

# Peace

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Preacher: Pastor Tom Kraft

- [ 0 : 00 ]     This is the day that the Lord has made.  
We'll rejoice and be glad in it. If any kids want to join us in singing, they're welcome. Come on up. This is the day that the Lord has made.  
Let us rejoice and be glad in it. This is the day that the Lord has made.  
Let us rejoice and be glad in it. This is the day that the Lord has made.  
Good morning and welcome to our church. We have a gift for our visitors at the Connection site. Please fill out your friendship card for any prayers or concern or just so we can get to know you.
- [ 1 : 22 ]     It's fun to be part of the welcoming committee here at Hamilton Center. We are glad to have you with us this morning. No clipboards this morning. How about that? That's good, isn't it?  
So we do want to mention two quick things. First of all, if you use offering envelopes, if you could check in the hallway because the finance team put them out for you and that saves us mailing them out.  
We appreciate that. You can take them with you. Also, this Saturday night we have worship services on Christmas Eve at 5 o'clock, 7 o'clock, and 11 o'clock.  
And on Sunday we'll have one service at 10 a.m. So you can mark that on your calendars. We appreciate you doing that. Let's take a moment and turn to the Lord in prayer. Dear Lord, we do thank you for this morning.  
We thank you for bringing us safely to this place. We pray for all those who are on the roads driving. Bless us with your Holy Spirit that it might descend in this place, that we might be touched by you, filled by you, transformed by you in this place.
- [ 2 : 22 ]     In the words of Jesus' name we pray. Amen. It is the fourth week of Advent, and so as we light our Advent candles, you hear these words from the Gospel of Luke, chapter 2, verses 8 through 20.  
And there were shepherds living out in the fields nearby, keeping watch over their flocks at night. An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified.  
But the angel said to them, Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people. Today in the town of David, a Savior has been born to you.  
He is the Messiah, the Lord. This will be a sign to you. You will find the baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger. Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God and saying, Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace to those on whom his favor rests.  
When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, Let's go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has told us about. This is the word of the Lord.

[ 3 : 32 ] Thanks be to God. I'd like to invite you, if you're able, to stand as we're going to sing together, Angels from the Realms of Glory. Angels from the Realms of Glory. Angels from the Realms of Glory.

Wing your flight for all the earth. Ye who sang creation's story, now proclaim Messiah's birth.

Come and worship, come and worship, worship Christ the newborn King. Shepherds in the fields abiding, washing all your flocks by night.

Son with us is now residing. Younger shines the infant light. Come and worship, come and worship, worship Christ the newborn King.

Sages from the Realms of Glory. Sages from the Realms of Glory. Sages from the Realms of Glory. For contemplations, brighter visions, beam all your contemplations. Brighter visions, beam all far. Seek the great desire of nations.

[ 5 : 09 ] As ye have seen his mortal star. Come and worship, come and worship, worship Christ the newborn King.

Shepherds in the HD gamer. They are ■- imagine theygeord per Saint falling for dear kjktriks, meaning God.■■■■■ our children of Roh and gard The Lord be with you.

Take a moment and share the peace of the spirit with one another. Well, we're going to invite the kids to come up and put an ornament on the tree. It's over by the tree. Right by the tree.

Behind the rail. If there's any in it. Any kids want to come up and put an ornament on the tree? Come on up. Or you can just come on up here and join me if you want to.

Slip sliding away.

[ 6 : 34 ] Slip sliding away. Oh, how are you this morning?

That's good. Slippery outside, isn't it? Yeah. I almost fell several times. I think people are going to be coming to church slow today.

Yeah. Do you know what we're adding to the manger scene today? Shepherds. Yes, that's right. See them all out here?

They're hanging out in the field in the dark watching their sheep. Right? Yeah. That is a goat, isn't it? Watching their sheeps and their goats. Yeah.

And that was kind of a lonely job. It's a good thing they had each other, wasn't it? That they could hang together. Because it was probably a little lonely out in that dark night. Don't you think? Where are the kings?

[ 7 : 38 ] You know where they are? Can you see them? Where did they go? Yeah. They were way over there, but they're not anymore. I think they went over there.

Yeah. Did you know the kings went to the wrong place? They did. They went to Jerusalem. They didn't even go to Bethlehem. They were all confused. They were all confused. You'll hear about that in a couple weeks.

