on the frenzy of shopping and decorating – things that need to be done – but in the midst of all that, don't let us forget to prepare for you. Help us to slow down and enjoy the simple, yet important things in life. Let us care for one another, and be mindful of those who enter this season, not with a sense of gladness, but with grief or wistfulness, and give them encouragement as they go through this season. We remember these as well: **Praises and Petitions** We give thanks that Jim Mallott is doing better, and continue to pray for him. We also continue to pray for * Mary Jo Bell's friend Denese, * for Brian and Judy Holmes, * for Linda Gordonier's cousin Ray, * and for Becky's cousin Julie and her husband Brian, and * for Kathy Novak's friend Beverly Wilkinson and those who are surrounding her * and any others on our hearts who are ill, or mourning a loss, or who struggle to make peace with painful memories of past Christmas seasons. May they, and all of us, find our hope in you, and in the promise of your return. We pray this in the name of Jesus Christ, who is our Lord and Savior, who taught us to pray... **Lord's Prayer**

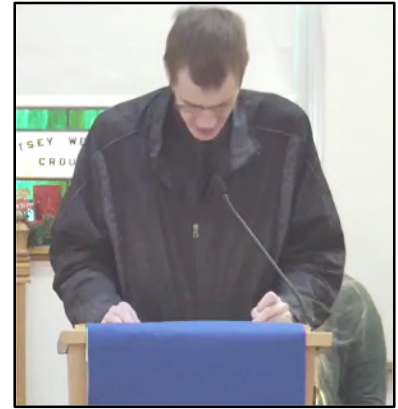
Music Jesus is the hope of the world, and if we awaken our hearts to it, we will see that hope realized again in our hearts and lives the Advent-Christmas season as we journey through the darkness toward his light of love. Let's stand before the Bible reading and sermon and sing Hope of the World to the tune of: We Would See Jesus. **Hope of the World** (to tune of We Would See Jesus)

Words: George Harkness, 1954 Music: Herbert B Turner, 1907
© 1982 Hymn Society of America

- 1 Hope of the world, thou Christ of great compassion,
speak to our fearful hearts by conflict rent.
Save us, thy people, from consuming passion,
who by our own false hopes and aims are spent.
- 2 Hope of the world, God's gift from highest heaven,
bringing to hungry souls the bread of life,
still let thy Spirit unto us be given
to heal earth's wounds and end her bitter strife.
- 3 Hope of the world, afoot on dusty highways,
showing to wand'ring souls the path of light;
walk thou beside us, lest the tempting byways
lure us away from thee to endless night.

Intro to Bible Reading

We prayed that Jesus keeps us true on our journey toward the manger and toward heaven. Advent begins the Christian Year and our spiritual journey to the birthplace of Jesus, the Savior of the world. It is fitting, then, that we read an ancient song. It became a song of ascents -- a song sung by people making their spiritual pilgrimage as they traveled upward, ascending to the city of Jerusalem.



Bible Reading

I lift my eyes to the hills from where help shall come to me. My strength comes from the Lord, who made heaven and earth. He will not let you slip or stumble. Your Guardian God who watches over you will not slumber. Indeed, he who watches over Israel will neither nap, doze nor sleep, God's your Guardian, right at your side to protect you, shielding you. The sun will not harm you by day, not the moon by night. God guards you from every evil, he will watch over your life. He guards you when you come in and when you go out both now and forevermore.

(NIV, WYC, MSG)

Sermon He Comes – To Bring Peace

For believers, life is a spiritual journey. Each of our current journeys may vary --

What are we facing on life's journey?

we may see our current place on our journey as simply moving through Advent to the manger, our journey toward God, -- or it may be much more specific. You might be on a journey to a career, to a relationship or an improved relationship, an addition of a good habit, an elimination of a bad one, a change in priorities, a new goal, an old goal revisited [pat belly I revisit one almost every day] – the current phase of our journey may take many different shapes and cause us to face many varied circumstances.

Differing translations start the Psalm that Sara just read for us in two possible ways. For some, the Psalmist looks up and knows that the hills are filled with dangerous valleys, and peoples and that the trip cannot be done alone, and so the song begins with a desperate question --- “Who can help me on my journey?” But the answer comes quickly from another voice -- calm and confident.

