



Wednesday Prayer

First Sunday of Advent – Goal lines toward justice

He shall judge between the nations, and shall arbitrate for many peoples; they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more. O house of Jacob, come, let us walk in the light of the Lord! Isaiah 2:4-5

In our present-day culture, much of our holiday time has been usurped by football. In many homes, holiday meals are scheduled between bowl games, and families gather to watch their favorite teams work their way up and down the field by carrying or throwing the ball toward the desired goal. Coaches train their players with daily practice and use their strongest skills to create effective plays and game plans. We hold our breath to see if the ball goes through the goal posts or over the line into the end zone. We join in the victory dance when a touchdown is made, a goal is reached.

The Old Testament text for the First Sunday of Advent presents us with a different goal, a vision of justice and peace in our world. It seems distant and impossible. But just like a football team would never sit at one end of the field and think “Gee, I wish we could reach that goal at the other end to win the game”, we can’t allow ourselves to think that Advent is a time for passive waiting and wishing for the coming of God’s kingdom. Advent is a time to get out of the spectator seats and be intentional about moving forward toward this goal of justice.

It doesn’t matter if you’re a rookie or a veteran, it’s time to develop or continue a daily practice of prayer, and create a game plan as we prepare to follow the one who Isaiah is anticipating. As we block the efforts of those who want to tackle our youth through exploitation, we move toward this goal of bringing justice and peace for all. The victory dance comes with each child that finds safety in our sanctuaries or other safe spaces, and hope in healthy relationships with caring adults.

God of justice and peace, open our hearts to the coming of the Savior. Give us the hope that inspires us to move toward justice. Live and burn in our hearts so that in our waiting, we are praying, teaching and advocating for those experiencing injustice and welcoming the redeeming word of your coming in the Christ child. Amen.

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