

The image features a collection of dried orange slices arranged around a central piece of torn, light-colored paper. The slices are cut into thin, circular sections, showing the intricate, dark brown patterns of the dried pulp and the lighter, fibrous outer rind. The background is a dark, textured grey fabric. A small, rectangular piece of plain, light-brown paper is tucked under the top edge of the torn paper. The word "Peace" is written in a fluid, black cursive font across the center of the torn paper.

*Peace*



# West Richmond Church of the Brethren

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December 5, 2021

Second Sunday of Advent

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## Welcome and Announcements

Prelude

*Lo, How A Rose 'Ere Blooming*

David Paxton

## GIVE PRAISE TO GOD

### Lighting the Advent Wreath

#### Scripture

Micah 4:1-4

In the days to come the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established as the highest of the mountains and shall be raised up above the hills. People shall stream to it, and many nations shall come and say: "Come, let us go up to the mountain of the Lords, to the house of the god of Jacob; that he may teach us his ways and that we may walk in his paths."

For out of Zion shall go forth instruction, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem. He shall judge between many peoples, and shall arbitrate between strong nations far away; they shall beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more; but they shall all sit under their own vines and under their own fig trees, and no one shall make them afraid; for the mouth for the Lord of hosts has spoken.

#### Meditation

The prophet Micah brings a grim message to his readers – Israel and Judah will be judged and destroyed. In Chapter 4, however, we see that all is not lost. Despite their failings, God has a bright future in store for God's people. There will come a day, Micah says, when God's word will be heard among all the nations. And in

response to the message of God, enemies will no longer be enemies. There will be no need for swords because the need for strife and killing will be no more. Everyone will live in peace and enjoy a life without fear of the other.

Can you see Micah's image? Can you imagine a day when the message of love and justice, kindness and mercy will be so pervasive that people will simply put down their weapons....put aside their rage and hostility...embrace the sacredness of one another? Can you imagine it? (*pause*)

We come here today to confirm again that we believe such a miraculous vision to be possible. Unity is not beyond us. Peace is not simply an idealistic notion. The message of this season is that there is a Prince of Peace, there can be healing to our division, and there is a call to follow another way.

It was not a mighty King who came to save us from ourselves. It was a baby, born in a manger, who grew into a man that healed the hurts we carry in our hearts. His teaching and his life show us the ways of peace. He once said, "Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you."

## The Candle of Peace

**One:** We light the candle of Peace, reminding us that God brings peace to our lives -- a peace that settles our fears...a peace that can bind us to each other, even when we have great differences. We long for the day when unity and peace prevail, and we open our hearts again in this season to receive and embody God's message of peace.

**All:** In this season of advent, we wait and long for peace.

\* **Opening Carol**      *While we are waiting, come*      # 1032  
(lighting the 1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup> advent candles representing hope and peace)

1. While we are waiting, come; while we are waiting, come.  
Jesus, our Lord, Emmanuel, while we are waiting, come.
2. Come, Savior, quickly come; come, Savior, quickly come.  
Jesus, our Lord, Emmanuel, while we are waiting, come.

3. With pow'r and glory, come; with pow'r and glory, come.  
Jesus, our Lord, Emmanuel, while we are waiting, come.

*While We Are Waiting, Come* by Claire Cloninger, Don Cason  
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## CELEBRATE GOD'S FAMILY

### Commissioning of Disaster Team Members

\* Song *Here I am to worship* # 227 VT

Light of the world,  
You stepped down into darkness,  
opened my eyes, let me see  
beauty that made this heart adore You,  
Hope of a life spent with You.

Refrain:

Here I am to worship, here I am to bow down;  
Here I am to say that You're my God;

You're altogether lovely, altogether worthy,  
Altogether wonderful to me.

King of all days,  
O so highly exalted,  
Glorious in heaven above;  
Humbly You came to the earth You created,  
all for love's sake became poor. [Refrain]

I'll never know how much it cost  
to see my sin upon that cross.

I'll never know how much it cost  
to see my sin upon that cross. [Refrain]

Here I am to worship. [Repeat]

*Here I am to Worship* by Tim Hughes  
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## Time with Our Children

(after the video, children can leave for Children's Church)

## Congregational Prayer

# WORSHIP IN GIVING

## Thoughts on Giving

Voices Together, #1021

How silently, how silently the wondrous gift is given. I would be silent now, Lord, and expectant... that I may receive the gift I need, so that I may become the gift others need.