For others, such as the one read today, the question may be implied but is not stated. Instead, it starts with the answer – people are on a spiritual quest through a physical pilgrimage to Jerusalem. So as the draw near, the person looks up to

the hills of Jerusalem, the home city, the Temple, the place where God resides...and the Psalm begins – I lift my eyes to the hills where my help comes from – the one who created everything and continues to be active in his creation. And both versions of translating the Psalm are now on the same page.

He certainly has the power and desire to strengthen you and steady your God-directed journey and watch over your way just as he

**God will help, steady you,
and watch with love as you go**

watches over his people. Then the song closes with a blessing over the trekker -- He will lovingly watch over your comings and goings now and forevermore. This Psalm, like Psalm 23, is very individual, personal, and expresses an intimate relationship that we have with our Lord, and the bottom line is – whatever we find on our journey, may it always be toward God and his plans for our life.

What the hills represent for the individual in Psalm 121, the mountains represent the same for the collective people of the world in Isaiah 2 when he wrote:

In the last days the mountain of the Lord's temple will be established as the highest of the mountains; it will be exalted above the hills, and all nations will stream to it.

Isaiah 2:2

The prophet says that in future days, the center of worship for God will be elevated -- not in the sense of the highest altitude, although Jerusalem is higher than anything immediately around it. Not the altitude like a plane taking off, but as the most important focal point that capture's the attention of the whole world. It is where God is. In this season, the angels tell us that the manger is the Temple, that is where God is for us this season -- the center symbol of God's presence; and all the nations will beat a path to his life and his ways, the ways of Christ.

As we heard earlier, Jesus did not come to inspire days of selfish greed, personal comfort, or superficial joys. We mustn't move away from following the magi to the manger and giving gifts to express love for God and others and exchange it for material selfishness. For Jesus came to selfless-ly save us from sin and to bring us home to God. Many may not even realize it, but somewhere deep down their spirits, they bleat daily for their shepherd. Someday people will realize it and say, as it was written in Isaiah:

“Come, let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the temple of the God of Jacob. He will teach us his ways, so that we may walk in his paths.”

Isaiah 2:3a Isaiah 2:2

No one would ever find their way if God didn't come and show us the way back to the hills, the mountains of home, to himself; if he didn't come in Jesus to lead us.

He came to correct our errant ways (Isaiah 1:27) and he will not simply give us *whatever we want* because we are his children. We all know what children become when they get that kind of response from parents, don't we? Isaiah says he will judge fairly the disputes between many peoples.

The law will go out from Zion, the word of the Lord from Jerusalem. **He will judge between the nations and will [fairly] settle disputes for many peoples.**
Isaiah 2:3b-4a (emphasis added)

Sometimes that means blessing us, defending our causes for right. Sometimes that means disciplining us and allowing us to experience consequences for our bad choices when our cause gets off course. Both of those are acts of love.

Just as a parent will sometimes lavish gifts and praise to encourage and bless their children with their love. A parent will also lavish unpleasant discipline upon their children or allow them to suffer the consequences of their actions as a maturing corrective to guide their children to responsible adulthood. Both are acts of great love.

When we find ourselves receiving the consequences of discipline, he also reminds us that our failures are not final. His love endures, and we are restored and can get up and move on when we ask for his forgiveness and repent and learn our lessons.

When people begin to realize that God is not biased nor corrupt and he will give be fair for whoever is involved in a dispute, then we will begin to invite each other to mutually agree to go to God to seek his wisdom and ways and allow his loving wisdom to settle our disputes. We do this because we have come to realize that our corporate journey will be blessed by submitting to God's wisdom, who is making us all one new creation -- *together*.

In a world that is increasingly polarized on just about any label or idea that you can imagine, Isaiah envisions and invites us to imagine a world where boundaries have been erased and all become one by inviting them into God's presence.

Not all may choose to come, but all are welcome, regardless of the differences they may have had before. Paul sees this happening, at least in principle, if not in practice; when he says that in Christ there were no longer distinctions between male and female, Jew and Greek, slave and free (Galatians 3:28) or anything we

name that separates us today... but all are one in Christ, and the only thing that matters is that in the end “every knee shall bow and every tongue confess” that Christ is Lord. (Philippians 2:10) In the meantime, we should be living as if ALL – ALL – ALL -- have a legitimate and honored place in God’s kingdom.

