



We Have Come to Worship Him

Advent 2025 Devotional by Rev. Lauren Green Yates

Austin Global Methodist Church

Advent Memory Verse- “Where is the newborn king of the Jews? We saw his star as it rose, and we have come to worship him.” (Matthew 2:2 NLT)

Advent Week Two- Peace

December 7- Luke 2:8-20

This week, we will light the candle of peace. Peace may feel like an oxymoron at Christmas time. The biblical Christmas story reads anything BUT peaceful: angelic messages, an unwed teenage bride in a biological miracle, Joseph’s decision to stay engaged to Mary, no room in the inn, giving birth amongst animals, shepherds minding their own business awakened by an angelic choir, etc.

Christmas continues to feel chaotic in modern times: hundreds of holiday parties to attend, tons of food to bake, all those presents to wrap, in-laws, etc. But peace should be what characterizes the Christmas story. Not because of the circumstances, but because of what the birth of Jesus means for the world.

“Peace on earth. Goodwill from God to mankind.” That was the Good News given to lowly shepherds. The mundane turned into the miraculous. Their Prince of Peace had come! They saw the child for themselves and went around sharing with everyone they met that the Messiah had come.

When we lose sight of the Good News, Christmas turns into chaos. But when we focus on the Good News, Christmas gives us peace. If you are feeling less than peaceful this week, pause. Breathe. Say a prayer of thanks for the birth of the Messiah. Let the peace that Jesus came to bring wash over you. Peace on earth. Peace to you.

Daily Question: Do I feel the peace of Christ in my heart today?

Prayer: Dear Lord, help me to rest in the peace of the Good News of Jesus Christ. If I feel anxiety or fear rise within me, remind me that you came to bring peace on earth and peace to me. Help me be an instrument of peace to someone this week. In Jesus’ name I pray, Amen.

December 8- Isaiah 11:1-10

Anyone who truly knows me knows what my number one fear is. It’s snakes. Come to think of it I also don’t like the idea of meeting a lion or a wolf in the wilderness. The idea that one day, I



won't be afraid of these things in the new Heaven and the new Earth fills me with hope. I cannot wait to live in a world of perfect peace.

Sadly, we do not live in a peaceful world. Look at the news or social media and you will understand what Jesus meant when he said, "In this world you will have trouble." Yet Jesus came to bring us perfect peace.

When the Messiah first came, he made a way for all believers to experience spiritual peace. When he returns, believers will finally experience physical peace. We are grateful for the spiritual peace we can have now and simultaneously hope for peace in the world to come. The Root of Jesse, a special title given to the Messiah, will be our resting place. We will finally experience absolute peace in his presence.

As you inch closer to Christmas day, meditate on the peaceful future that is in store for you. Imagine a world with no danger, fear, politics, sin, sickness, harm, and death. See the lion lay down with the lamb. No matter what you are going through today, know that peace awaits you because Jesus was born and is coming again.

Daily Question: What fears am I struggling with?

Prayer: Dear Lord, I am grateful for the spiritual peace your birth brought. I await the day when you rule and reign in the new Heaven and new Earth and there is physical peace too. In the meantime, let your peace wash away my fears. I cast all my fears on you. In Jesus' name I pray, Amen.

December 9- Colossians 3:15-17

Being thankful and peaceful are connected virtues. The more grateful you are, the more peaceful you become. If you can look around your surroundings and still be grateful for all that you have, you will feel peace growing within you. It will begin to rule or prevail over your spirit. Remember, peace is not the absence of problems but the presence of Christ within you.

At Thanksgiving, we often go around the table and say what we are thankful for. We should probably be doing this at Christmas too or as often as we gather together with family and friends over a meal. The Christian life should be marked by gratefulness and peacefulness. It should rule over us.

Rather than dwell on the chaos of Christmas, rest in gratitude today. Offer up a prayer of thanks today and feel the peace of Christ come over you.

Daily Question: What are you thankful for today?



Prayer: Dear Lord, Thank you for all the many blessings in my life. Though life isn't always easy, I have so much to be grateful for. Thank you for the peace that I can have because Jesus came into this world to save me. Let your peace rule within me today. In Jesus' name I pray, Amen.

December 10- Matthew 5:9

In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus' most famous sermon, he is giving his followers the keys to following him. Just like Moses shared the Law of God on Mount Sinai, Jesus shows his people how to live out the Law in its fullness.

He taught his disciples how to give, pray, fast, love God, love their neighbors, and live as believers. Part of the Sermon on the Mount is called the "Beatitudes". It means "blessed or happy". Jesus was saying that day, "You will be blessed, you will be happy if you..."

