

Welcome, Introduction and Prayer

Welcome everyone! I am glad you are here and would like to give a special welcome to all who are visiting us for the first time. A big thank you to the girls of 4 Kerygma who gladly accepted our invitation to bless us this morning singing Christmas carols. My prayer is that God will pour out His blessings over us all. May we all experience His presence and be filled with His Peace. **Let us pray:** *Dear Heavenly Father we thank you for sending Jesus to our world and the real peace we can find in Him. We want to praise and worship you with all our hearts, souls and minds this morning. Please speak to us through each and every part of this service; the reading and preaching of your word, the poem and the songs. I offer you our lives as a sacrifice of worship to you. In Jesus' name I pray. Amen!*

Reading – Luke 2:8-20 (Joan Cherry)

The Birth of Jesus and the Shepherds

*8 And there were shepherds living out in the fields nearby, keeping watch over their flocks at night. 9 An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. 10 But the angel said to them, 'Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people. 11 Today in the town of David a Saviour has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord. 12 This will be a sign to you: you will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger.'*¹³ *Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God and saying, 14 'Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace to those on whom his favour rests.'* *15 When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, 'Let's go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has told us about.'* *16 So they hurried off and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby, who was lying in the manger. 17 When they had seen him, they spread the word concerning what had been told them about this child, 18 and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds said to them. 19 But Mary treasured up all these things and pondered them in her heart. 20 The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things they had heard and seen, which were just as they had been told.*

Preaching and Teaching

"God's Peace at Christmas" by Pr. Claudio Moises

Introduction

We see the lights all around and Jesus is the reason for the season! We've got here our advent candles. Light shines in the darkness and lies are replaced with truth. On our first Advent Sunday we lit the candle of hope. Jesus is the hope of the nations, He is our hope in times of trouble and He is our only hope. Then we lit the candle of Joy, Jesus is our joy; joy to the world! The joy of the Lord is our strength. Last week we lit the candle of love. God is love and His love is like a river. He lavished His love on us and we ought to love one another! Today we light the candle of peace. Jesus is our peace! ***"For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders.***

And he will be called Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Isaiah 9:6 And when Jesus was born on that first Christmas Eve the Bible tells us that a multitude of Angels declared God's Peace on Earth! He is our peace! The true peace the world desperately needs can only be found in Jesus. **"Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God and saying, 14 'Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace to those on whom his favour rests.'"** **Luke 2:13-14** When we think about God's peace at Christmas in a world like ours today, full of uncertainties and troubles, with the pandemic. Abuse of all sorts, conflicts and wars of all kinds, the questions that automatically comes to our minds are: Peace with whom? Which circumstances? What did it mean when the angels proclaimed **"peace of those on whom his favour rests"**? The Bible speaks about peace in at least 4 dimensions:

I – Peace with God

"Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ," Romans 5:1 Jesus justified and reconciled us with God through his sacrifice on the cross for our sins. We've been made righteous before God because of Jesus. Only through His grace we are saved and salvation is a gift From God to us. Jesus is our Peace! We are saved and justified by His grace alone.

II – Peace in our Relationships

"If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone." Romans 12:18 As a result of this grace and peace we have with God through Jesus' blood and sacrifice for us, we can also now walk in peace in our relationships forgiving, accepting and loving one another. It is only by God's act of grace by sending us Jesus and the forgiveness we've received that we can love and forgive others. Because of Jesus we can have peace in our relationships.

III – God's Kingdom of Peace

"For the kingdom of God is not a matter of eating and drinking, but of righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit," Romans 14:17 Shalom in Hebrew, it's not the absence of wars, but peace can be present in the middle of wars. God's Kingdom of peace is available for everyone who believes in Jesus and accepts His gift of salvation. Everyone and from everywhere! All tribes, languages and nations can come and become part in God's Kingdom by faith.

IV – An Inner and Intimate Peace

"And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. Philippians 4:7 In the New Testament the Shalom in Hebrew is translated as the word "Eirini" in Greek. Eirini is the word for peace in the New Testament and Shalom is the word in Hebrew in the Old Testament. The apostle Paul gives practical examples in his letter to the Philippians on how we can obtain this interior peace in our day to day lives.

