

(First Sunday of Advent – Sunday, December 3, 2017)

1st Reader: This is the first Sunday in Advent. Today, we light one purple candle, the candle of peace. Our world is not always a peaceful world. People hurt other people. Countries are at war today. People don't take care of the world. People yell and scream at other people. But God promises peace. During Advent, we pray that we, as well as all people, will seek God's peace.

(Light the first candle)

2nd Reader: When we look at the first candle, we remember God's promise of peace. We recall the words of Jesus in the Gospel of John chapter 14 verse 27, "**Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you.**" In times of war and hatred, it's hard to remember that Jesus is the one who brings peace. As we approach Christmas, let's remember that God's intention is a place of peace where people shake hands instead of harm one another.

3rd Reader: *(Read Luke 1:46-55 Mary's Song)*

And Mary said, "My soul glorifies the Lord and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior,

for he has been mindful of the humble state of his servant.

From now on all generations will call me blessed,

for the Mighty One has done great things for me — holy is his name.

His mercy extends to those who fear him, from generation to generation.

He has performed mighty deeds with his arm;

he has scattered those who are proud in their inmost thoughts.

He has brought down rulers from their thrones but has lifted up the humble.

He has filled the hungry with good things but has sent the rich away empty.

He has helped his servant Israel, remembering to be merciful to Abraham and

his descendants forever, even as he said to our fathers."

4th Reader: In the Scripture, we hear Mary's song of praise. There must have been times when Mary was frightened, worried, fearful, and sad. She may not have felt very peaceful as she considered her future. Yet her words help us see the peace that comes when we trust in God.

Prayer:

Dear God,

Thank you for your son, Jesus. Thank you for those in our world today who seek to act for peace. Help us look for ways to be peacemakers at home, at church and at school. Amen.