They will beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks. Nation will not take up sword against nation, nor will they train for war anymore. Isaiah 2:4b

So convinced of this unity under God’s rule, Isaiah says that soldiers will be obsolete, and weapons will be converted to tools of cultivation. We can have twice the many sod farms 😊 or whatever else we are doing!

That is hard to envision in a modern world that always seems to be at war. But Isaiah wasn’t living in a golden age of peace. They had imminent threats of being overrun by much more powerful enemies. Nevertheless, he envisions and calls on the people to work toward a day when world peace would be a reality.

Micah adds to Isaiah’s words that “they shall all sit under their own vines and under their own fig trees, and no one shall make them afraid.” (Micah 4:3-5) The implication is clear: When there is a true sense of global security when *all* realize that we are in the same boat together under God’s judgment and grace – there are no longer any outsiders, and if we are all us – we aren’t going to damage to us! because we are all one.

The individual and the corporate go hand in hand. Someone said that if we cannot find peace within ourselves, how can we be instruments for God to create it in others? It is only when persons are at peace with God that there can be peace among the nations. So, the first step in getting ready for God’s global peace is by personalizing God’s peace in and around our own lives, and for some of our journeys, even that seems quite a challenge.

Come, descendants of Jacob, let us walk in the light of the Lord. Isaiah 2:5

Which brings us back to our dark world and the light of Advent. When Isaiah invites us all to walk in the light of the Lord, he was not referring only to the darkness created by the attack of foreign enemies. He was even more concerned with the deeper, internal darkness that threatens the peace of each human soul. It is hard to see those inner shadows that tempt us to personally destructive attitudes and actions -- attitudes and actions that sometimes bubble to the surface and launch out at others, and we don’t know what or why we did that! Why we said that! How

that could have happened. And it sacrifices not only the peace within ourselves but peace with others as well.

We need that source of the light that can shatter our soul's darkness and bring peace to

We need the Desire of nations

the world. The simple answer is found God's presence in Jesus who will become the desire of all nations – who binds all people into one heart and mind, the one who brought us to life and delivers us from earthly strife within and without.

And we know that in our heads – because we lit a candle! The candle of

We need the reality behind the ritual

peace. and we read a Scripture, we said a prayer, and we sang a hymn. And yet, for many, the light we know in our head eludes our hearts and souls. We need more than a flame and word, as good and as important as they are – we need to experience the reality behind the ritual. It begins when we persistently pursue the invitation to walk daily in the light of what Christ has done for us.

Then, suddenly, or gradually, through a conversation, a friend, a scripture, a feeling, or even an inner sense... something reaches into the depths of

We need inner peace that overflows to fill our world

our soul -- warmth and light is beginning to be felt, and we discover that our deepest Desire does visit us and bind us together, unifying and organizing the chaos of our conflicted lives, and like ripples in a pond, the peace within begins to spread to those around us to an ever broader world until all the earth will know, and come to his holy mountain -- to his holy manger.

This Advent season, my hope for me and for you is that Christ will somehow awaken even more within us, and we will experience Christ in deeper and brighter ways than we have experienced before; dissipating more of the darkness in our life -- that the coming peace of His light will no longer feel like a matter of IF he comes, but it will be a matter of expectancy to WHEN he comes and how fully he will come to our lives.

When considering what is your journey, whatever specific shape and focus it may currently demand of you, may it include within it -- the purpose of connecting your life with God's vision of a calm peace that you can experience in your personal life by confidently trusting in God -- (a la the Psalmist) -- but also for overflowing with God's peace to others -- to those we know, and then beyond that -- and even to the whole of creation – (a la the call of Isaiah).

Communion

For we who see Christmas as spiritual and divine, as a sign of God and that he has promised -- through Jesus -- at near the other end of his human life (not his birth but just before his death) -- in an upper room -- he promised to those who believe in him -- his ongoing presence and peace. His presence, his body, his blood, his life is in this communion meal. For those who desire to trust that God's peace is always coming to us, and desire to overflow with that peace toward others -- feel free to participate.

Music Let's prepare our hearts by reminding ourselves that he is revealed and comes to us, walks with us step by step on our life's journey, and fills the cups of our lives with his presence and grace. Let's sing.

Emmanuel, Emmanuel

Words and Music: Bob McGee, © 1976 CA Music

Emmanuel, Emmanuel, his name is called Emmanuel,
God with us, revealed in us, his name is called Emmanuel.