We can have peace in all these four dimensions. When Jesus came to this world on that first Christmas Eve, God was reconciling His truth and justice with His mercy and peace! There is a messianic Psalm that says: **"Mercy and truth have met together; righteousness and peace have kissed each other". Psalm 85:10** The context of this verse can be read in a future tense, or something that had already happened and it's certain. It is a prophecy about Jesus coming into the world. A world of violence, abuse,

hostility and competition this is the way that the Bible teaches about real peace. Jesus is the true reason for the season and he came to bring real peace to this world and to each one of us. **Truth** is the transparency of the facts and the things as it is. We can see it and we can speak about it because it's clear. Truth is something that is evident and has been revealed. **Justice** in other hand is the right thing to do and what needs to be done when the truth is revealed. Justice is what is done in order to restore what has been lost. It is the law and it is the standard set by God. **Mercy** is the undeserved favour of God. It is the suspension of the law in order to preserve the peace and order. Mercy is when we don't apply the law because of the misery of the heart. **Peace** – just to exemplify it, let's imagine a body completely broken. This body is carrying a heavy weight and it can't even breathe and stand on its feet properly. It is bending, hiding, scared and oppressed. Then this weight is taken from it, and this body can breathe again. This body is at peace! This is how the Bible teaches about real peace! The good news is that Jesus Christ came into the world to bring peace to all of humanity. The underserved grace and peace of God meets with the truth of our wicked and broken hearts. How does this happen? There is a powerful story in the Bible that helps us to understand this peace. The woman that was caught in adultery we read in **John 8:1-18** she was caught in flagrant without defense, in the very act of adultery. And the Scribes, Pharisees and Teachers of Law brought her to Jesus and put her in the middle of the crowd. What she had done was now in the light of the whole city. It had been hidden but now it was revealed. The law needed to be applied to her. And the law would say: Stone her! Everyone had a stone in their hand, ready to throw at her. Everybody could see the misery of that woman's heart. Everybody could see the sin of that woman as the truth had been exposed. Jesus said: **'Let any one of you who is without sin be the first to throw a stone at her.'** **John 8:7** Then they all started to drop their stones and leave. The woman was left alone with Jesus. Now she just saw Jesus and not the multitude anymore. Jesus asked her: **"Woman, where are your accusers? Did no one condemn you?"** **She said, "No one, Lord."** **Jesus said to her, "Neither do I condemn you. Go and sin no more."** Go and don't sin again! Enjoy your new life. You may ask – What if she continued to do it again. How many times would Jesus forgive this woman? I believe that every time she'd come to Jesus, He would have forgiven her. Can you see the misery of your own heart? Jesus invites us to look into a mirror. We are all like this woman and the people ready to throw stones. **"Because of the Lord's great love we are not consumed, for his compassions never fail. 23 They are new every morning; great is your faithfulness. Lamentation 3:22-23** if we had been able to obey the law Jesus wouldn't have died on the cross. Mercy is the Old Testament's word for Grace in the New Testament. It is only by His grace we can experience real peace! If we all want to celebrate and have peace this Christmas we need to come to the light. We need to be honest and open about who we are. Our truth needs to be exposed. Just like that woman; we deserve to be judged, rejected and stoned. We need to face the truth and take responsibility. We need to see clearly of what we truly deserve. Without a profound experience of guilt we can't experience the real peace that Jesus offers us. **"What a wretched man I am! Who will rescue me from this body that is subject to death? Thanks be to God, who delivers me through Jesus Christ our Lord! Romans 7:24-25**

Conclusion

We can all experience God's peace in all 4 dimensions this Christmas. Jesus is our real peace! And He is God's real gift to us this Christmas. He has justified us by His grace and we can have peace with God. We can also have peace in our relationships

because of His blood that was shed for us. We can love and forgive others by dropping our stones. We can enjoy God's Mercy and Grace – His Shalom and Irene by being truthful to ourselves bringing to light our weaknesses and the misery of our hearts. In His Kingdom Jesus is the Prince of Peace! Let's enjoy inner peace by presenting our requests, anxieties and worries to God in prayer. Let's confess our sins and accept His forgiveness and grace. Let us celebrate Jesus, our peace

