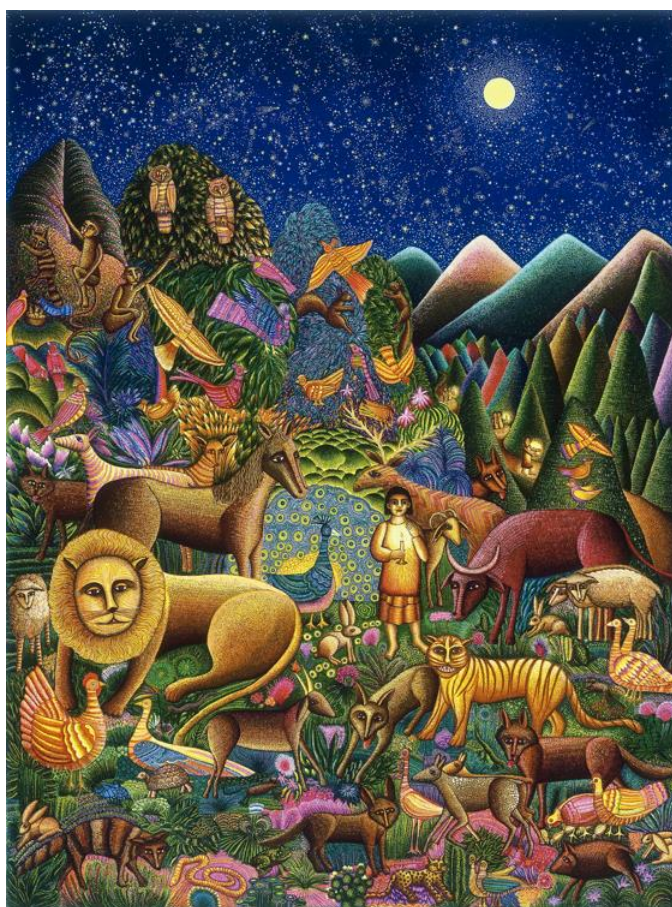


Living Out God's Call to Joy and to Justice

First Presbyterian Church, McAllen
Communion Worship Service
December 4, 2022 – 2nd Sunday of Advent



John August Swanson
Peaceable Kingdom

Opening Sentences

- Prepare the way of the Lord. God's kingdom has drawn near. Prepare the way of peace. God's salvation is at hand. Prepare the way of righteousness. God's Spirit moves among us. Prepare the way of the Lord.
- Blessed is the One who comes in the name of the Lord.

Call to Worship

Call and Response African Hymns

Prayer of the Day

O God of this and every time,
O God of Hope, O God of Peace,
stir up your power within us,
that in this time we may await with abundant expectation
the fulfillment of your eternal presence in creation,
for you live and reign among us,
Maker, Savior, and Giver of Life,
one God, now and forever. Amen.

Congregational Call to Confession Surely, It Is God Who Saves Me, refrain
*Surely, it is God who saves me; I will trust and not be afraid.
For the Lord is my stronghold and my sure defense,
and God will be my Savior.*

Prayer of Confession

John the Baptist's cry echoes through the ages:
Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near!
In humility and faith, let us offer to God our Prayer of Confession.

**Holy One,
Christ is coming; your kingdom is drawing near.
We cannot remain unchanged.
As we prepare the way for the Prince of Peace,
help us abandon wayward wanderings
and return to faithful paths.
We have neglected to plead for the poor;
we have neglected the needs of the afflicted.
We have denied our part in systems that oppress,
and turned a blind eye to injustice.**

**Renew our minds and transform our hearts,
that our lives might bear the fruit of
compassion and care.
Baptize us with your Spirit,
and claim us again for your holy work,
until you come in glory.
*A moment of silent prayer.***

Malcah Zeldis
The Peaceable Kingdom



Declaration of Forgiveness

Beloved, in this season of anticipation and preparation,
be filled with hope, believing in the power of the risen Christ
to bring new life to all creation.

Hear and trust the good news of the Gospel:

In Jesus Christ we are forgiven, healed and made whole.

