



WORSHIP for December 6, 2020

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- 1) To watch **sermons recorded** on Zoom on our YouTube Channel, go to the FPCP website: <https://www.fpcpataskala.com/> and click on WORSHIP or follow us on Facebook from the homepage. To potentially increase subscribers & views,  like and  share!
- 2) Please invite family or friends, who want to join us for live worship on Sundays @10:45am, to request access by emailing their name, email, & phone number to fpcofpataskala@gmail.com
- Zoom live worship** attendance: 10/4 50, 10/11 58, 10/18 46, and 10/25 58.
- 3) If you need a COVID-19 **cloth mask** call 740-901-1232 for the Johnsons, who lead the CRT. Thank you to Gage Marcum and Katie Slaymaker, who have been making masks available.
- 4) **Give to FPCP** while shopping for Christmas or for any time at smile.amazon.com. .5% of purchases go to FPCP, when you register for FPCP by going to this link: <https://smile.amazon.com/ch/31-1143651>
When shop thru smile.amazon.com, donations work like Kroger points. But for the church to get credit, you have to enter thru the link the first time, before shopping under your amazon account.
- 5) **A memorial fund for Sally Seiberling** has been established for the purpose of handicapped accessibility. To contribute in memory, denote Seiberling memorial in the memo area of your check and/or on your envelope.
- 6) "The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it." *John 1:5*
Please bring a candle to light during zoom worship during Advent thru Christmas. The candle may be real or battery operated.
- 7) **Blue Christmas & Communion service** 7pm on the longest night Monday 12/21 for those grieving the loss of loved ones & other losses in 2020.
- 8) One "Zoom" Schoolhouse **for all ages 10-10:30am Sundays** as we "**Walk with Jesus Thru Israel**" with photos from Pastor Janet's 2008 trip to the Holy Land and corresponding study of Scripture

SERVICE 2nd SUNDAY OF ADVENT

Lighting Candle of Peace:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=19&v=uGzZCRZaBhA&feature=emb_logo

Light a candle and meditate on the Advent Candle of Peace

Call to Worship: Isaiah 9:6-7 *Unison*

For unto 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 Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

Opening Hymn: "**Leaning on the Everlasting Arms**"

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UubIQnVC4IA>

Prayer of Confession: Psalm 27:1-3 *Unison*

Though peace is part of our inheritance that we share with Christ, we easily discard peace with worry and anxiety. Forgive us for this sin and relieve us of suffering that we bring on ourselves.

Amen

(Pause now for a time of silent confession.)

Assurance of Forgiveness: Psalm 27:10b-11 *Responsively*

"The Lord is enthroned as King forever.

The Lord gives strength to his people; the Lord blesses his people with peace."

We believe the good news of the gospel.

In Jesus Christ we are forgiven!

"The Gloria Patri"

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dgcYD_m4OhU

Hymn of Preparation: "Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silent"

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8wl4u8lnDQs>

Call to God's Word: *Unison*

"Scripture cannot be set aside... What does Scripture say?" John 10:35 & Romans 4:3.

Prayer for Illumination: *Unison*

Lord, through your Spirit enable us to consider your Word, and to enact it in our lives to bring you glory and praise. Amen.

Scripture Readings: Acts 16:16-40 & Philippians 4

<https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Acts+16%3A16-40&version=NIV>

<https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Philippians+4&version=NIV>

SERMON: "Peace Transcends" by *The Reverend Dr. Janet Hufford*

Watch sermon on: <https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLAdy2hvW6PL93B6hbgswTxf93Evs575yd>

We repeat our introduction for Advent from last week. Advent is the time we consciously wait in hope for Jesus to come again. In the meantime, Advent has as its themes: hope, peace, joy, and love, words which we long to hear in a year such as 2020. Yet Paul's letter to Philippi with all these hopeful themes was written while he was confined to prison in Rome. The 1st Sunday of Advent focuses on and all of Advent corresponds to the theme of hope. The 2nd Sunday of Advent focuses on peace.

But there not peace during the time leading up to Jesus' birth and through the early years of the Christian church, in Israel or numerous other countries, including the city of

Philippi in ancient Macedonia and current Greece. For Philippi is held under Roman rule. Rome tried to force a false sense of peace under Pax Romano, the peace of Rome, warning residents to keep the peace or suffer consequences. Any citizens, who disturbed “the peace,” particularly those who rebelled against Roman rule, thereby turning against the divine emperor, were subject to capital punishment, killed as traitors. Jesus was crucified as a traitor.

