

Sunday, November 27, 2022 – First Sunday of Advent

Reading: Isaiah 2: 1-5

The **first interesting thing** about these verses is how similar they are to Micah 4:1-3. See Isaiah 1:1 and Micah 1:1. These two prophets lived during the reigns of the same kings. Isaiah 6:1 – In the year that King Uzziah died. Who wrote first?

2 - In days to come the mountain of the LORD's house shall be established as the highest of the mountains, and shall be raised above the hills; all the nations shall stream to it.

3 - Many peoples shall come and say, "Come, let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, 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.

Non-Jewish people were drawn to the monotheism and high moral values of the Old Testament.

The **second interesting thing** is the contrast between these verses and Matthew 28:19, which we call the Great Commission – Go and make disciples of all nations.

How often do we as the church wait for people to come to us rather than we go out to them?

The **third interesting thing** is the universal longing for justice and peace.

"Gonna lay down my burden down by the riverside; ain't gonna study war no more."

4 - He shall judge between the nations and shall arbitrate for many peoples; 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 anymore.

Let Us Beat Swords into Plowshares Sculpture in the United Nations Art Collection

Psalm: Psalm 122

1 - I was glad when they said to me, "Let us go to the house of the LORD."

How glad are you to be able to go to church on Sundays?

What makes you most glad?

3 - Jerusalem is built as a city that is at unity with itself.

How different that is from the reality of today.

6 - Pray for the peace of Jerusalem. May they prosper who love you.

7 - Peace be within your walls and quietness within your towers.

8 - For the sake of my kindred and companions, I pray for your prosperity.

9 - Because of the house of the LORD our God, I will seek to do you good.

What chance is there for peace in Jerusalem, in our society, in our nation, in our world, without Jesus as the Prince of Peace?

Isaiah 9: 6 – For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given; and he shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

Luke 2: 14 – Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace among those whom he favors.

Second Reading: Romans 13: 11-14

The major theme for the First Sunday in Advent is the second coming of Christ. We do not know when it will occur – it could come at any time – like a thief in the night – so we need to wake up and always be prepared.

Do you think about the fact that the end of your life – the end of the world – the second coming of Christ could occur at any time so you always need to be prepared?

11-12 - It is now the moment for you to wake from sleep. For salvation is nearer to us now than when we became believers; the night is far gone, the day is near.

If we really were to think about that, what difference would it make in our lives?

12 - Let us then lay aside the works of darkness and put on the armor of light.

13 - Let us live honorably as in the day, not in reveling and drunkenness, not in debauchery and licentiousness, not in quarreling and jealousy.

14 - Instead, put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to gratify its desires.

What specifically does that mean for you? What might seem so all-consuming and all-important to you now that is actually quite small and petty in light of the second coming of Christ?

Gospel: Matthew 24: 36-44

36 - About that day and hour no one knows, neither the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father.

Philippians 2: 6-7 – Though he was in the form of God, he emptied himself.

Luke 2: 46-47 – After three days they found him in the temple, sitting among the teachers, listening to them and asking them questions. And all who heard him were amazed at his understanding and his answers.

Luke 2: 52 – Jesus grew in wisdom and in stature and in divine and human favor.

37-39 - For as the days of Noah were, so will be the coming of the Son of Man. For as in those days before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day Noah entered the ark, and they knew nothing until the flood came and swept them all away, so too will be the coming of the Son of Man.

The book of Genesis describes the days of Noah as times of great evil.

Genesis 6: 5 – The Lord saw that the wickedness of humankind was great in the earth, and that every inclination of the thoughts of their hearts was only evil continually.

Matthew 24 describes these days as a time when people were distracted.

40-41 - Two will be in the field; one will be taken and one will be left. Two women will be grinding meal together; one will be taken and one will be left.

These verses have been used to support the idea of a rapture.

42 - Keep awake therefore, for you do not know on what day your Lord is coming.

43 – Understand this: if the owner of the house had known in what part of the night the thief was coming, he would have stayed awake and would not have let his house be broken into.

44 - You also must be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an unexpected hour.