

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

Gathered here, in the house of the Lord, let us pray for the coming of Christ's realm.

Our Most High God, *our hope is in you.*

...Bring peace, O God, to the world you have made: the peace that passes understanding and the promise of your new creation; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who is coming in glory to reign. *Amen.*

LORD'S PRAYER

*Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name,
thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as in heaven.*

*Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors;
and lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil.*

For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory, forever, Amen.

INVITATION TO OFFERING

OFFERTORY *Morning Glow from Pippin* Stefen Kane, soloist

***PRAYER OF DEDICATION**

*Our Most High God, you are not so high you cannot see our dreams.
You are not so high you do not know our needs. Receive these gifts of generosity
today. Show us how we might use our resources to proclaim peace to a violent world
and comfort to an anxious community. Amen.*

— *Sending* —

***HYMN #82** **Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus**

CHARGE AND BLESSING

POSTLUDE *Seasons of Love from Rent* Ensemble

You may sit after the light passes you in the aisle.

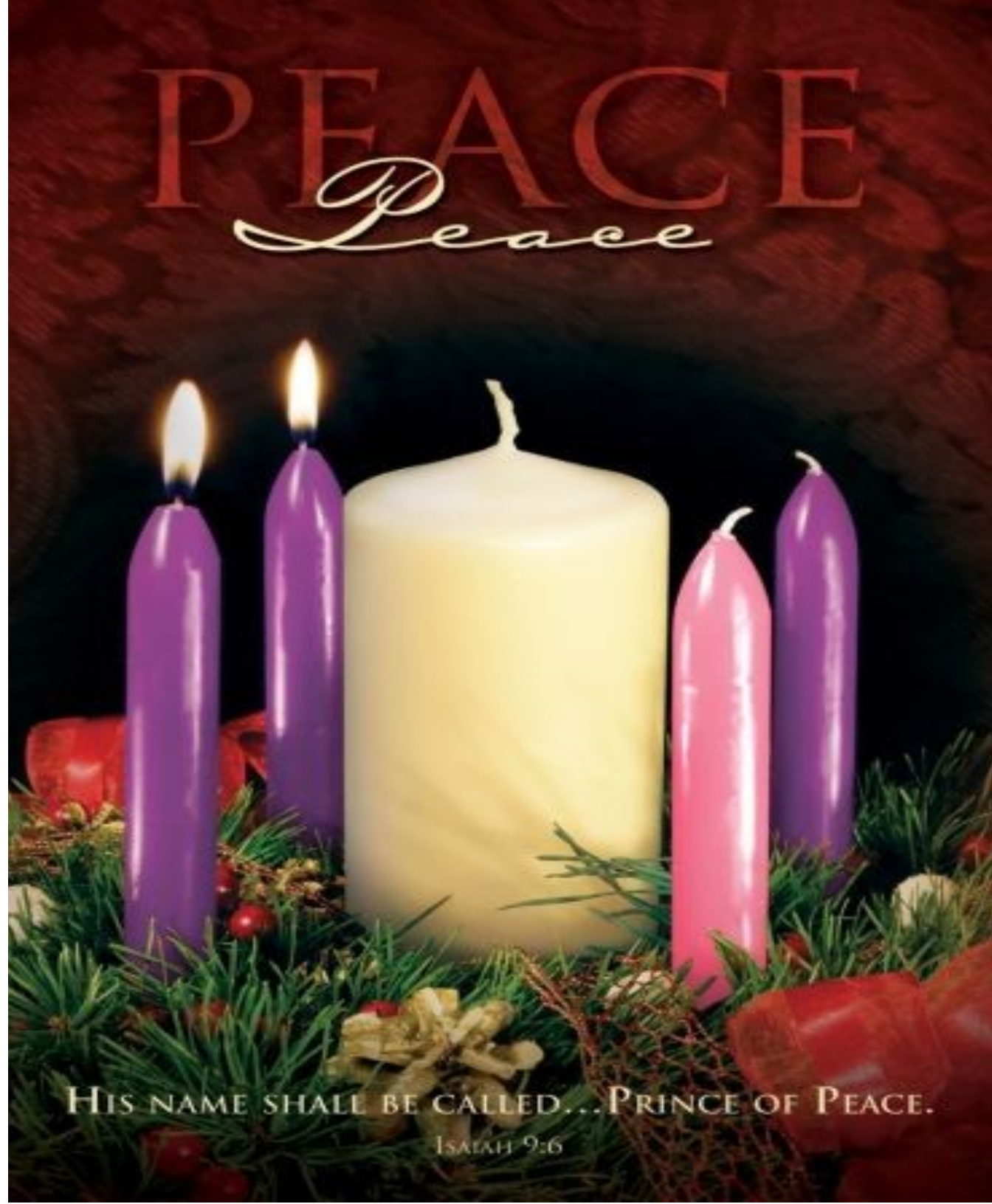
¹Affirmation of Peace by Illustrated Ministry