Response Prayer

Dear Heavenly Father,

Thank you for showing us the truth of the misery of our own hearts and our sins and what we deserve. Thank you also for your forgiveness and for embracing us with grace, through Jesus. May we be filled with your presence and be messengers of peace and reconciliation in our family and community, extending grace and forgiveness the same way you have forgiven us. Lord, fill our hearts with peace this Christmas, in Jesus' holy name, I pray. Amen.

Intercessory Prayer by Andrea Moises

Father God,

We thank you for your unfailing love and your blessings poured out into our lives throughout the year. We continue relying on your grace and mercy, and your hands of protection especially on the coming days when many of us are gathering with family members and beloved ones to celebrate Christmas. Would you please bring healing to those who are suffering right now, here in our community, in our city and everywhere else around the world. Help us to be messengers of true peace and hope, embracing others with compassion, accepting and giving grace, following Jesus' example.

In His name we pray,

Amen

Poem - "Peace" By Richard Tranter

*Jesus the Prince of Peace in all of our days,
Learn of his love and try not to stray.
Open your eyes be friendly and kind,
With peace in your heart the truth you will find.*

*Peace doesn't come easy at the end of the day,
So listen to Jesus He will show you the way.
Jesus is peace and wants you to know,
There's a place in his heart a place you can go.*

*With Jesus in your life and peace in your heart,
You'll be in the spirit a place you should start.
Jesus showed us His love and what it's worth,
To give us peace in our time on the earth.*

*First thing I learnt and I think is a must,
Worship in Jesus and to our God that we trust*

*Try to have Jesus and peace in your day,
He will dry all your tears and take them away.*

*I was going through life with my head in the sand,
Till a friend came along and put book in my hand.
Look at me now and what I can be,
I have peace in my heart and a new family.*

*Last line of this poem to show I'm alright,
Is I care for you all God bless and goodnight.*

Song 1 – Mary Did You Know? By Princess Atanda on the cello

<https://youtu.be/j0OAFk0W1FM> Click on the link or copy and paste to your browser in order to hear and follow the song on YouTube.

Song 2 – Silent Night by Saulo Moises

<https://youtu.be/hyY36DJmlcs> Click on the link or copy and paste to your browser in order to hear and follow the song on YouTube.

*Silent night, holy night
All is calm, all is bright
'Round yon virgin Mother and Child
Holy infant so tender and mild
Sleep in heavenly peace
Sleep in heavenly peace*

*Silent night, holy night!
Shepherds quake at the sight!
Glories stream from heaven afar;
Heavenly hosts sing Alleluia!
Christ the Saviour is born!
Christ the Saviour is born!*

*Silent night, holy night
Son of God, oh, love's pure light
Radiant beams from Thy holy face
With the dawn of redeeming grace
Jesus, Lord at Thy birth
Jesus, Lord at Thy birth*

Song 3 – Hark! The Herald Angels Sing by 4 Kerygma

<https://youtu.be/xqooC4ZG75Y> Click on the link or copy and paste to your browser in order to hear and follow the song on YouTube.

*Hark! the herald angels sing: "Glory to the newborn King!
Peace on earth and mercy mild God and sinners reconciled"
Joyful, all ye nations rise join the triumph of the skies
With angelic hosts proclaim: "Christ is born in Bethlehem"*

Hark! the herald angels sing: "Glory to the newborn King!"

