

WELCOME TO...
The Presbyterian Church of
Saint David
December 06, 2015

WHAT DOES PEACE LOOK LIKE?

Call to worship: *The coming of our Lord is near, and we wait in joyful expectation, Draw close, Lord Jesus Christ, shed your light on all that is filled with darkness. The coming of our Lord is near, and we wait with hope filled hearts, Draw close, God's beloved son, teach us the wonder of your all-embracing love. The coming of our Lord is near, And we wait attentive to the signs of his coming, Draw close, Lord Jesus Christ, God beyond imagining draw close* Amen



Hymn: The Love of God comes close (vs. 1-3) **474**



Prayer: *Guide us through this season with quiet, glad anticipation. Help us to pay attention to the poor and needy, and to the lonely among us. Give us a spirit of reflection, patience with each other, and hearts brimming with thanks. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.*

Hymn: The Love of God comes close (vs. 4-5) **474**

A call to Repentance: *As streets fill with shoppers bright lights and tempting offers Christmas songs and children's laughter... You lead us along a different path to a desert river and a Prophetic voice a call to repentance, a call to service, a call to immerse ourselves in living water that will never run dry. A call to prepare a way in our own lives For the Saviour of the world to enter in. To know the touch of tender mercy And rest in your forgiving love. For your faithful prophets and your Living Word... we give you thanks. Amen*

Scripture Luke 1:68-79 *Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, for he has looked favourably on his people and redeemed them. He has raised up a mighty saviour 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.*

Hymn: O God, defender of the poor (vs. 1-3) **3**

"Peace. We want peace. But we know so little peace in our world, in our community, in our lives.

So, what do we do with this dissonance? How do we resolve it? One response is to say that we are not peaceable people, that we do not really care enough about peace to make it happen. This would be the problem. It's as if we have not figured out a way to construct peace or make it a reality.

But this is not quite right. Because peace is not something we can create or invent. And to go more deeply into all of this, we don't always really know what peace is, do we? Some people sentimentalize peace. Peace is like a warm blanket or a hot bath or a sedative. Some people compartmentalize peace. I think of the homes in Latin America, in neighborhoods I have walked through, the walls lined with cut glass bottles, the jagged edges exposed, to separate those inside from those outside, to keep the peace.

Could we have peace if we just built a gigantic wall? In the land where the prince of peace was born, his ancestors on both sides have little desire for peace, although the multitudes of Palestinians and Israelis want peace. Could we have peace if we just separated the people we like from the people we don't like? Is that peace? What if peace turns out something completely different?"

THANKSGIVING

We bless you, our Lord God, that you have come and have redeemed your people, raising up for us a strong saviour from the family of your servant David, as you promised through your prophets long ago.

You have rescued us from the grip of our enemy; you have enabled us to serve you without fear, in holiness and righteousness before you all our days. **We thank you that you have given to us, your people, the knowledge of salvation through the forgiveness of our sins; and that by your tender mercy the Sun has risen into heaven to shine on all who live in darkness and in the shadow of death, and to guide our feet into the way of peace. Amen.**

Hymn: O God, defender of the poor (vs. 4-6)

3

Martin Luther King Jr. Nobel Peace Prize acceptance speech

We will not build a peaceful world by following a negative path. It is not enough to say "We must not wage war." It is necessary to love peace and sacrifice for it. We must concentrate not merely on the negative expulsion of war, but on the positive affirmation of peace. There is a fascinating little story that is preserved for us in Greek literature about Ulysses and the Sirens. The Sirens had the ability to sing so sweetly that sailors could not resist steering toward their island. Many ships were lured upon the rocks, and men forgot home, duty, and honor as they flung themselves into the sea to be embraced by arms that drew them down to death. Ulysses, determined not to be lured by the Sirens, first decided to tie himself tightly to the mast of his boat, and his crew stuffed their ears with wax. But finally he and his crew learned a better way to save themselves: they took on board the beautiful singer Orpheus whose melodies were sweeter than the music of the Sirens. When Orpheus sang, who bothered to listen to the Sirens?

So we must fix our vision not merely on the negative expulsion of war, but upon the positive affirmation of peace. We must see that peace represents a sweeter music, a cosmic melody that is far superior to the discords of war. Somehow we must transform the dynamics of the world power struggle from the negative nuclear arms race which no one can win to a positive contest to harness man's creative genius for the purpose of making peace and prosperity a reality for all of the nations of the world. In short, we must shift the arms race into a "peace race". If we have the will and determination to mount such a peace offensive, we will unlock hitherto tightly sealed doors of hope and transform our imminent cosmic elegy into a psalm of creative fulfillment.

*Welcome to the table of the Lord. Those who wish to serve him must first be served by him, those who want to follow him must first be fed by him, those who would wash his feet must first be cleansed by him. For this is the table where God intends us to be nourished. **This is a time to be restored and renewed and find a peace that passes all understanding.***

Hymn: Put peace into each other's hands (1,3,4)

560

Great Prayer of Thanksgiving: *The Lord is here. God's spirit is with us. Lift up your hearts. We lift them to the Lord. Let us give thanks to the Lord our God. It is right to give thanks and praise. God of the blessed life...* (continue in prayer)

Celebrating the Sacrament

Prayer after Communion *Lord, you have welcomed us,
Healed us, restored us and given us peace, fed us and empowered us.*

Send us out to live and work to your glory.

Send us out to reveal your presence.

Send us out to declare your love.

Send us out to proclaim your peace.

This day and always. Amen.

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord

In the name of Christ. Amen.

Hymn: Put peace into each other's hands (2,5)

560

Sending: *May God, who has begun a good work within you, continue that work until the day when Christ Jesus returns. May your love overflow more and more; may you continue to grow in knowledge and understanding, so that you can clearly discern what really matters, and so that you may stand pure and blameless before God on the day of Christ's return.*

The God who calls us is faithful, and will do this. We go in peace to love and serve the Lord.