The kings wander around a while. Eventually they'll get here, but they're not here for a while. But the shepherds, they came. And the reason why they knew exactly where to go is because the angels came and told them what to do.

That's why they're looking at the angel up there, right? Yeah. Because angels once in a while appear to us and tell us what we should do. And if an angel ever appears to you, they should say, don't be afraid.

And then listen to what they say, because that's from God. Okay? What are you guys thankful for? You want to share something? Raise your hand. Friends and family. My mom and dad.

[ 8 : 40 ] Friends and family. My mom. Anybody else? All right. Let's pray. Lord, we are thankful for our families. We're thankful for all the good blessings you give to us, for our friends, our parents.

Bless us today. Bless us always to follow you and everything you tell us. For it's in Jesus' name we pray. Amen. Amen. Okay, you guys can all go out to church school now if you'd like to. Kids are all welcome to go to church school now.

Good morning. Good morning. I am thankful that we were all able to get here this morning to worship the Lord together. And I'm grateful for the folks who realized that probably they might not be in the best state of being if they came out.

So, as God has given each of us wisdom, we are thankful. Amen? Amen. Let's continue our worship with bringing our gifts, tithes, and offerings before the Lord. Let's pray.

Thank you.

[ 10 : 40 ] Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

[ 13 : 10 ] Thank you.

Praise God from whom all blessings flow. Praise Him, all creatures here below.

Praise Him above ye heavenly hosts. Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

Amen. Dear Heavenly Father, we do give you thanks and praise for this day and that we may gather together to worship.

To worship your name, to worship your name, to worship your name, to worship you for who you are. Lord God, we lift up this gift that we offer to you, Lord. We offer up all of the gifts that you have given us.

[ 14 : 28 ] We ask that you bless them, we ask that you bless them. We ask that you bless them, we ask that you bless them. We ask that you bless them and give us wisdom to know how to best use them for the furtherance of your kingdom.

We desire to draw many to salvation in Jesus Christ. It is in Jesus' name we pray. Amen. Amen. Please be seated. We do have a couple of things just to be mindful of as we move into our time of prayer.

Sandy Houck has had an accident and in the accident she burned both of her hands, particularly the palms of both of her hands. And she's wearing gloves and has special medication and stuff to keep them protected.

But we're going to pray for her to continue, for her continued healing. Her ministry has so much to do with being able to use her hands and we want to pray for her.

And also for all of those folks who are battling cancers and for those people who are caring for them and who are going through that with them. We just want to pray for them today.

[ 15 : 36 ] So with these concerns, those that are on your heart, we're going to turn to the Lord in prayer. You may join me in prayer from your seat or standing or kneeling at the rail with me.

You're welcome to come. Gracious Heavenly Father, We come before you now knowing that you are the God who hears and answers prayer.

You are Lord of heaven and Lord of earth. There is nothing that happens here that you are not aware of. There is nothing that happens here that you do not care deeply about.

We thank you, Lord, for your love, for your care, for your blessing. We pray, Father, now for all of those who are sick and infirm.

For those who have had accidents and injuries of various kinds. For all those who need healing. For those who have done love, people have done well, We darling.

[ 16 : 56 ] Help them, Lord. Bring wisdom and compassion and patience to their caregivers. let all draw closer to you.

Father, we pray for those who are grieving losses of all kinds. The sadness of their hearts, we ask that you would mix that sadness with the joy that there is the hope of eternal life in you.

The joy of all of the blessings of relationships that we have had in our lives. Let it bring comfort, Lord.

By your Spirit, bring peace. Bring rest. Help us as your people, dear Lord, to be able to minister words of healing, words of comfort, words of compassion.

Lord, we pray in Jesus' name that as we wind down to the tail end of getting ready for all of the excitement and celebration that will be Christmas, that our hearts be guarded.

[ 18 : 19 ] Lord, that in the midst of having to deal with all kinds of busyness and all kinds of folks, we would have hearts of forgiveness as your people.

We would have hearts of patience. We would have hearts that seek to bring unity, the unity that can only come from your Holy Spirit.

Help us, Lord, to be your vessels of peace in this world of busyness, in this world of anger, in this world of confusion.

