

## **2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of Advent Readings: Preparation and Peace**

Light the HOPE & PEACE candles

The **Hope Candle**, also known as the Prophecy Candle, represents the anticipation and hope of the Messiah's coming.

The **Peace Candle** or Preparation Candle, signifies the peace that Christ brings to our hearts and lives.

Last week we read from Isaiah 9. We learned Jesus would be called the *Prince of Peace*. The Israelites were promised peace would come. This promise was fulfilled when Jesus was born. Our worldly leaders bring a temporary peace but the peace Jesus brings is everlasting.

The angels announced the birth of Jesus in Luke 2:14    *Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace to those on whom His favor rests.* This peace is not just the absence of conflict but reconciliation with God.

Jesus tells us in John 16:33    *“... in Me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world.”* We should remember Jesus will help us trust His peace when our hearts feel troubled.

True peace is found only in Jesus. He calms our fears, reconciles us to the Father and invites us to live at peace with one another. Advent peace is both present and future: we taste it now and we await its fullness when Christ reigns forever.

- What anxieties do you need to surrender to Christ's peace?
- How can you be a peacemaker in your family or community this Advent?

**Prayer:** *Father, as we light this candle of peace, we ask that You prepare our hearts for Your coming. Clear the paths in our lives that keep us from You and make room in our hearts for Your peace and presence. Lord, remind us that Your victory secures our peace. May we welcome You with open hearts and lives prepared for Your glory. Amen.*

**Questions:**

- How does worship or prayer help you experience God's peace more deeply?  
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- This second week of Advent turns our hearts toward **Peace**. On Sunday, Mr. Ron asked us a piercing question: "***What anxieties do you need to surrender to Christ in order to receive His peace?***" That's not just a Sunday thought – it's a midweek challenge, too.
- Have you taken that question to God yet? Has the Holy Spirit whispered what you need to lay down?
- True peace is found only in Jesus. ***What's the difference between worldly peace and the peace Jesus offers?***
- The world offers a fragile peace—temporary, circumstantial, easily broken. Worldly peace depends on circumstances lining up just right. But the peace Jesus offers? It's deeper. He calms our fears. He reconciles us to the Father. He invites us to live at peace with one another. His peace isn't fragile—it's steady, even when life feels anything but. This peace is not the absence of conflict, but the presence of Christ Himself.
- It's Wednesday – midweek:
- **15 days until Christmas** (or only 10 for our family as we are celebrating early). Family gatherings can be beautiful, but let's be honest, they can also stir up tension.
- **21 days until the end of the year.** Work deadlines press in & the end of the year looms with its unfinished tasks. Overwhelm can creep in quickly. It's easy to lose sight of peace.
- In moments like these, pause & ask yourself: ***Where do I most need Christ's peace right now—my heart, my relationships or my circumstances?***
- God's Word give us promises to anchor us – we can hold onto these:
- **John 14:27** – "*Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.*"
- **Philippians 4:6-7** – "*Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.*"
- **2 Thessalonians 3:16** – "*Now may the Lord of peace himself give you peace at all times and in every way. The Lord be with all of you.*"
- As we journey through the remainder of this week of Advent, let's not just talk about peace—let's actually receive it. Let's hand over our anxieties, invite Christ into our chaos & let His peace guard our hearts as we wait for His coming.