

Sunday – December 22, 2024 – Fourth Sunday of Advent



This morning, we witnessed the tangible application of the Christmas message. In baptism we have the visible demonstration of people who have acknowledged and welcomed Jesus into their lives as Lord and Savior.

REVIEW VERSE: *"How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him who brings good news, who publishes peace, who brings good news of happiness, who publishes salvation, who says to Zion, "Your God reigns." The voice of your watchmen—they lift up their voice; together they sing for joy; for eye to eye they see the return of the LORD to Zion". (Isaiah 52:7)*

This week's verse is the foundation of our peace. Without this verse being true in our lives, we cannot hope for lasting peace in my life, relationships, or world.

"But after he had considered these things, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, "Joseph, son of David, don't be afraid to take Mary as your wife, because what has been conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. She will give birth to a son, and you are to name him Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins."
(Matthew 1:20,21)

God speaks to Mary and Joseph independently to assure them of what God is about to do. In Matthew's account, Joseph gets a visit from the angel to tell him to "have no fear" God is one the move. Joseph would need that reassurance because of the societal pressure he would face marrying a woman, with child that was not his.

What is the hardest thing you have had to do that God told you to do?
How did God assure you to follow through?

Jesus is a variation of the Old Testament name, "Joshua" - "God saves."
From what did I need saving? _____.

Read *Romans 3:23,24. Romans 3:10-11.*

How do I view sin in my life? In the lives of others? How does God's naming of this baby give me peace?

Read *Philippians 4:7.* On what foundation do I build my peace? How does the result of my peace foundation differ from God's?

Have I invited and accepted God's gift of salvation through Jesus Christ as Savior? When and why? _____

Have I publicly declared my allegiance to Jesus through baptism? _____

Many know the verse, *John 3:16,17.* At Christmas we lean into the love of God. God's love has a practical outcome, and that is peace for every area of my life.

Will I step into the peace that God offers through the gift of his son Jesus?