

Peace, Love, Justice, Hope & Joy:

Churches for Middle East Peace's 2011 Advent & Christmas Reflections

*A Coming
for All People*

O God, I pray
for peace and justice
for all people.

O God, I pray
for love and joy
for all people.

O God, I pray
for all children,
women and men
of the Holy Land.

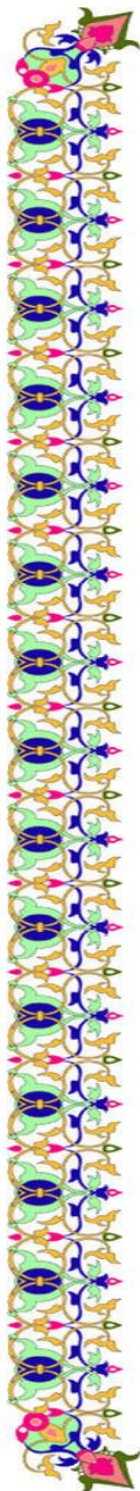
Through my words
and actions this day
help me live as
an instrument of
Your peace
and justice.

Through my words
and actions this day
help me live as
an instrument of
Your love and joy.

Let my expectations
of God with us,
of You with us,
include all people.

Help me to be like
Christ this and every
season.

Amen.



I am your servant; let it be to me
according to your word." – Luke 1:38

Expecting Hope

Ten women bishops returned from an ecumenical "[Pilgrimage for Understanding & Peace](#)" in the Holy Land. They visited places where Jesus lived and walked: Bethlehem, Jerusalem and Nazareth. Because they were in the Holy Land just prior to Advent, they offer the following litany as a gift to the Church for use in local congregations and personal reflection during this Advent season.

The Gospel of Luke describes Mary as overshadowed by the power of God. For God, nothing is impossible! Mary responds to God, "I am your servant; let it be to me according to your word."

An Advent Litany

Leader: It is Advent, and we wait and hope for peace and love.

Response: We are on our way to Bethlehem, where Jesus will be born.

Leader: Mary, overshadowed by God, says, "I am your servant; let it be to me according to your word."

Response: We are on our way to Bethlehem, where Jesus will be born.

Leader: Mary and Joseph travel and arrive weary and unwelcomed.

Response: We are on our way to Bethlehem, where Jesus will be born.

Leader: Bethlehem this Advent is weary and anxious in the shadow of the high dividing wall.

Response: We are on our way to Bethlehem, where Jesus will be born.

Leader: We in the world have lost our way. We need a Savior and Shepherd and Healer.

Response: Overshadow this world, O God, with your power and love.

Leader: Come, Lord Jesus, and bring peace in Israel and Palestine, and in every broken place.

Response: We pray for your birthplace as we make our way to Bethlehem.

Leader: Shatter darkness with your light as you come to gather, heal and save us.

Response: Come, Lord Jesus, Prince of Peace.

--Litany written by United Methodist Bishop Hope Morgan Ward

Members of the pilgrimage delegation were: Bishop Laura Ahrens, Episcopal Diocese of Connecticut; Bishop Sarah Davis, African Methodist Episcopal Church; Bishop Violet Fisher, United Methodist Church; Bishop Carolyn Tyler Guidry, African Methodist Church; Bishop Deborah Lieder Kiesey, United Methodist Church; Bishop Vashti McKenzie, African Methodist Episcopal Church; Bishop Jane Middleton, United Methodist Church; Bishop Teresa E. Snorton, Christian Methodist Episcopal Church; Bishop Mary Ann Swenson, United Methodist Church, and; Bishop Hope Morgan Ward, United Methodist Church



Churches
MIDDLE EAST PEACE