Repeat

Confession Let's continue to prepare through a time of confession. Merciful God, we are conditioned to measure truth by physical proof and evidence, by the testimony of witnesses and the testing of our knowledge. In the birth of Jesus Christ, you gave us evidence of your supreme love for us, yet we still sometimes struggle to accept it. We ignore your still, small voice. We dismiss your action in our lives as -- coincidence. We take credit for our blessings rather than receiving them gratefully from your hand. We demand signs of your presence yet are so distracted by the pace of our lives that we never notice that you have, indeed, answered our prayer and plastered evidence of yourself all around us. Forgive our short attention spans, our insatiable desire for the new and glittery and our disdain for the richness of our heritage. Grant us the grace to be still, to listen and to respond to the leading of your Spirit,

Assurance who tells us that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners like us, and in him, we are forgiven.

Thanksgiving (Bold parts of the Thanksgiving are said with the congregation)

So, The Lord be with you. **And also with you.**

Lift up your hearts. **We lift them up to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

It is right, and a good and joyful thing, always and everywhere to give thanks to you, Father Almighty creator of heaven and earth. You formed us in your image and breathed into us the breath of life. When we turned away, and our love failed, your love remained steadfast. You delivered us from captivity, made covenant to be our sovereign God, and spoke to us through your prophets, who looked for that day when justice shall roll down like waters and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream, when nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war anymore. And so, with your people on earth and all the company of heaven, we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might, heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.

Holy are you, and blessed is your Son Jesus Christ, whom you sent in the fullness of time to be a light to the nations. You scatter the proud in the imagination of their hearts and have mercy on those who fear you from generation to generation. You put down the mighty from their thrones and exalt those of low degree. You fill the hungry with good things, and the rich you send empty away. Your own Son came among us as a servant to be Emmanuel, your presence with us. He humbled himself in obedience to your will and freely accepted death on a cross. By the baptism of his suffering, death, and resurrection you gave birth to your Church, delivered us from slavery to sin and death, and made with us a new covenant by water and the Spirit.

And so, in remembrance of these your mighty acts in Jesus Christ, we offer ourselves in praise and thanksgiving as a holy and living sacrifice, in union with Christ's offering for us, as we proclaim the mystery of faith.

Christ has died; Christ is risen; Christ will come again.

Pour out your Holy Spirit on us gathered here, and on these gifts of bread and cup. Make them be for us the body and blood of Christ, that we may be for the world the body of Christ, redeemed by his blood. By your Spirit make us one with Christ, one with each other, and one in ministry to all the world, until Christ comes in final victory, and we feast at his heavenly banquet. Through your Son Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit in your holy Church, all honor and glory is yours, almighty Father, now and forever. **Amen.**

Bread and Cup

On the night in which he gave himself up for us, he took bread, gave thanks to you, broke the bread, gave it to his disciples, and said: "Take, eat; this is my body which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me." [Take and eat...]

When the supper was over, he took the cup, gave thanks to you, gave it to his disciples, and said: "Drink from this, all of you; this is my blood of the new covenant, poured out for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me." [Take and drink...]



Prayer Let's pray. Dear Light of the World, some of us sense no darkness of the soul, already enlivened and enlightened by your Spirit in deep measure -- we just pray you do so more and more. We can never finish plummeting the depths of peace that we may find in Christ Jesus. Continue to work in us -- that we may be quick to accept and respond to your discipline as our loving Father, that we may find in our world no "thems", but only "us-es", and that we may always be re-tooling our lives as instruments of your peace. We pray in the name of the Prince of Peace. Amen.

Music Let's stand as comfortable and sing of our hope to do our part in fulfilling God's purposes for peace in his world.

Let There Be Peace

Words and Music: Sy Miller and Jill Jackson,
harm. by Charles H Webb, 1987 © 1955, 1983 Jan-Lee Music

Let there be peace on earth, and let it begin with me;
let there be peace on earth, the peace that was meant to be.

With God our creator, children all are we.

Let us walk with each other in perfect harmony.

Let peace begin with me; let this be the moment now.

With every step I take, let this be my solemn vow:

to take each moment and live each moment in peace eternally.

Let there be peace on earth, and let it begin with me.

Blessing Now as we go, know that the Father will watch over and guard you in all your comings and goings, so that even now we can experience his peace in our lives and be his peacekeepers and peacemakers wherever we journey in his world and toward his holy mountain. Amen.

Music Lyrics copyright license: CCLI # 2561297