*Serving God,
Honoring Creation,
Embracing Differences*



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(*) Please rise in body or in spirit
Bold Italic Letters indicate congregational response

**FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
HENDERSON, TX**

2nd Sunday of Advent

December 10, 2023

— *Gathering* —

Prepare Ye *from Godspell*

Ensemble

PRELUDE

WELCOME

Rev. Michele Goff

***Call to Worship**

Liturgist: John Bruce Hillin

Wake up, my friends, and hear the words of the messenger:

"Do not be afraid. A baby will be born, and you will call him Jesus."

Come and hear the words spoken long ago:

"Jesus will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High."

Will there be an end to his kingdom, his mission of love on earth?

"Of his kingdom there will be no end."

Then have no fear, for the kingdom of heaven is eternal.

We are not afraid. Come, let us worship!

***PRAYER OF THE DAY**

***HYMN #105**

People, Look East

CANDLE LIGHTING

... We welcome the peace of Christ, present among us and available to all.

Today we light the candle of peace, because peace has come to us.

Welcome, peace of Christ.

We breathe in your presence, which sustains us and makes us whole.

Where will we find you today?

ADVENT PRAYER

CANDLE LIGHTING RESPONSE

Beautiful City *from Godspell*

Joshua Allen

CONFESSION

Our Most High God,

You call us to bring the light of your Word to a foggy, confusing world.

You call us to bring the darkness of comfort to a lost and lonely creation.

***But we often use our lights to shame others and our darkness
to hide pain and suffering.***

You created us to bring illumination and compassion,

and instead we have brought condemnation. Forgive us, God.

Help us begin again today.

Orient us to the love and justice of heaven. Amen.

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

Receive the pardon of the Most High God today. ***Glory to God.***

— *Word* —

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

FIRST TESTAMENT READING

Isaiah 40:1-11 Bible p. 627-628, LG p. 816-817

A voice is crying in the wilderness: Listen to the word of the Lord.

SECOND TESTAMENT READING

2 Peter 3:8-15a Bible p. 224, LG p. 289

Hear the word of the Lord.

Heaven and earth will pass away but the word of the Lord stands forever.

Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL

Mark 1:1-8

Bible p. 32-33, LG p. 42

Hear God's wisdom for us.

The wisdom of God for the people of God. ***Thanks be to God.***

SERMON

Just the Beginning

Rev. Michele Goff

Rev. Michele Goff

ASCRPTION OF PRAISE

— *Response* —

***HYMN #144**

In the Bleak Midwinter (vv 1, 2, 4)

***AFFIRMATION OF PEACE¹**

Siblings in Christ, let us proclaim the peace of our faith:

While we were ashamed of our sin,

our Creator dressed us in righteousness.

While we were at war with our neighbor,

the Righteous Judge called us to lay down our weapons.

When we were in despair,

the Holy Spirit granted us rest and recovery.

While we held prejudice dividing us from others,

Jesus showed us the way of welcome.

When we held riches, privilege, and inheritance,

our Great Provider led us to share in the bright light of community.

When we were stressed by the demands of this life,

the Loving Parent brought peace of mind.

When our trauma made us anxious and we could not calm down,

the Mother Hen kept us close in the darkness of her nest.

When we could not find common ground and there was no hope for peace,

Jesus held the space between us, nursing our pain.

We have seen God's faithfulness in the past.

And because of our past, we have hope for the future.