

**General Topics :: Advent Week 4 (peace) - Saturday - Christmas Eve****Advent Week 4 (peace) - Saturday - Christmas Eve - posted by sermonindex (), on: 2016/12/24 8:39****Prayers****Thematic Prayer**

O Holy One,  
heavenly angels spoke to earthly shepherds  
and eternity entered time in the child of Bethlehem.  
Through the telling of the Christmas story,  
let our temporal lives be caught up in the eternal  
in that same child,  
that we might join shepherds and all the heavenly host  
in praising the coming of Jesus Christ, our Saviour. Amen.

or this

God of glory,  
your splendor shines from a manger in Bethlehem,  
where the Light of the world is humbly born  
into the darkness of human night.  
Open our eyes to Christ's presence in the shadows of our world,  
so that we, like him, may become beacons of your justice,  
and defenders of all for whom there is no room. Amen.

or this

Light of life, you came in flesh,  
born into human pain and joy,  
and gave us power to be your children.  
Grant us faith, O Christ, to see your presence among us,  
so that all of creation may sing new songs of gladness  
and walk in the way of peace. Amen.

or this

We bless you, Abba, Father,  
for you have visited your people  
in one like us in all things but sin,  
and in human fragility you have revealed  
the face of divinity.  
Gather into your arms  
all the peoples of the world,  
so that in your embrace  
we may find blessing, peace,  
and the fullness of our inheritance  
as your daughters and sons. Amen.

**Intercessory Prayer**

God of incarnation,  
your angel host announces  
that peace has been born among us,  
embodied in fragile flesh.

With confidence in the power of that miracle,  
we bring before you our prayers for the church and the world.

Prayers of the People, concluding with:

By your grace, transform our prayers from words to deeds,  
that we may live as a holy people  
in the dawn of your peace,  
redeemed from all that divides us. Amen.

Scripture Prayer  
Christ, our God,  
whom humble shepherds worshipped at a manger,  
you are holy and most high, merciful and mighty.  
Startle us to wakefulness,  
that we may rejoice in your new and glorious dawn,  
and, in your holy name,  
act to mend this suffering world. Amen.

or this

Tender and precious God,  
from ancient times  
the promise of your salvation  
has sustained your people. With Mary and Joseph,  
teach us to treasure in our hearts the birth of Jesus,  
and with shepherds and angels,  
lead us to praise his holy name. Amen.

Isaiah 9:2-7  
The people who walked in darkness  
have seen a great light;  
those who lived in a land of deep darknessâ€”  
on them light has shined.  
You have multiplied the nation,  
you have increased its joy;  
they rejoice before you  
as with joy at the harvest,  
as people exult when dividing plunder.  
For the yoke of their burden,  
and the bar across their shoulders,  
the rod of their oppressor,  
you have broken as on the day of Midian.  
For all the boots of the tramping warriors  
and all the garments rolled in blood  
shall be burned as fuel for the fire.  
For a child has been born for us,  
a son given to us;  
authority rests upon his shoulders;  
and he is named  
Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God,  
Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.  
His authority shall grow continually,  
and there shall be endless peace  
for the throne of David and his kingdom.  
He will establish and uphold it  
with justice and with righteousness  
from this time onward and forevermore.

The zeal of the Lord of hosts will do this.

#### Psalm 96

Praise to God Who Comes in Judgment

O sing to the Lord a new song;

sing to the Lord, all the earth.

Sing to the Lord, bless his name;

tell of his salvation from day to day.

Declare his glory among the nations,

his marvelous works among all the peoples.

For great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised;

he is to be revered above all gods.

For all the gods of the peoples are idols,

but the Lord made the heavens.

Honor and majesty are before him;

strength and beauty are in his sanctuary.

Ascribe to the Lord, O families of the peoples,

ascribe to the Lord glory and strength.

Ascribe to the Lord the glory due his name;

bring an offering, and come into his courts.

Worship the Lord in holy splendor;

tremble before him, all the earth.

Say among the nations, "The Lord is king!

The world is firmly established; it shall never be moved.

He will judge the peoples with equity."

Let the heavens be glad, and let the earth rejoice;

let the sea roar, and all that fills it;

let the field exult, and everything in it.

Then shall all the trees of the forest sing for joy

before the Lord; for he is coming,

for he is coming to judge the earth.

He will judge the world with righteousness,

and the peoples with his truth.

#### Titus 2:11-14

For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all, training us to renounce impiety and worldly passions, and in the present age to live lives that are self-controlled, upright, and godly, while we wait for the blessed hope and the manifestation of the glory of our great God and Saviour, Jesus Christ. He it is who gave himself for us that he might redeem us from all iniquity and purify for himself a people of his own who are zealous for good deeds.

Luke 2:1-14,

#### The Birth of Jesus

In those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be enrolled. This was the first enrollment, when Quirinius was governor of Syria. And all went to be enrolled, each to his own city. And Joseph also went up from Galilee, from the city of Nazareth, to Judea, to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and lineage of David, to be enrolled with Mary, his betrothed, who was with child. And while they were there, the time came for her to be delivered. And she gave birth to her first-born son and wrapped him in swaddling cloths, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.

#### The Shepherds and the Angels

In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid; for see, I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord. This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of clo

th and lying in a manger. And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying,

Glory to God in the highest heaven,  
and on earth peace among those whom he favors!

When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us. So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger. When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child; and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them. But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.