One of the things Jesus says is, "Blessed are the peacemakers for they will be called the children of God." This may seem self-explanatory, but it is so deep. It was important enough for Jesus to say during this sermon so we need to pay attention.

There is a difference between being a peacemaker and a peacekeeper. Jesus did not say "peacekeepers" are blessed. He said "peacemakers" are blessed. Don't get the two confused.

Especially during the holiday season, we want to keep the peace. Don't talk about politics, feelings, childhood trauma, religion, or the color of your grandkid's hair at the dinner table. Don't ruffle any feathers. Don't make waves. Try to keep the peace. That may seem virtuous but that's not what Jesus has asked his followers to do.

To make peace means having difficult conversations that help heal and produce peace, not just maintain the image of it. This requires love and maturity. There may be things that need to be addressed within your family. The goal is that peace will be made from these conversations. If you need to have conversations this Christmas season to make peace, not just attempt to keep it, I pray that the Holy Spirit guides you and you will be blessed.

Daily Question: Are there some conversations I need to have with someone with the goal of making peace?

Prayer: Dear Lord, Help me be a peacemaker, not just a peacekeeper. Guide me in my conversations. Help me speak the truth in love. Let your peace be made within my family. In Jesus' name I pray, Amen.



December 11- Romans 12:17-21

Not everyone is going to like you. Merry Christmas! Sorry for that truth bomb but sometimes we need to realize that we may not be everyone's cup of eggnog. But we are called to live at peace with everyone, if it is possible.

The Apostle Paul, who had many enemies, understood this truth deeply. He encouraged the believers in Rome with this truth as well. He was teaching them Christian conflict resolution and it's important for modern believers to learn from his words today.

First, no payback games. If someone is rude to you, don't match their rudeness. Second, let people see you doing what is right, not what is wrong. Don't take revenge. In fact, bless your enemies. Or in modern words, "kill 'em with kindness". We will never overcome evil with evil. We must overcome evil with good as we seek to live in peace with all people.

This is a hard task, but we must do it. This is scripture. This Christmas, may the Lord see us being kind to people even when it seems like they don't deserve it. May he see us living with integrity. May he see us seeking to live in peace, even with those who seem not to like us.

Daily Question: How can you show kindness today with someone you disagree with?

Prayer: Dear Lord, Help me to show kindness even when it is difficult. I lift up the people who I may not get along with. Help me to live in peace with them as much as it is possible. In Jesus' name I pray, Amen.

December 12: Isaiah 66:12-14

As a little kid in Vacation Bible School, we used to sing a song called "Peace like a River." It went, "I've got peace like a river. I've got love like an ocean. I've got joy like a fountain. Down in my soul." It was fun to sing because there were hand motions. The idea was that God's peace should flow out of us like a river, our love should be deep as the ocean, and our joy should bubble up like a fountain.

There's something really peaceful about being next to a flowing river. It's a habit for wildlife, it nourishes the trees around the bank of the river, and the sound of gentle, rushing water is good for the soul.

That is the beautiful imagery God has for his people. He promises peace like a flowing river for them. He promises nurturing comfort. He promises a beautiful future. We wait for that day. May we rest and be comforted by God's promise of peace for us.

Daily Question: How have I experienced the peace of God in my life?



Prayer: Dear Lord, Let your peace flow over me like a river. Thank you for the promises of peace for my future. As I wait for your return, let me experience your peace in the waiting. In Jesus' name I pray, Amen.

December 13: John 14:25-27

The Holy Spirit is the amazing gift that Jesus gave his people when he ascended into heaven. The idea that the God of the Universe would put on flesh and come down as a baby, then die on the cross, and rise again for us is simply amazing. But he did not stop there. He gave us himself to dwell within us so that Emmanuel would always be with us.

Jesus promised that when he left, the Holy Spirit or the Advocate would come. He promised he would leave us his peace. This should banish every fear within us. His presence within us is our peace.

Meditate on the fact that the Advocate lives within you. Let that give you lasting peace. You are not alone. The peace he brings is different than the world's peace. That comes and goes. But the peace that comes from the indwelling of the Holy Spirit is everlasting. Rest in that today.

Daily Question: Am I thankful for the indwelling of the Holy Spirit within me?

Prayer: Dear Lord, Thank you for the gift of the Holy Spirit living within me. Help me to understand that his peace is everlasting. I will not look to the world for peace but to your Holy Spirit. In Jesus' name I pray, Amen.