Let us be your light. Let us be your life going forth. Father, as we continue on our worship and hear your words spoken, let it wash over us and transform us, making us more able than ever to show your love.

Be with Pastor Tom as he delivers the message that you have given him. Let it be a blessing to him and to us. And make all of our worship to be a blessing to you, Lord.

[ 19 : 36 ] That is why we came. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen. Shall we hear from the word of the Lord?

Amen. Amen. Good morning.

The reading today is from Colossians 3, verses 12-17. Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience.

Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. And over all these virtues, put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity.

Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace. And be thankful. Let the message of Christ dwell among you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom through psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit, singing to God with gratitude in your hearts.

[ 21 : 18 ] And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God, the Father, through Him. This is the word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God. Chess loves roasting on an open fire, Jack Frost nipping at your nose, Yuletide carols, being sung by a choir, and folks dressed up like Eskimos.

Everybody knows a turkey and some mistletoe help to make the season bright.

Tiny tots with their eyes all aglow will find it hard to sleep tonight.

They know that Sam was on its way. You know, for you type A people, you aren't going to like this sermon. We're talking about the fruits of the Spirit.

[ 22 : 52 ] Love, joy, peace today. Can you say the rest of them? Patience, kindness, gentleness.

Oh, you all know self-control. I know you know that one. Because you all practice it so much. This morning we're going to talk about peace. Peace. Peace. The peace of God.

You know, when we read that story about the shepherds out in the hills watching their flocks by night, I don't know that we fully grasp their reality because we come from a different world than they do.

They were out at night watching their sheep. And there would have been maybe a couple little tiny glows from the town of Bethlehem.

Those street lights. No airplanes buzzing in the background. No traffic. No car lights or anything else. No glows from a city. We're talking dark.

[ 23 : 54 ] So dark that they may not have been able to see their hands in front of them. And quiet. The only sound that they would have heard was occasionally a sheep going, That's it.

Really, really quiet. And dark. And peaceful. Like we just don't even understand anymore.

We have a place out at Silver Lake we call the Meadow. It's surrounded by trees. And if you go down out in the meadow, the lights don't get into the meadow, and you can lay on your back and look up into the sky, and you can see the Milky Way.

I took my brother-in-law there one time, and he was looking up at it, and he said, Well, you know, it'd be okay if it wasn't for that cloud that's in the way of... I said, That is the Milky Way. You've never seen it.

Because all we have is light pollution, and sound pollution, and noise, and clatter, and craziness. What a calm picture. Peace.

[ 24 : 58 ] All is well with the world. But the problem is, is most people don't feel at peace. They don't feel really okay. Especially this time of year.

Christmas doesn't help. I went out Friday night. My wife wanted to go to the store and pick up some game. So you know what it's like. You get in the parking lot, and you see a parking space and you go around to get in it.

Just as you get in there, somebody slips in. It's that smirk they give you when they get out of the car, you know? Without that, it'd be okay. You want to run them over just to do it. So she goes in the store, and I'm waiting for her, and I'm waiting for her, and I'm waiting for her.

Now I know that there's long lines and such. Well, there is no game in the store. She doesn't have it. She can't find it there. She's been calling every store, even competitor stores, in the entire region.

There is no game. And of course, Christmas will not be complete unless we get whatever this game is. And somebody told me, don't even go on the boulevard because there's like four miles of it that are just a plain parking lot.

[ 26 : 04 ] So I'm just staying away from that part of the world. Then when you do get the gift, you bring it home. Don't you love this? Wrapping paper is so different than it used to be.

Not just the Christian-themed thing, you know, but the idea that the rolls are shorter. Have you noticed this? So you get this box, you put it down on the floor, and you take the whole roll of wrapping paper, you wrap it around, and it comes up an inch and a half short.

Have you ever noticed this? It's like they measured all the boxes in the world, and they know that it'll come up an inch and a half short. So you've got to cut like a two-inch strip off of some other paper that doesn't match, tape it on the bottom, you know, and hope nobody will ever see this, right?

And you're just getting it put together, and you're just holding it, and the phone rings. And you've got to decide. You let it go, which took you 20 minutes to get there, or do you answer the phone, right?

