

Message for Sunday, December 7, 2025

Scripture: Isaiah 11: 1-10

Title: Strife

## **Welcome**

### **Announcements:**

Giving Options; Special Offering for December-Scholarship Fund;  
Holiday Giving Tree-is for the food pantry. Looking for a fun holiday activity? Try the reverse advent list.

Toys for Tots box in foyer;

Remember to bring your unwrapped, labeled gifts for Sonoyta,

Holiday gift basket for staff in the foyer,

Advent Study-“Seasons Greetings” , Sundays at 2PM in Verde Hall.

Middle School Christmas party donations...popcorn, bags, cocoa, marshmallows, sprinkles, candy canes, popcorn salts, syrups for cocoa, etc.

Blue Christmas-Sunday Dec 14 at 4:30PM

Christmas Eve, Wednesday, Dec 24<sup>th</sup> at 5:30PM

## **Fellowship of Love**

### **Advent Reading**

(Reader 2)

Last Sunday we lit the first candle in our Advent Wreath, the candle of hope.

Let us light it again to show that our hope continues. (Light the first candle)

(Reader 1)

John the Baptist called on the people of his day to prepare the path for the coming of the Messiah.

He called them to repent, turn around, change their ways. To live in peace with others, we need to repent and change directions.

(Reader 2)

We light this second candle to remind us that Jesus is the Prince of Peace.

He shows us how to share God's peace with others. (light the second candle)

(Reader 1)

The prayer of St. Francis asks God to help us be peacemakers. Let us say it together:

**(Please say in Unison)**

**Lord, make us instruments of your peace.**

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**Where there is hatred, let us so love;**

**Where there is injury, pardon;**

**Where there is doubt, faith;**

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**Where there is despair, hope;**

**Where there is sadness, joy;**

**And where there is darkness, light.**

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**Grant that we may seek not so much to be consoled as to console,  
to be understood as to understand,  
to be loved as to love.**

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**For it is in giving that we receive,  
in pardoning that we are pardoned,  
and in dying that we are born to eternal life. Amen.**

Song-O Come O Come Emmanuel

Music for Your Heart-Away in a Mange

Call to Worship

L: People of God, Christ has been invited us here!

**P: We gather to praise God, who brings justice and righteousness to all.**

L: We gather to give thanks to God for hope and peace.

**A: Blessed be the Lord, who has done marvelous things.**

L: Let us praise God together!

**Unison Prayer**

**God of hope and peace, as we worship you this day, may we catch a glimpse of your peace;  
may we open ourselves to received your grace;**

**may we welcome one another as you have welcomed us; may we prepare hearts and our  
lives for Christ to be born in us once again.**

**And when our worship is done, may we be renewed in body and spirit, prepared to bring  
your righteousness and justice to the world.**

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**In the name of Christ, we pray. Amen.**

### **Offering**

L: As we come to this time of offering, let us remember that giving is an opportunity to respond to God's generosity with our own.

### **Scripture: Isaiah 11:1-10 NRSVue**

**11** A shoot shall come out from the stump of Jesse, and a branch shall grow out of his roots.

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<sup>2</sup> The spirit of the LORD shall rest on him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the LORD.

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<sup>3</sup> His delight shall be in the fear of the LORD. He shall not judge by what his eyes see or decide by what his ears hear,

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<sup>4</sup> but with righteousness he shall judge for the poor and decide with equity for the oppressed of the earth; he shall strike the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips he shall kill the wicked.

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<sup>5</sup> Righteousness shall be the belt around his waist and faithfulness the belt around his loins.

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<sup>6</sup> The wolf shall live with the lamb; the leopard shall lie down with the kid; the calf and the lion will feed together, and a little child shall lead them.

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<sup>7</sup> The cow and the bear shall graze; their young shall lie down together; and the lion shall eat straw like the ox.

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<sup>8</sup> The nursing child shall play over the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put its hand on the adder's den.

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<sup>9</sup> They will not hurt or destroy on all my holy mountain, for the earth will be full of the knowledge of the LORD as the waters cover the sea.

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<sup>10</sup> On that day the root of Jesse shall stand as a signal to the peoples; the nations shall inquire of him, and his dwelling shall be glorious.