*Christ by highest Heav'n adored Christ the everlasting Lord!
Late in time behold Him come offspring of a Virgin's womb
Veiled in flesh the Godhead see; Hail the incarnate Deity
Pleased as man with man to dwell Jesus, our Emmanuel
Hark! The herald angels sing: "Glory to the newborn King!"*

*Hail the Heav'n-born Prince of Peace! Hail the Son of Righteousness!
Light and life to all He brings Ris'n with healing in His wings
Mild He lays His glory by born that man no more may die
Born to raise the sons of earth born to give them second birth
Hark! the herald angels sing: "Glory to the newborn King!"*

Song 4 – Noel by 4 Kerygma

<https://youtu.be/jGg7KdN19rs> Click on the link or copy and paste to your browser in order to hear and follow the song on YouTube.

*Love incarnate, love divine
Star and angels gave the sign
Bow to babe on bended knee
The Saviour of humanity
Unto us a Child is born
He shall reign forevermore*

*Noel, Noel
Come and see what God has done
Noel, Noel
The story of amazing love!
The light of the world, given for us
Noel*

*Son of God and Son of man
There before the world began
Born to suffer, born to save
Born to raise us from the grave
Christ the everlasting Lord
He shall reign forevermore*

*Noel, Noel
Come and see what God has done
Noel, Noel
The story of amazing love!
The light of the world, given for us
Noel*

Song 5 – Oh Holy Night by 4 Kerygma

<https://youtu.be/iyjm6VpNaNA> Click on the link or copy and paste to your browser in order to hear and follow the song on YouTube.

*O holy night, the stars are brightly shining,
It is the night of the dear Saviour's birth;
Long lay the world in sin and error pining,
Till he appeared and the soul felt its worth.
A thrill of hope the weary world rejoices,
For yonder breaks a new and glorious morn;*

*Fall on your knees, Oh hear the angel voices!
O night divine! O night when Christ was born.
O night divine, o night, o night divine*

*Truly He taught us to love one another;
His law is Love and His gospel is Peace;
Chains shall he break, for the slave is our brother,
And in his name all oppression shall cease,
Sweet hymns of joy in grateful Chorus raise we;
Let all within us praise his Holy name!*

*Christ is the Lord,
O praise His name forever!
His power and glory, evermore proclaim!
His power and glory, evermore, evermore proclaim!*

Song 5 – “Little Drummer Boy” by 4 Kerygma

<https://youtu.be/6vMcz5lzPMQ> Click on the link or copy and paste to your browser in order to hear and follow the song on YouTube.

Come they told me pa rum pum pum pum
A new born king to see pa rum pum pum pum
Our finest gifts we bring pa rum pum pum pum
To lay before the king pa rum pum pum pum,

Rum pum pum pum, rum pum pum pum
So to honor him pa rum pum pum pum
When we come pum pum pum pum
Pa rum pum pum pum pum pum pum
Pa rum pum pum pum pum pum pum
Pa rum pum pum pum pum pum pum pa rum

Little baby pa rum pum pum pum
I am a poor boy too pa rum pum pum pum
I have no gift to bring pa rum pum pum pum
That's fit to give our king pa rum pum pum pum,
Rum pum pum pum, rum pum pum pum
Shall I play for you pa rum pum pum pum
Pa rum pum pum pum pum pum pum
Mary nodded pa rum pum pum pum
The ox and lamb kept time pa rum pum pum pum
I played my drum for him pa rum pum pum pum
I played my best for him pa rum pum pum pum,

Rum pum pum pum, rum pum pum pum
Then he smiled at me pa rum pum pum pum
Me and my drum

Come they told me pa rum pum pum pum
A new born king to see pa rum pum pum pum
Me and my drum me and my drum
Me and my drum me and my drum
Rum pum pum pum

Final Words and Apostolic Blessings

We are coming to the end of our service and we hope you enjoyed it. Christmas Day Service starts at 11am. Children are encouraged to bring their toys and gifts to play and show one another. Joan has some nativity costumes and we would like our children to participate in the service with a small play. We would love to see little Mary and Joseph, baby Jesus and the Angel Gabriel on Christmas day. Don't forget to sign up if you are planning to come. If you want to bring someone along with you please call or send an email so we can book a place.

Let me finish the service by praying an apostolic prayer over us all

May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love, mercy and peace of God, our father, the sweet presence and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with us all now and forevermore. Amen

See you all on Christmas Day!