So you reach for the phone, the scissors fall, you know, cut your toe, and you're sitting there looking at it, bleeding, thinking, now, do I need stitches or not? Can I reattach it with the scotch tape?

[ 27 : 06 ] We know that won't work because nobody can get the scotch tape started, so that'll never happen, right? And probably about that point, you say a word you shouldn't have said, but your two-year-old immediately repeats.

Not just to you, but to the neighbors the next day. And that's when you find out that your neighbor is best friends with your boss, and oh, it all goes south.

Stress! Christmas is not helping. We have to have the perfect gift. We have to have the perfect meal. We have to have the perfect life. We have to have everything just so, and it's making us crazy.

And the problem is, even if we accomplish what we're trying to accomplish, it feels like we never quite make it. The writer of Ecclesiastes, King Solomon, said this.

He said, When I surveyed all that my hands had done and what I had toiled to achieve, everything was meaningless. A chasing after the wind. Just trying to catch the wind. And that's what it feels like for so many people.

[ 28 : 05 ] As a culture, it seems we have a self-esteem problem. Nobody feels good about who they are and what they're doing and how their life's going and how their jobs are going and how their families are going.

Nothing's quite right. Some of us start out with it. We're told from the very beginning that we're not going to measure up. I grew up in Chikawaga, and I went to church in Snyder.

Now, if you're not from this area, you don't know the difference, but believe me, we knew the difference. And when we went to church, we went to a men's breakfast thing once with my father and I, and my father said to me, Now, Tom, you keep your mouth quiet and your head down because we're football, they're golf.

We're beer, they're scotch. Okay? So just don't open your mouth because you will make a fool of yourself and you won't like it. It's kind of an odd thing, isn't it?

And here now I'm in Pendleton, so go figure it out. I don't know. There's a feeling somehow we don't measure up. And no matter how well we try, it doesn't work, and everybody seems to be critical.

[ 29 : 12 ] They call it constructive criticism. Have you ever noticed that? Your boss, your spouse, your teacher, your kids, your friends, your family, your church, your pastor, they're just trying to help you be a little bit better.

I'm a little tired of being helped. We're just like a peaceful moment where somebody would just forget about trying to make me better and concentrate on themselves.

I'm sorry, that was a sermon. And our kids, just as bad. We have preschool plays in here this week. Little guys. So I'd come in, before the preschool play would start, and I'd stand right about here and I'd say, okay, they're going to come up here and they're going to do the best they can, right?

But they're three years old. Give them a break. They're going to melt down. They're going to collapse. Some of them are going to run out. Some of them are going to walk away. They're not going to do the right thing. They're three and four years old.

You know? Don't like rip into them because they forgot the word. It doesn't matter. They're little itty bitty kids. These poor kids are stressing out. I hear people are having a 25-year crisis.

[ 30 : 28 ] We don't wait until midlife anymore. The shepherds. Shepherding was a terrible job. It was lonely.

You sat out in the field watching animals. And these were not the brightest animals in the world. In fact, sheep are the least intellectually capable. Am I saying this right?

I know I get in trouble if I use that word, so I'm trying to avoid it, right? The sheep were that. You know what I'm talking about, okay? I'm not going to get in trouble. They're intellectually not very astute, okay?

These sheep. And the shepherds, they like live out there. There's no showers. There's no bedrooms. There's not even a bed. They smell.

They smell. They're lonely. It's cold. They're not paid very well. It's kind of a miserable job. We have a picture of shepherds, you know, from church where we put them in bathrobes and think that they look noble and great and wonderful.

[ 31 : 32 ] Shepherds were considered the lowest of the low in their culture. Here they are sitting out there just trying to mind their own business. Just wanted to be left alone. Sometimes we're not asking for much.

Just don't get all over us. In this letter from Colossians, Paul talks to us about what God thinks of us.

And God thinks more of you than you might realize. You know, in John 3.16, it says, God so loved the world that he gave his only son that whoever believes in him will not perish but have eternal life.

We all know that verse, right? But it goes on to say, God did not send his son into the world to condemn the world but to save the world through him. God loves you.

Do you realize that? God even loved these shepherds. Now just picture, they're in this like dark where they can't hardly see their hands and it says a light shone around.

[ 32 : 36 ] I mean, you know what it's like when you're in a dark room and somebody turns on a light. Imagine, this is like the brightest light you've ever seen in the darkest place you've ever been in. And the angels appear.

