

Midweek Advent 1

December 6, 2023

Look Up! The Star of Peace Draws Near

The season of Advent is filled with the relentless seeking of things. Shopping is in full swing, and we hear the promise again and again: If we have all the right stuff, buy all the perfect gifts, attend all the posh parties, and decorate with all the trendy decorations, then we will feel complete and at peace. Counter this line of thinking with what God's Word teaches us about contentment. The apostle Paul writes, "Now there is great gain in godliness with contentment, for we brought nothing into the world, and we cannot take anything out of the world. But if we have food and clothing, with these we will be content" (1 Timothy 6:6–8). As we pause during this first week of Advent and pray for the Lord to stir up our hearts for the arrival of His Son, we remember the story of the ancient Magi, who followed the star and found contentment in the King who had been born to save them. Jesus now invites us also to follow Him and receive from Him that same peace, that "godliness with contentment," which the Magi also received.

Opening Sentences

Isaiah 9:6; Philippians 4:7

- P** For to us a child is born, to us a son is given;
- C** **and the government shall be upon His shoulder,**
- P** and His name shall be called Wonderful Counselor,
- C** **Mighty God,**
- P** Everlasting Father,
- C** **Prince of Peace.**
- P** The peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.
- C** **Amen.**

Psalm

Psalm 80:1-7

- P** Give ear, O Shepherd of Israel, You who lead Joseph like a flock!
- C** **You who are enthroned upon the cherubim, shine forth.**
- P** Before Ephraim and Benjamin and Manasseh,
- C** **stir up Your might and come to save us!**
- P** Restore us, O God;
- C** **let Your face shine, that we may be saved!**
- P** O Lord God of hosts,
- C** **how long will You be angry with Your people's prayers?**

- P** You have fed them with the bread of tears
C **and given them tears to drink in full measure.**
- P** You make us an object of contention for our neighbors,
C **and our enemies laugh among themselves.**
- P** Restore us, O God of hosts;
C **let Your face shine, that we may be saved!**

Salutation

- P** The Lord be with you.
C **And also with you.**

Prayer of the Day

- P** Let us pray.
Stir up Your power, O Lord, and come, that by the light of Your Holy Word, we may be drawn to Jesus and lay our lives before Him in worship, receiving from Him the gift of perfect peace. We pray this in the name of Jesus Christ, our Prince of Peace, who lives and reigns with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.
- C** **Amen.**

First Reading

1 Timothy 6:6–9

P A reading from 1 Timothy, the sixth chapter.

Now there is great gain in godliness with contentment, for we brought nothing into the world, and we cannot take anything out of the world. But if we have food and clothing, with these we will be content. But those who desire to be rich fall into temptation, into a snare, into many senseless and harmful desires that plunge people into ruin and destruction.

P O Lord, have mercy on us.

C **Thanks be to God.**

Second Reading

Matthew 2:1–2, 9–10

P A reading from Matthew, the second chapter.

The Visit of the Wise Men

Now after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, behold, wise men from the east came to Jerusalem, saying, “Where is he who has been born king of the Jews? For we saw his star when it rose and have come to worship him.”

After listening to the king, they went on their way. And behold, the star that they had seen when it rose went before them until it came to rest over the place where the child was. When they saw the star, they rejoiced exceedingly with great joy.

P O Lord, have mercy on us.

C **Thanks be to God.**

Readings Response

P In many and various ways, God spoke to His people of old by the prophets.

C **But now in these last days, He has spoken to us by His Son.**

397 As with Gladness Men of Old

Sermon

Offering

Magnificat

Luke 1:46–55

P Mary rejoiced that the Lord was coming to earth, drawing all people to Himself, the true star of Bethlehem, our Prince of Peace. Let us now use her song of praise to rejoice in our Advent Savior.

C **My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God, my Savior;**

P for He has regarded the lowliness of His handmaiden. For behold, from this day all generations will call me blessed.

C **For the Mighty One has done great things to me, and holy is His name; and His mercy is on those who fear Him from generation to generation.**

- P** He has shown strength with His arm; He has scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts.
- C** **He has cast down the mighty from their thrones and has exalted the lowly.**
- P** He has filled the hungry with good things, and the rich He has sent empty away.
- C** **He has helped His servant Israel in remembrance of His mercy as He spoke to our fathers, to Abraham and to his seed forever.**

**Glory be to the Father and to the Son
and to the Holy Spirit;
as it was in the beginning, is now,
and will be forever. Amen.**

Lord's Prayer

- P** Lord, remember us in Your kingdom and teach us to pray:
- C** **Our Father who art in heaven,
hallowed be Thy name,
Thy kingdom come,
Thy will be done on earth as it is in
heaven;
give us this day our daily bread;
and forgive us our trespasses as we
forgive those who trespass against
us;
and lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.**

For Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever and ever. Amen.

Prayers

Collect for Peace

- P** O God, from whom come all holy desires, all good counsels, and all just works,
- C** **give to us, Your servants, that peace which the world cannot give,**
- P** that our hearts may be set to obey Your commandments and also that we, being defended from the fear of our enemies,
- C** **may live in peace and quietness;**
- P** through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen**

Benediction

Matthew 2:10

- P** When [the Magi] saw the star,
- C** **they rejoiced exceedingly with great joy.**
- P** Go forth then, children of God, with the light of Christ leading your way, rejoicing in His presence and knowing His perfect peace. The blessing of almighty God—the Father, the ✠ Son, and the Holy Spirit—be with you and remain with you always.
- C** **Amen.**

