Liturgy for December 20, 2020
Fourth Sunday of Advent

“I believe in the light: illuminating peace”

Prelude

Welcome

The Call
The “great light” prophesied by Isaiah in today’s text is echoed in the first strains of John’s Gospel of good news: the light that brings peace, that saves the people from all that would extinguish it, has been there from the beginning. The Word is made flesh and dwells among us. This reign is now... will we believe it? Will we continue to put flesh on it, embodying the peace meant for all humanity?

“I Believe”
KUCC Virtual Choir

Gathering Prayer

Holy One,
we thank you for the glimpses we catch
of your gift of peace on earth.
Even in the midst of fear,
of challenge, of struggle–
even when we aren’t sure that
goodwill among us can be found,
ignite the flame of peace within us,
... that we might glow with its brilliance from the inside out.
Help us face the uncertainty and pain of life
and embrace the assurance that light is already here, and always coming.
Amen.

Lighting of the Advent Candle of Peace

Children’s Time with Ms. Jill

Scripture Reading
Isaiah 9:2-6a (The Voice)
The people who had been living in darkness have seen a great light.
The light of life has shined on those who dwelt in the shadowy darkness of death.
And You, God, will make it happen. You bolstered the nation, making it great again. You have saturated it with joy.
Everyone in it is full of delight in Your presence,
like the joy they experience at the harvest,
like the thrill of dividing up the spoils of war.
For as You did back in the day when Midian oppressed us,
You will shatter the yoke that burdens them,
You will lift the load that weighs them down,
You will break the rod of their oppressor.

It’s true. All the fabric of war will go up in flames:
the troops 'heavy boots that stamped us down and their blood-soaked garb
Will all be burned beyond recognition or use.
There will be a new time, a fresh start.
Hope of all hopes, dream of our dreams,
a child is born, sweet-breathed; a son is given to us: a living gift.

Gathering Song

“O Come, O Come, Emmanuel” vv. 1, 6 & 7

Scripture Reading

Isaiah 9:6-7 (The Voice)
Hope of all hopes, dream of our dreams,
a child is born, sweet-breathed; a son is given to us: a living gift.
And even now, with tiny features and dewy hair, he is great.
The power of leadership, and the weight of authority, will rest on his shoulders.

His name? His name we’ll know in many ways—
He will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God,
Dear Father everlasting, ever-present never-failing,
Master of Wholeness, Prince of Peace.
His leadership will bring such prosperity as you’ve never seen before—
sustainable peace for all time.
This child: God’s promise to David—a throne forever, among us,
to restore sound leadership that cannot be perverted or shaken.
He will ensure justice without fail and absolute equity. Always.
The intense passion of the Eternal, Commander of heavenly armies,
will carry this to completion.

Music for Reflection

Message

“The Peace Within”

Prayers of the People/Lord’s Prayer
Our Father who art in Heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kindom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in Heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil, for thine is the kindom, and the power and the glory forever. Amen.

Song of Response

“Stillness” Mark Miller

Thanksgiving to God

Breaths of God
Blessing and Commissioning

We wait for justice
but we do not wait to work for change;

We wait for restored health
but we do not wait to work to heal;

We wait for wholeness
but we do not wait to work at binding brokenness;

We wait for peace
but we do not wait to work to eliminate hatred.

Like bells ringing out the news
that the light has dawned and shines on all people,
fill the night left by sadness and anxiety with messages of peace.
Go into your lives humming the tunes that keep that peace alive in you
and that spur you on in your work of justice and reconciliation.
Raise your voices and repeat after me…
“do not be afraid!”
“do not be afraid!”
Amen!

Sending Forth Song

“Let There Be Peace on Earth”

Postlude

Sources:
O Come, O Come, Emmanuel

Isa. 11:1-12; Exod. 19-20:17

Based on ancient antiphons from Advent Vespers
Tr. John Mason Neale, 1851, and others, alt.
St. 3, 7, tr. by. Henry Howe Coffin, 1916, alt.

Unison

1 O come, O come, Emmanuel, and
2 O come, O Wisdom from on high, and
3 O come, O come, O A-donai, who
4 O come, O shoot of Jesse, free your
5 O come, O Key of Da-vid, come, and

ransom captive Is-rael. That mourns in lone-ly
or-dain all things far and nigh; To us the path of
came to all on Sinai high, And from its peak a
own from Sa-tan’s tyr-an-ny, From depths of hell your
o-pen wide your heav-en-ly home; Make safe the path to

exile here, un-till the Child of God ap-pear.
knowl-edge show, and help us in that way to go.
sin-gle law pro-claimed in maj-es-ty and awe.
peo-ple save, and give them vic-tory o’er the grave.
end-less day, to hell’s de-struc-tion close the way.

Refrain

Re-joice! Re-joice! Em-man-u-el shall come to you, O Is-ra-el!

6 O come, O Day-spring, come and cheer
our spir-its by your ad-vent here;
Love stir with-in the womb of night,
and death’s own shad-ows put to flight.
(Refrain)

7 O come, De-sire of Na-tions, bind
all peo-ple in one heart and mind;
Make en-vy, strife, and quar-rels cease;
fill the whole world with heav-en’s peace.
(Refrain)
Let There Be Peace on Earth

C    Am    Dm7    G7    C    F    C    Dm    G7

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

C    B7    Em    B7    G    G7
let there be peace on earth, the peace that was meant to be.

Am    Em    C7    F    G7    C

"With God our creator, children all are we.

Am7    D7    G    Am7    D7    G7
Let us walk with each other in perfect harmony.

C    Am    Dm7    G7    C    F    C    Dm    G7

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

C    B7    Em    B7    G
With every step I take, let this be my solemn vow:

C    C+    F    D7    Dm7
to take each moment and live each moment in peace eternally.

C    E7    F    C    F    G7    C
Let there be peace on earth, and let it begin with me.
Kirkwood United Church of Christ
Advent and Christmas Activities for 2020

This Advent and Christmas, we’ll fill the world with music and light and affirm and act on the reasons why we can still “believe, even when” we feel discouraged, anxious, sad, exhausted… Let us walk with hope toward love, joy and light.

All activities will be held on Zoom.

Sun Dec 20 9:30 am Worship: Advent Candle of Peace “I believe in the light: illuminating peace”

Thurs Dec 24 9:45 pm Gathering music 10:00 pm Candlelight Service of readings, prayer, beautiful music and communion “We believe, even now.”