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## **Meditation: Strife**

I am a man of strong opinions and beliefs. Shocking I know. This has often led me into many situations that have put me at odds with people. Years ago, I worked at an Eddie Bauer store. This was my first retail job, and I grew to be quite close with many of the people I worked with. In fact, there are quite a few of them Katie and I invited to our wedding, and we would often go out on Friday night with them when I was the Key holder position, which was basically a manager position.

I worked at this job for three years before leaving to work at Walmart optical department, and I worked under three different head managers. The first manager who hired me we worked well together and understood each other. The second manager, well let me tell you things didn't go very well at first. Working in retail it mattered who rang the customer up, because the company kept track of your sales, and if you didn't sell enough you would be let go. I observed the manager putting in his own number when he rang up sales that I knew others helped with.

Now I shouldn't need to tell you that this didn't sit very well with me. It came to a head one night when he and I argued quite loudly after the store was closed as I defended another employee who wasn't getting credit for the sales that they were making. I remember walking out of the store that night with Katie and the other employee waiting for me and saying that I didn't know if I was going to work there anymore. That night I felt sick to my stomach and had trouble sleeping.

I share this story because when we talk about peace I think it's important to talk about what we mean for when there isn't peace. Most of us do not have "literal" war stories to talk about, and because of that when we talk about peace I think most of us do not really know what that means. Peace as a concept just seems to big for a conversation, much less our lives. The story I shared from my life I think is a little closer for each of us about what peace is and what peace is not.

The scripture passage today reads like a fairy tale. It feels like a version of peace that we will never see, a peace that is always a promise yet never truly delivered. Isaiah, when he wrote this passage, had an eye to the future. Some future time where peace is so ubiquitous that even mortal enemies will stay together. The New Testament authors read this scripture and interpreted it to be about Jesus. Now here is the thing with that. The New Testament authors interpreted this to be peace now- not peace deferred. So how can it be peace if there is still war? How can it be peace if we are still eating animals, and a lion is certainly going to try to eat a calf.

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I believe the key for this is to understand that peace is not the absence of strife, of fighting or arguments. These facets of our existence are always there. Peace instead is something we try to live out every day. Peace happens sometimes in the midst of that strife. Now I know some of you are wanting to know the end of my story with this manager. Well, I didn't get fired. In fact, we had a great conversation the next day and came to a better understanding of each other. We got along great and worked well together for another year before he left to work at a bank. I know we worked well together because a month after he left he came in to offer me a job at the bank he was at.

Peace is not a fairy tale. It is not something that is out there to be hoped for but never experienced. It is a reality we strive to live out every day. It is simply the good news of who God calls us to be. Amen.

### **THE GREAT THANKSGIVING Communion Liturgy UMH pp. 13-16**

L: The Lord be with you.

**P: And also with you.**

L: Lift up your hearts.

**P: We lift them up to the Lord.**

L: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

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**P: It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

L: It is right, and a good and joyful thing,  
always and everywhere to give thanks to you, Father Almighty, creator of heaven and earth.

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L: And so, with your people on earth and all the company of heaven we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

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**P: Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might, heaven and earth are full of your glory.**

**Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.**

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L: Holy are you, and blessed is your Son Jesus Christ. By the baptism of his suffering, death, and resurrection you gave birth to your church, delivered us from slavery to sin and death, and made with us a new covenant by water and the Spirit.

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L: On the night in which he gave himself up for us he took bread gave thanks to you, broke the bread, gave it to his disciples, and said:

"Take, eat; this is my body which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me."

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L: When the supper was over, he took the cup, gave thanks to you, gave it to his disciples, and said:

"Drink from this, all of you; this is my blood of the new covenant, poured out for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me."

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L: And so, in remembrance of these your mighty acts in Jesus Christ, we offer ourselves in praise and thanksgiving as a holy and living sacrifice, in union with Christ's offering for us, as we proclaim the mystery of faith.

**P: Christ has died; Christ is risen; Christ will come again.**

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L: Pour out your Holy Spirit on us gathered here, and on these gifts of bread and wine. Make them be for us the body and blood of Christ, that we may be for the world the body of Christ, redeemed by his blood.

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L: By your Spirit make us one with Christ, one with each other, and one in ministry to all the world, until Christ comes in final victory, and we feast at his heavenly banquet.

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Through your Son Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit in your holy church, all honor and glory is yours, almighty Father, now and forever.

**P: Amen.**

**Communion**

**Benediction**