Now, we don't really picture angels, right? Because we've got this like touched by an angel show in our mind of this pretty little girl. Angels are like frightening. These guys came in full battle gear.

I don't know why, but they did according to the scripture. And they're like in front of these shepherds who are going, they're freaking out. They're freaking out.

It doesn't say that in the Bible, but they are. You can tell because it says they were. They were terribly frightened. They're freaking out. What is, and the angel said, don't be afraid.

Don't be afraid. God has good news for even you. You shepherds. God has good news for you. That today a Savior is going to be born in the city of Bethlehem.

[ 33 : 36 ] And he's going to bring peace on earth. Goodwill towards everybody, including you. Wow. Verse 12 of this chapter in Colossians, Paul says, God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience.



[ 38 : 00 ] You know, in verse 16 here, it says, let the message of Christ well in you richly, as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom, through psalms, hymns, and songs, from the Spirit. I said, I know, a song, a song, a song, a song, a song, a song, a song, a song, a song, a song, a song, a song, a song, a song, a song, a song, a song, All is Bright.

A couple other people yelled, when do we get the gifts? And I noticed we were really not going to get there, you know. It was better than we had done before.

It was worth trying. Maybe a few people appreciate it. And then we turned loose on the gifts, and they just all, you know, did what they did. See, this is what we live in. We live in a culture where God is mixed in with the chaos and the craziness, and somehow we need to be the silent light in the midst of this.

We need to be the people of peace. We need to be the people of love and of caring and concern. But that isn't easy. It's not easy to live in peace.

It's not easy to love some people. It's not easy to be compassionate and humble and kind and gentle and patient, as it says in the air. Let me explain about shepherds.

[ 39 : 18 ] I want you to picture them. They haven't bathed for a month or two. All right? They don't even have soap. Why should they bathe? The guy next to them doesn't smell any better.

Their clothes haven't been cleaned for probably even longer. And you don't even want to look at their teeth. Nonetheless, the breath that comes out of there. All right? You have to picture some of the smelliest, messiest people you've ever seen in your life.

Now, ladies, I know these are the kind of folks you want to show up to your birthing room. All right? Imagine. There's Mary.

She just gave birth to her little boy. And this crew shows up of the most, I am sorry, but I'm picking on people in the Bible, disgusting-looking folks you've ever seen.

Right? And they smell. Oh, my gosh. There's flies buzzing around them. I mean, it's terrible. I would have said, get out of here. Go take a bath and a shower and brush your teeth, for goodness sakes.

[ 40 : 26 ] Go away. My wife just gave birth to a child. She needs some rest. She doesn't need you. It's not easy to love everybody.

But you see, God didn't ask us to love people. He didn't ask us if we wanted to be kind and gracious. He gave us a command.

In John, he writes this, a new command I give you, love one another as I have loved you, so you must love one another.

How do you do that? How do you love people that you don't like? You have to tell me, there's got to be somebody that you don't like.

You know, somebody that as soon as you get in their presence, it's like somebody's running fingernails on a blackboard and you're going to say, please make it go away. You know? Everybody has those people. I mean, we don't like to admit it, but it's true.

[ 41 : 24 ] Right? There's people that we just assume would not be around us. And Jesus commands us that we have to love them too. In verse 14, it says we're to put on love.

Put on love. Put it on like a coat. In verse 13, it says we have to put up with one another. We're supposed to care for each other by acting loving.

We may not want to be loving. We may not feel loving. We may not even have a desire to be loving, but we can act loving towards other people.

Jesus said in the book of Matthew, if anyone gives even a cup of cold water to one of these little ones who is my disciple, truly I tell you, that person will certainly not lose their reward.

A cup of cold water. Or maybe a cup of nice, warm, spiced tea. Wouldn't that be better? Yeah. That would be good, wouldn't it?

[ 42 : 33 ] Yeah. Can you smell it back there? I hope so. That was the whole idea. I've got a cup. I've got a cup for me.

And I even have one for Sue. Here you go, Sue. Was it good the last night? It's wonderful, isn't it? I don't have any for you.

It is good, though. Yeah. Yeah. That's good. And doesn't that just make you even more upset?

