

ADVENT DEVOTIONALS WEEK 4 (12/20-26/20)

This week's devotionals will come from the prescribed lectionary for the week, which includes the following scriptures:

- 2 Samuel 7:1-11, 16
- Psalm 96
- Isaiah 9:2-7
- Luke 1:26-38, 46b-55
- Titus 2:11-14

We will focus on specific verses within these scriptures each day, not the whole texts, so you may want to read the entirety of these passages sometime this week for the full effect.

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 20, 2020

“SO THIS IS LOVE PART 1”

By Rev. Joanna Dietz

*The people who walked in darkness
have seen a great light;
those who lived in a land of deep darkness—
on them light has shined.
You have multiplied the nation,
you have increased its joy;
they rejoice before you
as with joy at the harvest,
as people exult when dividing plunder.
For the yoke of their burden,
and the bar across their shoulders,
the rod of their oppressor,
you have broken as on the day of Midian.
For all the boots of the tramping warriors
and all the garments rolled in blood
shall be burned as fuel for the fire. ~ Isaiah 9:2-5 (NRSV)*

Imagine a world of peace – one where warriors put aside their weapons and work side by side with those whom they have oppressed. Imagine a world where there are no more tears and suffering is ended while each person is elevated in status while they share their gifts for the good of community.

This is the world that Isaiah sees. There has been darkness, or depression and death. But soon there will be light, or life and joy. Understand that there has been great tumult between Israel and, well, everyone else. Israel was a very small patch of land located in some prime real estate between other prime pieces of real estate. It was desired, in other words. And there was a lot of war. The people lived in decades of unrest. There were many warriors – some their own and others the oppressors’.

Isaiah’s last verse talks about the boots of the tramping warriors. This imagery is so rich! All the violent clothing is burned and used for the fire. Fire is light. Light is life and joy. What had been seen as tools of hostility are now seen as the very fuel for love of the community.

We long for the end of oppression and war. Advent is the time of waiting for love and peace to reign. May God’s justice come soon to our world!

Prayer: Just God, we call to you to end war and violence and bring us peace and love. Amen.

Thought for the Day: Where can you offer a word of peace and love when you have war in your heart?