

Offering Prayer: God, our Peace and our Promise, receive our gifts as seeds of gratitude for your gift to us in Christ Jesus. Bless these seeds with growth so that peace will take root in people who face conflict and danger, and in places seeking to establish peace in the face of violence. Be their peace and their promise, through Christ our Lord.

Communion, The Lord's Prayer

Hymn: 44 It Came Upon a Midnight Clear

To Depart in Faith

Commissioning and Benediction

The word we have been given this day is *peace*.
May we carry peace on our journey throughout this week, the *peace* we have encountered and experienced in this place.
May we offer the vision of *peace* to all we meet.
May we share the blessing that we have received, this day and always. Amen.

Closing VU 43 refrain **Go tell it on the mountain, over the hills and everywhere. Go tell it on the mountain that Jesus Christ is born!**

Scripture readings for December 14 2025

Isaiah 35:1-10 Psalm 146 James 5:7-10 Matthew 11:2-11

Meridian Pastoral Charge

December 7, 2025 Advent 2

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Welcome and Announcements.

Acknowledgement

Holy One, Child of Life, Great Spirit, we meet you in the company of ancestors and the presence of people praying throughout our country, connected by a longing for peace and healing.

Find our hearts open and ready for reconciliation as we face the injustices of the past and long for the joy of a future of peace and healing.

Introit VU 6 v. 2 **A candle is burning a candle of peace, a candle to signal that conflict must cease: for Jesus is coming to show us the way; a message of peace humbly laid in the hay.**

WE GATHER TO WORSHIP GOD

Call to Worship

We are called into worship and fellowship by the words of John the Baptist:

Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.

We bring our wishes for the world and its people:

Every valley shall be filled, and every mountain and hill shall be made low, and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough ways made smooth; and all flesh shall encounter the salvation of God.

HYMN: 2 Come Thou Long Expected Jesus

Advent Candle

Second Candle: Justice and the End of Oppression

One blue/purple candle is lit.

In the name of the One who came to bring justice, we gather around the Advent wreath.

The prophet Isaiah announces, “Here is my servant, whom I uphold, my chosen, in whom my soul delights; I have put my spirit upon him; he will bring forth justice to the nations” (Isaiah 42:1).

A tiny babe, a child of wisdom, an adult with courage, Jesus lived the way of justice. He committed to a ministry of ending oppression.

Jesus the Christ brought hope for troubled folk.

“What does the Lord require of you but to do justice and to love kindness and to walk* humbly with your God?” (Micah 6:8).

We too travel the paths of justice, kindness, and humility, knowing that these are the footprints** of the merciful Christ.

This Advent season we commit ourselves to Isaiah’s instruction:

“Learn to do good; seek justice; rescue the oppressed; defend the orphan; plead for the widow” (Isaiah 1:17).

We light the second Advent candle committing ourselves to the way of justice and overcoming oppression. We place on the communion table these scales, reminding ourselves of the scales of justice.

The second candle is lit

Response: Peace is a ribbon that circles the earth, giving a promise of safety and worth. When God is a child there’s joy in our song. The last shall be first and the weak shall be strong, and none shall be afraid! VU 7v.2

Prayer of Approach

Gentle Creator, who travels beside us and dwells among us, we gather in this community to feel your embrace. We are waiting in joyful anticipation for the arrival of your son, God- Made-Flesh. Ready our hearts for the hope, the peace, the joy, and the love that arrives with Jesus. Open our senses to your messages today, to feel your grace weaving between us and drawing us closer to you and to each other.

HYMN: 5 All the Earth is Waiting

Prayer for Understanding

God of the journey, we have begun to make our way to Bethlehem. We stumble on rocks and pull out a well-worn map, wondering if we are on the right path.

Here in the wilderness, may these words from scripture guide our path.

May they offer the peace of a deep and sacred breath, that we might discover a clear and evident way ahead, the one that leads to a humble stable, the one that reveals Emmanuel, God-with-Us. Amen.

First Scripture Isaiah 11:1-10

This is the story of God’s people. **All: Thanks be to God.**

Responsive Reading Psalm 72 VU 790

Gospel Matthew 3:1-12

This is the story of Jesus. **All: Thanks be to God.**

To Respond to the Word of God

Reflection

HYMN: 20 On Jordan’s Bank

Minute for Mission, Prayers of the People

Offering Invitation: This Sunday, we celebrate the Advent of Peace, born for us in Jesus Christ. Think of your gifts as seeds of that peace which we can plant in the world God loves for Christ’s sake.

Offertory Hymn: VU 64v3 How silently, how silently the wondrous gift is given! So God imparts to human hearts the blessed gift of heaven. No ear may hear his coming; but in this world of sin, where meek souls will receive him, still the dear Christ enters in.