See, because what's even harder sometimes to love is the people that get what we don't get. They got the parking lot. They got the game that you were looking for. They got the tree. They got the kid.

They got everything. They got the tea. Oh, that's good. It's real good. My mother used to call it reverse snobbery when we get angry at people that were wealthier than us.

[ 43 : 39 ] I thought that was an interesting term. She just made it up. She said that's no better than when rich people look down on poor people. If you act badly towards somebody who has more than you.

See, loving one another means loving everyone. No matter who they are, where they are, or what they are. And no, I didn't bring enough for you. I just didn't have that much, and I didn't think about it, to be honest with you.

Well, I didn't know how I would do it. But, you know, I didn't know how I would do it. I didn't know how I would do it. So, that's the way it is. But we have to learn to love each other anyways. Verse 14 of this passage says, Love is the glue that holds it all together.

And we love not because of what has been done for us by the other person. Not because of our condition, or because we got everything. We love because we've been loved by God himself.

God loved us so we can love. God gave us peace so we can bring peace. Do you understand this? God loves you.

[ 44 : 45 ] Each and every one of you, God loves you. He chose you. He decided out of the whole world that he was going to pick you to love and to put peace in your heart.

And when we come to realize and internalize just that God loves you people too. I don't want to leave you out because I haven't looked over here, you know. He loves you. He even loves you back there, Marsha.

I see you hiding, you know. God loves us. And he says that you're okay. And if God says you're okay, you are okay.

Our problem is, we struggle. And we hurt. And we cause hurt to other people. Because we're so focused on the pain, we don't see the blessing.

God forgave your sin. In verse 13, he tells us to forgive others. Proverbs says, a gentle answer turns away wrath. We don't need harsh words.

[ 45 : 57 ] We don't need any more anger. Have you noticed there's a group of people in our culture right now that are trying to make you angry? Have you noticed this? Some of these people want to believe that this election couldn't go on for another year or two.

I mean, how many of you thought it was done in November? Good luck with that, right? It's still going. And you know why? I'll tell you why. You may have your ideas, but I'll tell you the reason.

Because people are tuning into TVs and radios and newspapers because they want to be angry about this. And as long as you keep being angry about this, they can keep selling you stuff through your anger.

They're making it up. They're just doing it to make you angry. But that's not the way of Jesus. In verse 15, it says, let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts.

Since as members of one body, you were called to peace and to be thankful. We belong to each other. We're meant to be at peace with each other.

[ 47 : 06 ] That doesn't mean we'll always agree on everything. It simply means we're the people who are supposed to be loving and kind and gracious and humble and peaceful. And if Christians aren't, the world's in real trouble.

In the book of Romans, in chapter 14, it speaks a lot about this. And you can read the chapter at home. I'm just going to pick out a couple of verses from it. Accept one another whose faith is weak without quarreling over the little stuff.

Why do we argue over the little stuff? You then, why do you judge your brother or sister? Or why do you treat them with contempt? For we'll all stand before God's judgment seat.

Therefore, let us stop passing judgment on one another. Instead, make up your mind not to put any stumbling block or obstacle in the way of a brother or sister. Let us therefore make every effort to do what leads to peace and mutual edification.

God calls us to peace. Our problem is, we're so anxious, we're in such a hurry, you are so concerned I'm going to go long in my sermon, that we freak out and we get angry instead of getting filled with peace.

[ 48 : 20 ] Do you know that passage in the psalm where it says, he makes us lie down in green pastures? That's because we aren't smart enough to stop ourselves. Sometimes we just have to slow down.

Take a walk on a snowy winter day. That's because we're not nearly halfway there. Take a walk in awhile because there's two bullets where these microorganisms are always going to help use to stir in one another.

To episode 22, close the distance because of the Samarte sometimes those numbers or most of the people seent youriente doesn't know but we're still walking as well to open it up to the application in the process where I know some of you are saying, what's the point?

That's it. That's it. Just be quiet. Be still. And let the peace of God flow over you. I had a dog that made me quiet down.

His name was Alpha, and he was nearing the end of his days. So this was a couple years ago when the snow was like up to here. Remember that? So you're shoveling sidewalks and driveways.

[ 49 : 42 ] I'm shoveling a path for my dog to walk in the backyard. You can imagine. And then I've got to walk with him on the path. Come on. Come on.