# LISTEN FOR GOD'S WORD PROCLAIMED

## Special Music

*Love Came Down at Christmas*

R. Thygerson

## Scripture

Ezekiel 37:1-14 (NRSV)

37 The hand of the Lord came upon me, and he brought me out by the spirit of the Lord and set me down in the middle of a valley; it was full of bones. <sup>2</sup> He led me all around them; there were very many lying in the valley, and they were very dry. <sup>3</sup> He said to me, "Mortal, can these bones live?" I answered, "O Lord God, you know." <sup>4</sup> Then he said to me, "Prophesy to these bones, and say to them: O dry bones, hear the word of the Lord. <sup>5</sup> Thus says the Lord God to these bones: I will cause breath to enter you, and you shall live. <sup>6</sup> I will lay sinews on you, and will cause flesh to come upon you, and cover you with skin, and put breath in you, and you shall live; and you shall know that I am the Lord."

<sup>7</sup> So I prophesied as I had been commanded; and as I prophesied, suddenly there was a noise, a rattling, and the bones came together, bone to its bone. <sup>8</sup> I looked, and there were sinews on them, and flesh had come upon them, and skin had covered them; but there was no breath in them. <sup>9</sup> Then he said to me, "Prophesy to the breath, prophesy, mortal, and say to the breath: Thus says the Lord God: Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe

upon these slain, that they may live.”<sup>10</sup> I prophesied as he commanded me, and the breath came into them, and they lived, and stood on their feet, a vast multitude.

<sup>11</sup> Then he said to me, “Mortal, these bones are the whole house of Israel. They say, ‘Our bones are dried up, and our hope is lost; we are cut off completely.’<sup>12</sup> Therefore prophesy, and say to them, Thus says the Lord God: I am going to open your graves, and bring you up from your graves, O my people; and I will bring you back to the land of Israel.<sup>13</sup> And you shall know that I am the Lord, when I open your graves, and bring you up from your graves, O my people.<sup>14</sup> I will put my spirit within you, and you shall live, and I will place you on your own soil; then you shall know that I, the Lord, have spoken and will act, says the Lord.”

## Sermon

“Can These Bones Live?”

## Confession and Affirmation of Faith

One: Remember: we are earth

All: **and to earth we shall return**

One: we are ashes

All: **and to ashes we shall return**

One: we are dust

All: **and to dust we shall return**

One: Earth to earth, ashes to ashes, dust to dust. (Silence)

One: Remember; the One who breathes life into dust recreates us. The One whose feet walked the earth journeys with us. The One whose embers glows in ashes becomes in us a living flame.

## GO IN GOD’S NAME

### \* Closing Carol

*Come, thou long-expected Jesus*

# 178

1. Come, thou long expected Jesus!  
born to set thy people free;  
from our fears and sins release us,  
let us find our rest in thee.

Israel's strength and consolation,  
hope of all the earth thou art;  
dear desire of ev'ry nation,  
joy of ev'ry longing heart.

2. Born thy people to deliver,  
born a child and yet a king,  
born to reign in us forever,  
now thy gracious kingdom bring.  
By thine own eternal Spirit  
rule in all our hearts alone.  
By thine all-sufficient merit,  
raise us to thy glorious throne.

**\* Benediction**

**Postlude Duet**

*Praise and Thanksgiving*

G.F. Handel

\* Please stand as able and led



|                             |                      |
|-----------------------------|----------------------|
| <b>Ministers</b> .....      | <b>All Members</b>   |
| Pastor .....                | David Whitten        |
| Worship Leader .....        | Susan Robertson      |
| Advent Readers .....        | M. Keller & A. Lynch |
| Special Music .....         | Bob Phillips         |
| Song Leader .....           | Bob Gangwer          |
| Flautist .....              | Sarah Hartman        |
| Guitarist .....             | David Whitten        |
| Pianist .....               | Bob Phillips         |
| Violinist .....             | Bill Kinzie          |
| Media & Technology Dir..... | Kevin Beers          |



*Peace*