

## ***THE MEANING OF CHRISTMAS***

Holiday and Holy Day, Christmas is more than a yule log, or holy tree. It is more than natural good cheer and the giving of gifts. Christmas is even more than the feast of the home and of children, the feast of love and friendship. It is more than all of these together. Christmas is Christ, the Christ of justice and charity, of freedom and peace.

The joy of Christmas is a joy that war cannot kill, for it is the joy of the soul and the soul cannot die. Poverty cannot prevent the joy of Christmas, for it is a joy no earthly wealth can give. Time cannot wither Christmas, for it belongs to eternity. The world cannot shatter it, for it is union with Him who has overcome the world.

The leaders and peoples of nations must understand these fundamental truths if we are ever to have freedom and peace. Unless charters and pacts have a divine sanction, unless "God is the Paramount Ruler of the world," then again and again as the waves upon the shore, must catastrophe follow catastrophe. Not until men lay aside greed, hatred, pride and the tyranny of evil hatred, passions, to travel the road that began at Bethlehem, will the Star of Christmas peace illuminate the world. Christmas is the Birthday of freedom for it is only the following of Christ that makes men free.

*Francis Cardinal Spellman, Archbishop of New York*

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***GROOME CHURCH  
P.O. Box 299  
Lewes, DE 19958***

***FOUNDED IN 1904***



***Fourth Sunday of Advent***

GROOME CHURCH  
December 19, 2021: 10:00 a.m.  
Reverend, Dr. S. Willard Crossan, III  
Worship Leader: Retta Rose Frampton

*Fourth Sunday of Advent*  
**CELEBRATION OF PEACE**

GATHERING AND REFLECTION

ORGAN PRELUDE

PARISH CALENDAR AND GREETING *Dr. Crossan*

CALL TO WORSHIP:

Leader: We wait for the word of the Lord as we wait for the rains

**People: and our God shall come down upon us like gentle dew.**

Leader: The hills and the mountains will be singing praise to God.

**People: Every tree in the forest will be clapping its hands. The Lord will come and rule forever. Alleluia.**

OPENING PRAYER

HYMN OF PRAISE "O Little Town of Bethlehem" 230

LIGHT THE ADVENT CANDLE OF PEACE

*Yvonne Martz*

We light this candle as a symbol of the Prince of Peace. May the visitation of your Holy Spirit, O God, make us ready for the coming of Jesus, our hope and joy. O come, O come, Emmanuel. *Reading: Isaiah 9:6-7*

MUSICAL RESPONSE "Light the Advent Candle" vs. 3 *Insert*

CALL OF CONFESSION

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

**Almighty and most merciful God, you know the thoughts of our hearts. We confess that we have sinned against you and done evil in your sight. We have transgressed your holy laws. We have disregarded your Word and Sacraments. Forgive us, O Lord. Give us grace and power to put away all hurtful things, that, being delivered from the bondage of sin, we may bring forth fruit worthy of repentance, and from henceforth may ever walk in your holy ways. Almighty and merciful Lord grant us remission of all our sins, true repentance, and amendment of life, and the grace and consolation of the Holy Spirit. Amen.**

SILENT PRAYER

WORDS OF ASSURANCE

THE LORD'S PRAYER

PROCLAMATION AND PRAISE

Leader: O Lord, open our hearts and our minds;

**People: that we may behold wonderful things out of your word.**

Old Testament Lesson Micah 5:2-5 *Retta Rose Frampton*

Epistle Lesson Hebrews 10:5-10

\* Gospel Lesson Matthew 1:18-25

\* Affirmation of Faith "I Timothy" 889

\* Gloria Patri

OFFERINGS AND REFLECTIONS

COLLECT

**O God, whose will is justice for the poor and peace for the afflicted, let your herald's urgent voice pierce our hardened hearts and announce the dawn of your kingdom. Before the advent of the One who baptizes with the fire of the Holy Spirit, let our complacency give way to conversion, oppression to justice, and conflict to acceptance of one another in Christ. We ask this through the One whose coming is certain, whose day draws near: your Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.**

Pastoral Prayer & Prayers of the People

*-Voicing of our Petitions-*

Leader: Lord, in your mercy,

**People: Hear our prayer.**

WORDS OF PRESENTATION

*Retta Rose Frampton*

OFFERING

THE PRESENTATION "Doxology" 95

HYMN OF PREPARATION "Love Came Down at Christmas" 242

ADVENT MEDITATION "Come and See" *Dr. Crossan*

SENDING FORTH

HYMN OF DEDICATION "Good Christian Friends, Rejoice" 224

\* WORDS OF DEDICATION

May the presence of God the Creator give you strength;

**May the presence of God the Redeemer give us peace;**

May the presence of God the Sustainer give you comfort;

**May the presence of God the Sanctifier give us love. Amen.**

\* BENEDICTION

\* BENEDICTION RESPONSE "Away in a Manger" vs. 3 217

\* POSTLUDE

*\* Please Stand*