Oh, you decide to take a rest? Okay. I'll stand out here. A little cold. Nothing going on. I have stuff to do, but I'll just stand here.

Come on. You need help getting up? Okay. Come on. Let's walk. We've only gotten 10 feet. We've got the whole yard to walk yet.

Let's go. Mm-hmm. And he made me be still. And as much as it drove me crazy to dig a path in the snow for this dog, and I thought this was the craziest thing in the world.

For that short period of time, I slowed down. And you know what? I miss that time. I miss that quiet moment. It was me and my dog out in the cold. In the snow.

[ 50 : 48 ] Being quiet. Take a cup. Cider. Sit by the fireplace. And do nothing. And listen for the angels of God.

When we let love and peace dwell in us, it shows out to the world, and in doing so, we show the world God.

Jesus said he had that new commandment for us. To love one another as I have loved you, you must love one another. And then he goes on to say, by this, everyone will know that you are my disciples if you love one another.

Every action we do, as it says in verse 17, should honor God. Because God loves us.

In spite of who we are. Not because we're perfect. No one's perfect. In the one preschool play this week, they were doing the alphabet. You know? M is for major.

[ 51 : 53 ] That kind of a thing. So a little boy had F. F is for Frankenstein. You know? Like the kings brought gold, Frankenstein, and myrrh.

He became the star of the show. Because he messed up. We don't have to be perfect. God loves us.

Even when we're imperfect, he chose you. He chose you, and he asked you to love one another. So every day we need to clothe ourselves like we're putting on our jackets with compassion and kindness and humility and gentleness and patience.

Show God is. God is. By who we are and what we do. It says that we're supposed to put Christ in our hearts. We're supposed to teach one another and encourage one another with wisdom.

Through psalms and hymns and songs. You know the kind of songs to me. Grandma got run over by a reindeer. Coming home from my house, Christmas Eve.

[ 53 : 03 ] Right? Where do we come up with this stuff? All the hip and pop is for Christmas. What? Really? Really? Where do we get this stuff? No. God has better songs in mind for us.

The songs that the shepherds probably sang when they were leaving that place. And it says they were praising God and singing. It came upon a midnight clear.

That glorious sun of old. From angels bending near the earth. To touch their harps of gold. He sung the air and will to walk.

From heavens all gracious feet. The world in solemn stillness may.

To hear the angels sing. Still through the cloven skies they come.

[ 54 : 32 ] With peaceful wings unburnt. And still their heavenly music float. For all the weary world.

Above its sad and lonely plate. They bend on heart and wings. And then through all the battle's sight.

The blessed angels sing. And keep me with my scratching throat.

Whose horns are banded long. Who told the lock the climbing way.

With painful saps and smud. Look now for glad and bold in us. Come swiftly on the way.

[ 55 : 37 ] O rest beside the weary road. And hear the angels sing.

For though the days are easing on. My prophets sing the bold. When with the ever-sarming years.

Shall come the time for dawn. When peace shall over all the earth. Its anxious splendors gleam.

And the whole world send back. The song which now the angels sing.

Long time ago in Bethlehem. Long time ago in Bethlehem.

[ 56 : 51 ] So the whole revival say. Mary's born child Jesus Christ. Was born on Christmas day.

But now hear the angels sing. Blue wings born today. We will live forevermore.

Because of Christmas day. Shepherds watched their flocks. Shepherds watched their flocks. By night they saw blind blue shining star.

And heard our choir from heaven sing. The music came from afar. I can hear the angels sing.

New kings born today. And we will live forevermore. Because of Christmas day.

[ 57 : 50 ] Joseph and his wife Mary. They came together that night. They found no place to bear her child.

Not a single room was beside. By and by they found a little nut. In a stable of old Lord.

And in a manger cold and dark. Mary's little boy child was born. Trumpets sound and angels sing.

Listen to what they say. And we will live forevermore. Because of Christmas day.

And we will live forevermore. Because of Christmas day. Please be seated.

[ 58 : 53 ] You know, there are things we do wrong. And we know it. And there's things we do wrong. That we plan to do wrong. That's real sin. But there's things we do wrong. And we didn't really need to do it.