Thanks be to God!

Lighting the Advent Wreath

The Rowland Family

*⁶ The wolf shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid,
and the calf and the lion and the fatling together, and a little child shall lead
them. ⁹ They shall not hurt or destroy in all my holy mountain; for the earth shall
be full of knowledge of God as the waters cover the sea. (Isaiah 11:6,9)*

A voice cried out in the wilderness:

“Prepare the way of the Lord.”

A choir sings in the silence, “Come, Emmanuel.”

Every valley shall be filled.

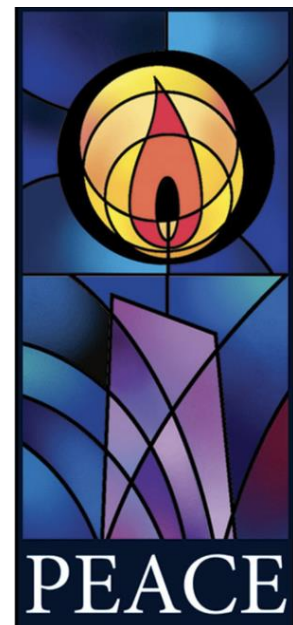
Every heart shall be made whole,
for peace is stronger than turmoil,
and love is louder than hate.

As we light our second Advent candle,

we pray for the holy peace of God.

Come now, O Child of Mary.

Come now, O Prince of Peace.



Hymn

While We Are Waiting, Come

GG #92

While we are waiting, come; while we are waiting, come.

Jesus our Lord, Emmanuel, while we are waiting, come.

With power and glory, come; with power and glory, come.

Jesus our Lord, Emmanuel, while we are waiting, come.

Come, Savior, quickly come; come, Savior, quickly come.

Jesus our Lord, Emmanuel, while we are waiting, come.

Passing the Peace of Christ

The peace of our Lord be with you all. / **And also with you.**

Prayer Requests / Life of the Church

Prayer for Illumination

Holy God, our hope and strength,
by the power of your Spirit prepare the way in our hearts
for the coming of your Word,
so that we may see the glorious signs of your promise fulfilled;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Time with the Younger Church

Waiting Is Not Easy!

Anthem

Gospel Reading Matthew 3: 1-12

In those days came John the Baptist,
preaching in the wilderness of Judea,
² “Repent, for the realm of heaven is at
hand.” ³ For this is the one spoken of by
the prophet Isaiah, “The voice of one
crying in the wilderness: Prepare the way
of the Lord, make the paths of the Lord straight.”



⁴ Now John wore a garment of camel’s hair, and a leather girdle around his
waist; and his food was locusts and wild honey. ⁵ Then Jerusalem and all Judea and
all the region around the Jordan went out to him, ⁶ and they were baptized by him
in the river Jordan, confessing their sins.

⁷ But seeing many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming for baptism, John
said to them, “You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to
come? ⁸ Bear fruit that befits repentance, ⁹ and do not presume to say to
yourselves, ‘We have Abraham as our father’; for I tell you, God is able from these
stones to raise up children to Abraham. ¹⁰ Even now the axe is laid to the root of
the trees; every tree therefore that does not bear good fruit is cut down and
thrown into the fire.

¹¹ “I baptize you with water for repentance, but the one who is coming after me
is mightier than I, whose sandals I am not worthy to carry; that one will baptize
you with the Holy Spirit and with fire. ¹² With winnowing fork in hand, that one will
clear the threshing floor and gather the wheat into the granary, but will burn the
chaff with unquenchable fire.”

The Word of the Lord / Thanks be to God.

Sermon

Affirmation of Faith

from Brief Statement of Faith

In life and in death we belong to God.

Through the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ,

the love of God,

and the communion of the Holy Spirit,

we trust in the one triune God, the Holy One of Israel,

whom alone we worship and serve.

With believers in every time and place,

we rejoice that nothing in life or in death

can separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Hymn

I Come with Joy

GG #515

I come with joy, a child of God, forgiven, loved, and free,
the life of Jesus to recall, in love laid down for me,
in love laid down for me.

