

A MESSAGE FROM THE PASTOR

LIVING ADVENT

Against the backdrop of military threat, the eighth century prophet of Israel named Isaiah offered these promising words: “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 any more.” (*Isaiah 2:4*)

In those words Isaiah captured the hopes and dreams of not only his people, but also the people of every generation. We long for the same today. But this longing is more than wishful thinking. It embodies the hope that one day God will accomplish this vision in real time...our time.

Meanwhile, other themes of the Advent season are appropriate.

“Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near” (*Matthew 3:2*) preached John the Baptist. A healthy dose of repentance is an essential ingredient along the road to peace. Jesus would call for the same repentance. To repent means to have a changed mind and a changed life. We are invited into deep repentance that leads us to new life by an act of God in our lives.

Finally, “Say to those who are of a fearful heart, ‘Be strong, do not fear! Here is your God. He will come with vengeance, with terrible recompense. He will come and save you.’” (*Isaiah 35:4*) For those with a fearful heart, there is the encouragement to be strong, not to fear the days ahead. Do not fear because the God who is god is ushering in His new day. He is sending us His Son to be born into our world and coming again in glory to complete His kingdom work.

This is the season of Advent. Live Advent! Don't pass it by.

Love,
Pastor Dean