

December 8 – Second Sunday of Advent

By Barbara McMullen, CDP



In today's first reading, Isaiah paints a compelling vision for the future, one that has often been named *the peaceable kingdom*. In it, he speaks of a new heaven and new earth; he talks about the wolf and the lamb lying down together; that paradise will be restored and all nature will sing in harmony. Isaiah portrays to the people of Israel a message of hope ... that what God has cut off is also that which God restores. That the One who judges his people is also the One who forgives them and restores Peace.

Isaiah holds out hope to us that we can change, that we can be transformed, that grace working in human nature accomplishes so much more than we could ever imagine. The prophet grew old and yet he continued to watch and wait. For us, too, it is important that we sit still long enough, listen closely enough, discern carefully enough, and trust that the vision will become clear. The meaning and the message of this Advent will be revealed to us.

In the gospel, John the Baptist tells us that peace can be found in repentance, in lives of integrity, in relationships rooted in honesty and respect. Paul tells us that the peace for which we yearn can be found in openness to others.

The peaceable kingdom of God for which we long is possible. In this Advent season of preparation, we can graft our lives to the shoot that has emerged from the stump of Jesse and pray for his peace to fill us and transform us. Let us open our eyes, ears, hearts, and hands to be promoters of the peaceable kingdom here, now, and to come.