

# 2 SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT: PEACE December 10, 2023

## LITANY OF THE ADVENT CANDLE

One: Paul wrote to the Philippians that the peace of God surpasses all understanding.

**All: So, we gather around this Advent wreath—humbly, vulnerably, and guided by a longing older than reason.**

One: Maya reminded us that peace is always louder, louder than the explosion of bombs and the sounds of violence.

**All: And so, we call upon the triumphant symphony of peace—the choirs of angels and saints, the laughter of**

**children with their elders, the sobs of loved ones reuniting in safety, and the breaking of bread at a Passover meal.**

One: Let us speak into being a peace that is as loud as it is delicious—hard earned and satisfying.

**All: Yes, peace has a way with the senses. It soothes like a hum and settles us back into our bodies.**

One: Back here.

**All: Back where the work and the pleasure of peace lives. Amen.**

## PRAYER OF CONFESSION

One: O Christ, the Great Practitioner of Peace, hear our plea. In the midst of self-hate, aggression, environmental collapse, and policies that obstruct the Good News,

**All: we seek accountability and reconciliation.**

One: Though the root of the word peace, pax, means a pact to end a war,

**All: we recommit ourselves not to a pact that can be broken, but to our eternal covenant with you, Our Creator.**

One: Confession by confession, conversation by conversation, communion by communion,

**All: may we learn the practices of peace and the language of restoration. Amen.**

## WORDS OF ASSURANCE

Peace teaches us how to create a container for justice, how to request and respect consent, how to work for something—not just against something else. Gracious God, you show us how peace is not imprisoned by an unknown perfect future, but how peace is a practice we can partake in each day. Grant us the wisdom and courage that peace requires, for us to build the kin-dom of God moment by moment, choice by choice, alone and together. Amen.

## INVITATION TO THE OFFERING

We exist in the paradox of the “already but not yet,” of the Gospel. The prophesy of peace can be felt right now and yet its full expression in our world has certainly not yet come. May the offerings of this community be blessed in the support they provide today and the goodness that continues to unfold tomorrow. May these gifts be lifted up in honor of our covenant with you, O God, to make a just world for all. Amen.

## PRAYER OF DEDICATION

**As we prepare for the coming of the Prince of Peace, may we call upon the strength of his ancestors to meet our own struggles with fierce compassion. Cultivate in us the courage of Shiphrah and Puah, who refused to participate in genocide and midwived justice into life. May we have the leadership of Miriam, who delivered her people from slavery and taught them the song of freedom. Grant us the wit and wisdom of Rahab, who navigated the violence around her and rebuilt a life for her family amongst the rubble. Bless us with the grace upon grace we need to hold and channel such peace, O God, knowing that in you we have all we need. Amen.**

*These worship resources were written by the Rev. Elyse Berry, who serves as the Associate for Advocacy and Leadership Development for the Council for Health and Human Service Ministries (CHHSM) of the United Church of Christ.*