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We wear our hearts on our sleeves and we trust that even now, God is here.** Leader: Family of faith, what we practice in worship, we must live out in our daily lives. **People: So we prepare the way. Let us worship our God.**  \* Hymn     Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus GtG # 82  Prayer of Confession Holy One, we wish that peace was something we could buy. We wish that peace could be ordered in a subscription service, found on a map, downloaded on an app, or voted for in a ballot. We wish that peace was as easy as a one-time choice when we were feeling our best. However, what we have found is that peace involves everyday decisions over and over, whether or not we are feeling our best. So today we confession, in front of one another, that we need your help in this Advent season. Prepare the way for greater peace and teach me how to be a part of it. Amen.   Silent Prayers of Confession   Words of Assurance (responsive) Leader: May God forgive you. May God’s guiding hand surround you. May you know comfort and may you know peace. **People: Thanks be to God. Amen.**   The Peace Leader: The peace of Christ be with you! **People: And also with you!** (You may greet those around you)    The Proclamation of the Word   Prayer of Illumination   God of Peace, we must admit, there are a million things on our minds. We would like to be as focused as John the Baptist – preparing the way, gathering the crowd, and spreading the word of your arrival. Maybe then we’d know peace. However, more often than not, we are a swirling complication of grocery lists, text messages, e-mails, and over-referenced to-do lists. So today, we ask for your help in preparing the way. Could you start with our ears, and then maybe move to our hearts? We’d like to hear you more clearly. Maybe then we’ll know peace. Amen  Scripture Lesson     Mark 1:1-13  The beginning of the good news of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. 2 As it is written in the prophet Isaiah, ‘See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way; 3 the voice of one crying out in the wilderness: “Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight” ’, 4John the baptizer appeared in the wilderness, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. 5And people from the whole Judean countryside and all the people of Jerusalem were going out to him, and were baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins. 6Now John was clothed with camel’s hair, with a leather belt around his waist, and he ate locusts and wild honey. 7He proclaimed, ‘The one who is more powerful than I is coming after me; I am not worthy to stoop down and untie the thong of his sandals. 8I have baptized you with water; but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit.’  **The Baptism of Jesus**  9 In those days Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan. 10And just as he was coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens torn apart and the Spirit descending like a dove on him. 11And a voice came from heaven, ‘You are my Son, the Beloved; with you I am well pleased.’  **The Temptation of Jesus**  12 And the Spirit immediately drove him out into the wilderness. 13He was in the wilderness for forty days, tempted by Satan; and he was with the wild beasts; and the angels waited on him.  Sermon Prepare the Way for Peace   The Response to the Word   \* Hymn   Prepare the Way, O Zion  GtG # 106   The Communion of the People   Invitation to the Lord’s Table Leader: Hallelujah! The Lord our God the Almighty reigns! Let us rejoice and exult and give God the glory, **People: For the marriage of the Lamb has come.** **Blessed are those who are invited to the marriage supper of the Lamb.**   The Lord be with you **And also with you.** Lift up your hearts. **We lift them to the Lord.** Let us give thanks to the Lord our God. **It is right to give our thanks and praise.**   It is truly right and our greatest joy to give you thanks and praise, O Lord our God, creator and ruler of the universe. You formed us in your image and set us in this world to love and serve you. When we were captives in slavery, you delivered us to freedom, and made covenant to be our sovereign God. When were stubborn and stiff necked, you spoke to us through prophets who looked for that day when justice shall triumph and peace shall reign over all the earth. Therefore, we praise you, joining our voices with the celestial choirs and with all the faithful of every time and place, who forever sing to the glory of your name.   In Praise of God – GtG #552   You are holy, O God of majesty, and blessed is Jesus Christ, your Son. You sent him into this world to bring freedom to the captives of sin and to establish justice for the oppressed. He came among us as one of us, taking the lot of the poor, sharing human suffering, dying an unjust death. We rejoice that in his dying and rising again, you set before us the sure promise of new life, The certain hope of a heavenly home where we will sit at table with Christ our host. Remembering your gracious acts in Jesus Christ, we take from your creation this bread and this wine and joyfully celebrate his dying and rising and await the day of his coming. With thanksgiving we offer our very selves to you to be a living and holy sacrifice, dedicated to your service.  In Praise of Jesus Christ – Tune GtG#553  Pastoral Prayer and the Lord’s Prayer  “For this I pray to God” / “For this I give thanks to God.” Congregational Response: “**Hear our prayer, O God.”** And now, in confidence and in gratitude, we say the prayer together that Jesus Christ, our Savior and Redeemer, taught us to pray…  **Our Father,** **who art in Heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on Earth as it is in Heaven and 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, the power, and the glory forever. Amen.**   Words of Institution Jesus took his place at the table with the apostles and he said to them, “I will not eat this Passover again until it is fulfilled in the kingdom of God.” Then Jesus took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to them, saying, This is my body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me. After supper, he took a cup, saying, This is the cup of the new covenant, shed from my blood. I will not drink of the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God comes.   Sharing of the Meal With thanksgiving and praise, we now offer ourselves to you in the sharing of this holy meal, remembering Christ’s dying and rising and praying: Come, Lord Jesus! **PRAYER OF DEDICATION** (Unison) **Dear God, take us out to live as changed people because we have shared the living bread and cannot remain the same. Ask much of us, expect much from us, enable much by us, encourage many through us. So, Lord, may we live to your glory, both as inhabitants of the earth, and citizens of the commonwealth of Heaven. Through Christ, with Christ, in Christ, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, all glory and honor are yours, almighty God, now and forever. Amen.**   Offertory Prayer   Hymn O Lord, How Shall I Meet You  GtG # 104  Charge & Benediction Leader: Lead us out in peace, **People: And let Your peace take root in our hearts.** Leader: So that we might be your disciples, **People: Who point to a different way, a way of love.** Leader: Lead us this Advent season, with a foundation of hope, **People: To be your peacemakers in this world. Amen.** | |  | | | | |