I come with Christians far and near to find, as all are fed,
the new community of love in Christ's communion bread,
in Christ's communion bread.

As Christ breaks bread and bids us share, each proud division ends.
The love that made us, makes us one, and strangers now are friends,
and strangers now are friends.

The Spirit of the risen Christ, unseen, but ever near,
is in such friendship better known, alive among us here,
alive among us here.

Together met, together bound by all that God has done,
we'll go with joy, to give the world the love that makes us one,
the love that makes us one.

Invitation to the Offering

With gratitude for the abundant goodness of God, let us bring our tithes and offerings.

Offertory

Act of Dedication

Though I May Speak, v. 3

GG #693

*Come, Spirit, come, our hearts control; our spirits long to be made whole.
Let inward love guide every deed; by this we worship and are freed.*

Offertory Prayer

God of all righteousness,
receive these gifts of gratitude,
the offerings of our lives.
Purify them with your refining fire
so that they may serve your purposes
and shine with your glory;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

The Sacrament of Communion

Invitation to the Lord's Table

Jew or Gentile, slave or free,
wolf or lamb, child or viper,
poor or rich, red or blue –
all are welcome at this table.
We have brought the bread and cup,
but it is Christ who invites us to eat our fill;
Christ who encourages us to slake our thirst.
Come to the table.



Jan Wall
The Peaceable Kingdom

Prayer of Great Thanksgiving

The Lord be with you / **And also with you.**
Lift up your hearts. / **We lift them 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 praise to you,
Almighty God, creator of heaven and earth.
You call all people to follow your paths of justice and peace,
beating their swords into plowshares
and their spears into pruning hooks.
In the light of your holy Word, we look for the day
when nation shall not lift up sword against nation,
or learn war anymore.
Therefore, with the entire company of heaven,
and with your people on earth who live in this hope,
we praise you and join our voices to the never-ending 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 Jesus Christ your Son,
for he is Immanuel, God with us.
Fulfilling the expectations of the prophets
he healed the blind and the lame,
cleansed the lepers, opened the ears of the deaf,
raised the dead, and brought good news to the poor.
Through his life, death, and resurrection
you, O God, manifest your new covenant with humankind,
and through the church of his disciples,
you give testimony to the power of your salvation for the world.

Therefore, in remembrance of all your mighty acts in Jesus Christ, we give ourselves in praise and thanksgiving as a living sacrifice in union with Christ's offering for the world as we declare:

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

Send your Holy Spirit upon us, gathered here out of love for you, and on these gifts of bread and wine.

Let the bread we break

be a true fellowship in the body of Christ.

Let the cup we bless

be a true participation in the new covenant in his blood.

By your Spirit, empower us to be Christ for the world, serving in his name

until the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea.

Through your son Jesus Christ,

with the Holy Spirit in your holy church,

all glory and honor are yours, almighty God, now and forever.

Amen.

Let us pray as Christ has taught us, saying:

Our Father, who art in heaven ...

Sharing Bread and Cup

Words of Institution

The gifts of God for the people of God.

Whenever we share in this sacrament,

we celebrate Christ's death and resurrection

until he comes again.

The Sacrament is Carried Beyond the Sanctuary

We send you out with this bread and cup

to share the feast of the risen Lord.

We who are many are one body,

for we all partake of the one bread.

Prayer after Communion

God our hope, we give you thanks
that you have given us this foretaste
of the justice, righteousness, and peace
of your promised new creation.
Strengthen us with this heavenly food
as we seek to serve in your holy realm.
Lead us to live in joyful expectation
of the coming again in glory
of Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

Charge and Benediction

Congregational Response

Call and Response African Hymns

Postlude

Today's Worship Leaders:

Rev. Kathryn J. Escandell

Chris Leonard

Rowland Family

Beverly Avila

Robert Garza

Ale Pacheco

FPC Chancel Choir

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Edward Hicks
Peaceable Kingdom, detail