

**November 28, 2016**

**KJ Norris '14**

### **Scripture**

Psalm 122

- <sup>1</sup> I was glad when they said to me,  
    “Let us go to the house of the LORD!”
- <sup>2</sup> Our feet are standing  
    within your gates, O Jerusalem.
- <sup>3</sup> Jerusalem — built as a city  
    that is bound firmly together.
- <sup>4</sup> 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.
- <sup>5</sup> For there the thrones for judgment were set up,  
    the thrones of the house of David.
- <sup>6</sup> Pray for the peace of Jerusalem:  
    “May they prosper who love you.
- <sup>7</sup> Peace be within your walls,  
    and security within your towers.”
- <sup>8</sup> For the sake of my relatives and friends  
    I will say, “Peace be within you.”
- <sup>9</sup> For the sake of the house of the LORD our God,  
    I will seek your good.

### **Devotional**

Images flood our minds of the sorrows of this world: tent cities hosting hundreds of thousands of refugees; children so undernourished that eight-month-olds are mistaken for newborns; young black sons found dead in the streets; a political process so deceptive that a “Pinocchio Scale” is devised to see who tells the biggest lies. Where is peace? Where is true shalom—peace that is not just absence from violence but holistic rest—encompassing internal and external peace with God and neighbor and earth and self?

Advent, the season of waiting for Christ to come, is a time to remember how very good it is to go to the house of the Lord. We go to the house of the Lord not to forget the troubles of the world, not to hide our eyes from the suffering, but to acknowledge them. For we remember that God does not stand far off, does not ignore suffering and sin, but God enters in. God took on human flesh, felt hunger and thirst and pain. Our Lord Jesus Christ defeated sin and death. So we await Christ's coming again when True Shalom will reign. We do not hide from sorrow, but we confess our sins, what we have done and what we have left undone, our individual sins and our collective sins. And we pray for peace while believing in the one who was and is and is to come, our Prince of Peace.

**Prayer**

Almighty God, it is truly good to spend time in your house praising your name. We give you thanks that you do not stand far off, but that you enter into our suffering. Teach us to be advocates for peace in this restless world, in Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.