We didn't intend to do it. We just got caught up in it. Caught up in the moment. That sin needs to be forgiven too. Because it hurts other people. And it hurts us.

And it certainly hurts the witness of God. So we need to put away that brokenness. And fill our hearts with the love that God gave to us in his peace. So let's lift that up to God in prayer, shall we?

Dear God in heaven. I have sinned. I've hurt other people. I've gotten angry. Frustrated.

Frustrated. And disappointed. I forget your love. And I don't seek your peace. Forgive me, Lord.

[ 59 : 53 ] Help me to remember. How much I'm loved. And let your Holy Spirit. Fill me with peace. Now and forever.

In Jesus' name we pray. Amen. God loves you. He loves you so much that he doesn't even care what you've done wrong.

He's going to forget all that. Erase it. And start over. In the name of Jesus Christ, your sins are forgiven. Amen. Glory to God.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. John. John.

John. John.

[ 62 : 13 ] I live down at Christmas. And I know. I know that love is mine. And I know.

I know that love is mine. God loves us so much.

God loves us so much that he made a way. For us to be in relationship with him. In such a wonderful, wonderful way. God has invited us to this table to celebrate.

To this table that represents all that God has done for us. That represents God's love for us. Come and receive.

Everyone is welcome. If you love God. Repent of your sin. And seek to live in peace as a disciple of Jesus Christ. You are welcome to come to the table.

[ 63 : 16 ] It doesn't matter if you're a new Christian. It doesn't matter if you've never been in a church before in your life. In the United Methodist Church. You are welcome to come to the table. If you come.

Seeking God. So come this morning and receive all God has for you. The Lord be with you. Lift up your hearts.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God. It is right and a good and joyful thing always and everywhere to give thanks to you, Father Almighty, creator of heaven and earth.

You formed us in your image and breathed into us the breath of life. When we turned away and our love failed, your love remained steadfast. You delivered us from captivity, made covenant to be our sovereign God, and spoke to us through your prophets who looked for that day.

When justice shall roll down like waters and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream. When nations shall not lift up sword against nations, neither shall they learn war anymore.

[ 64 : 23 ] And so with your people on earth and all the company of heaven, we praise your name and join their in ending hymn. Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might, heaven and earth are full of your glory.

Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest. Holy are you and blessed is your son Jesus Christ, whom you sent in the fullness of time to be a light to the nations.

You scatter the proud in the imagination of their hearts and have mercy on those who fear you from generation to generation. You put down the mighty from their thrones and exalt those of low degree.

You fill the hungry with good things and the rich you send empty away. Your own son came among us as a servant to be Emmanuel, your presence with us.

He humbled himself in obedience to your will and freely accepted death on a cross. By the baptism of his suffering, death, and resurrection, you gave birth to your church, delivered us from slavery to sin and death, and made with us a new covenant by water and the Spirit.

[ 65 : 44 ] And on the night in which he gave himself up for us, he took bread and he gave thanks to you. He broke the bread and gave it to his disciples, saying, take and eat.

This is my body which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me.

And when the supper was over, he took the cup. He gave you thanks and praise and gave it to his disciples. He said, drink from this, all of you. This is the cup of my blood, the blood of the new covenant poured out for you, poured out for many for the forgiveness of sin, do this as often as you drink, in remembrance of me.

And so, in remembrance of these, your mighty acts in Jesus Christ, we offer ourselves, in praise and thanksgiving, as a holy and living sacrifice, in union with Christ's offering for us, as we proclaim the mystery of faith.

Christ has died. Christ has risen. Christ will come again. Pour out your Holy Spirit on us gathered here. And on these gifts of bread and wine, make them be for us, the body and blood of Christ, that we may be for the world, the body of Christ redeemed by his blood.

[ 67 : 13 ] By your Spirit, make us one with Christ, one with each other, and one in ministry to all the world, until Christ comes in final victory. And we feast at his heavenly banquet.

Through your Son, Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit in your Holy Church, all honor and glory is yours, almighty God, now and forever. Amen. Shall we pray together, with the confidence of children of God, the prayer Jesus taught us.

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us, and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen. Will those who are serving, please come forward.

[ 68 : 20 ] Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.  
Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Thank you.

Thank you.

[ 70 : 03 ] Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

[ 73 : 03 ] Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you.