Last week, we heard in the 1st half of Acts 16 of Paul’s journey to Philippi, a place under Roman rule and Pax Romano. We heard of the conversion of Lydia, a woman originally from Turkey, who opened a store in Philippi to trade her purple cloth, the representative color for Advent. Lydia worshiped God, and prayed at the river, since there were not enough Jewish men for there to be a synagogue in the city. Then Lydia and her entire household were baptized with water at the river by Paul.

Ever wonder what prayers of intercession were raised by the faithful women at the river? What particular situations troubled these women, causing them to pray? What did the women pray, due to a lack of peace in the city of Philippi?

One such prayer may be hinted at in the next account in Acts 16, beginning in v. 16, “Once when we were going to the place of prayer, we were met by a female slave...” This woman is forced to live under a condition of captivity, which caused lack of peace in her and in her country. With the practice of slavery, there is not peace on earth. In the peaceful paradise of Eden, humans are instructed by God to have dominion over the earth, but not domination over fellow human beings, who have been equally created in the image of God!

Like last week’s sermon was written on the 4th of July, when in 1776 the United States gained independence from England. Yet the years leading up to independence were not ones of peace, but of revolution. Even in the years to follow, those who remained in England and who tried to remain loyal to the English crown, such as John Newton, writer of Amazing Grace, and William Wilberforce, British politician, did not have peace, due to the slave trade. Although what came to be 6 mid-west US states from the Northwest Territory, including Ohio, were formed as free states at their founding, freedom from slavery was not granted in the US in full until the 13th amendment to the constitution was ratified, after civil war from 1861 to 1865. Nor is peace, as we call it, in the US today in the presence of current civil unrest and still existing racism.

The poor Philippian woman in the passage is also enslaved spiritually. V. 16 continues, “who had a spirit by which she predicted the future. She earned a great deal of money for her owners by fortune telling.” Ancient Greek specifies the spirit as Pythos, a serpent spirit that operated at the great temple of Apollos high in the mountains of Delphi, where kings travelled for counsel before engaging in war. This poor woman in Philippi was possessed by the same evil spirit of divination. Her owners exploited her because of it. The account continues in vv. 17-18 . Paul cast out the spirit, setting the woman free.

But Paul’s healing the girl did not bring peace. Hear now vv. 19-24. The owners did not have peace when Paul disrupted their means of making money, and so had Paul and Silas thrown into prison.

v. 25-27 reports, too, how the jailer had no peace that night! Awakened from his sleep

by the earthquake, when he saw all the prison doors open, “he drew his sword and was about to kill himself because he thought the prisoners had escaped.” But then comes vv. 28-40.

Paul’s experiences in the jail of Philippi translate into how Paul writes during his arrest in Rome to the church in Philippi. He remembers how while a prisoner behind bars in Philippi he and Silas held onto their hope and peace in Christ by praising and praying to Jesus.

So Philippians 4:1-3 begins with Paul encouraging fellow believers to stand firm in the Lord, not turning away from him or each other and to “rejoice in the Lord always,” next week’s Advent theme.

In vv. 4-9, Paul especially focuses on the ways of peace through Christ. Paul does not promote dismay, but joy. Paul does not promote violence and fear, but gentleness. Paul does not promote anxiety, but of thanksgiving and peace. Peace is demonstrated and brought forth in prayer. Elevating prayer elevates peace. Peace is not dependent upon, but transcends all circumstances. For peace is the presence of Christ even in suffering, as Christ himself suffered. Paul continues by telling fellow believers to direct our thoughts toward what is noble, right, pure, lovely or admirable; then “the God of peace will be with you.” Here is a message of peace for us to carry in our hearts and minds.

vv. 10-13 speak of contentment whatever the circumstances. In vv. 14-20 he thanks the Philippians for providing for him during his time of need. The chapter & sermon concludes with final greetings in vv. 21-23. The traditional final greeting is “grace and peace.” Peace is always extended. Thus, the grace [and peace] of the Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit. Amen.

Hymn of Response: “I Heard the Bells on Christmas Day”

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pvMWcl8xuKg>

PRAYERS of Joy and Concern, followed by:

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 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.

Please Continue to Give in Dedication to Our Lord and Savior, Jesus

Prayer Of Dedication: *Unison*

In view of your mercy help us to offer ourselves as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to you, O God. Amen. *Romans 12:1*

Doxology

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HqpXWF15avU>

Closing Hymn: “We’ve a Story to Tell to the Nations”

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C1q-fDpiKng>

Benediction: *Responsively*

Go forth with peace into the world to proclaim the Gospel of Christ, in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**