

MIDWEEK OF ADVENT 1

LOOK UP! THE STAR OF PEACE DRAWS NEAR

AS WE GATHER

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 good 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.

PRELUDE "Lift Up Your Heads" setting by John A. Behnke

HYMN 350 Come, Thou Precious Ransom, Come

INVOCATION AND CALL TO WORSHIP

Isaiah 9:6; Philippians 4:7

Pastor: In the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

People: Amen.

Pastor: For to us a child is born, to us a son is given;

People: and the government will be upon His shoulders.

Pastor: And He will be called Wonderful Counselor,

People: Mighty God,

Pastor: Everlasting Father,

People: Prince of Peace.

Pastor: The peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

People: Amen.

PSALM

Psalm 80:1–7

Pastor: Hear us, O Shepherd of Israel, You who lead Joseph like a flock!

People: You who sit enthroned between the cherubim, shine forth

Pastor: before Ephraim, Benjamin, and Manasseh,

People: awaken Your might and come to save us!

Pastor: Restore us, O God;

People: make Your face shine upon us, that we may be saved!

Pastor: O LORD God Almighty,

People: how long will your anger smolder against the prayers of your people?

Pastor: You have fed them with the bread of tears;
People: you have made them drink tears by the bowlful.

Pastor: You have made us a source of contention to our neighbors,
People: and our enemies mock us.

Pastor: Restore us, O God Almighty;
People: make Your face shine upon us, that we may be saved!

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Pastor: The Lord be with you.
People: And also with you.

Pastor: 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.
People: Amen.

ANTHEM

“Peace Came to Earth”

FIRST READING

1 Timothy 6:6–9

⁶ But godliness with contentment is great gain. ⁷ For we brought nothing into the world, and we can take nothing out of it. ⁸ But if we have food and clothing, we will be content with that. ⁹ People who want to get rich fall into temptation and a trap and into many foolish and harmful desires that plunge men into ruin and destruction.

Pastor: O Lord, have mercy on us.
People: Thanks be to God.

Please stand

HOLY GOSPEL

Matthew 2:1–2, 9–10

¹ After Jesus was born in Bethlehem in Judea, during the time of King Herod, Magi from the east came to Jerusalem ² and asked, "Where is the one who has been born king of the Jews? We saw his star in the east and have come to worship him."

⁹ After they had heard the king, they went on their way, and the star they had seen in the east went ahead of them until it stopped over the place where the child was. ¹⁰ When they saw the star, they were overjoyed.

Pastor: O Lord, have mercy on us.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

READINGS RESPONSE

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

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

HYMN **397** As with Gladness Men of Old

SERMON

Please stand

APOSTLES' CREED

**I believe in God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth.
And in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by
the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius
Pilate, was crucified, died and was buried. He descended into hell.
The third day He rose again from the dead. He ascended into
heaven and sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty. From
thence He will come to judge the living and the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy Christian Church, the
communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of
the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.**

OFFERING

"Come, Thou Precious Ransom, Come"

setting by Hugo Gehrke

MAGNIFICAT 933 My Soul Rejoices

PRAYER

Pastor: O Lord, support us all day long, till the shadows lengthen
and the evening comes and the busy world is hushed and
the fever of life is over and our work is done. Then, in
Your mercy, grant us a safe lodging and holy rest and
peace at the last. Lord, Jesus Christ.

People: **Give us Your peace.**

(continued on next page)

Pastor: O God our Father, by Your mercy and might the world turns safely into darkness and returns again to light. We place into Your hands our unfinished tasks, our unsolved problems, and our unfulfilled hopes, knowing that only what You bless will prosper. To Your great love and protection we commit each other and all those we love, knowing that You alone are our sure defender. Lord, Jesus Christ.

People: Give us Your peace.

Pastor: Keep watch, dear Lord, with those who watch or work or weep this night, and give Your angels charge over those who sleep. Tend the sick, give rest to the weary, comfort the afflicted, soothe the suffering, bless the dying—and all for Your love's sake. Lord, Jesus Christ.

People: Give us Your peace.

Pastor: Look down, O Lord, from Your heavenly throne, and illuminate this night with Your celestial brightness, that by night as by day Your people may glorify Your holy name; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

People: Amen.

LORD'S PRAYER

Pastor: Lord, remember us in Your kingdom and teach us to pray:

People: 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.

PRAYER FOR PEACE

Pastor: O God, from whom come all holy desires, all good counsels, and all just works,

People: give to us, Your servants, that peace which the world cannot give,

Pastor: that our hearts may be set to obey Your commandments and also that we, being defended from the fear of our enemies,

People: may live in peace and quietness;

Pastor: through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

People: Amen.

BENEDICTION

Matthew 2:10

Pastor: When the Magi saw the star,

People: they rejoiced exceedingly with great joy.

Pastor: 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.

People: Amen.

HYMN 763 When Peace, like a River

POSTLUDE

“Lo, He Comes with Clouds Descending”

Wilbur Held

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Serving at Chapel

Preacher:	Theodore Laesch
Liturgist:	Ellory Glenn
Acolyte:	Madison Arrasmith
Choir:	Choral Singers
Director & Organist:	Ryan Meyer