

Footwashing – Advent Response

(You may also offer hand washing as an alternative. The Psalm frames this responsive action that invites us to deepen our understanding of the season and the challenges it presents us with.)

Response

Psalm 122

Leader: I was glad when they said to me,

All: "Let us go to the house of the Lord!"

Left: Our feet are standing within your gates, O Jerusalem.

Right: Jerusalem—built as a city that is bound firmly together—

*All: to it the tribes go up, the tribes of the Lord,
as was decreed for Israel,
to give thanks to the name of the Lord.*

Leader: For there the thrones of judgment were set up,

All: the thrones of the house of David.

Left: Pray for the peace of Jerusalem:

Right: "May those who love you prosper."

All: "Peace be within your walls, and security within your towers."

Leader: For the sake of my relatives and friends I say,
"Peace be within you."

*All: For the sake of the house of the Lord our God,
we seek your good.*

Prayer

Coming One,

as did the people of God in the time of the psalmist,

we long to receive your instruction in the ways that make for peace.

But we come not to a city or a place

but to you:

our Savior in whom alone peace abides.

Free us

from our insistence on

privilege,

power,

and position,

our obsession with "more,"

and our highly developed sense of entitlement.

Help us embrace the way of Jesus,
who came seeking the good of all,
whether enemies or friends.

Wake us up
to the establishment of your kingdom here on earth,
to the hope of Emmanuel,
and to the joy of new birth.

Help us find the courage and commitment
to wait for you,
to work for peace,
and to proclaim your wonder.

Cleanse us, coming One,
that we, assured of your presence,
may love without counting the cost
and die to the world
so that we may live to you. Amen.

Invitation to the Waters

Leader: Come.
Come to the cleansing waters
as a sign of your desire to be washed
and to know the peace that can only be found in Christ.
Receive these waters as a token of Jesus' presence with you,
as an acknowledgment that you are a child of his peace,
and as a sign of your commitment to live peaceably with all.

(Those offering the water should say to each individual: May you know more fully the mystery of God's dwelling in the present.)

Leader: For the sake of our families and friends, let us say it again:

People: we will live in peace!

Leader: For the sake of the house of our God, we promise:

People: God, we will do our very best for you. Amen.

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