

Giving Light to the Voice

the second Sunday of Advent

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Luke 2:25–32 (NLT)

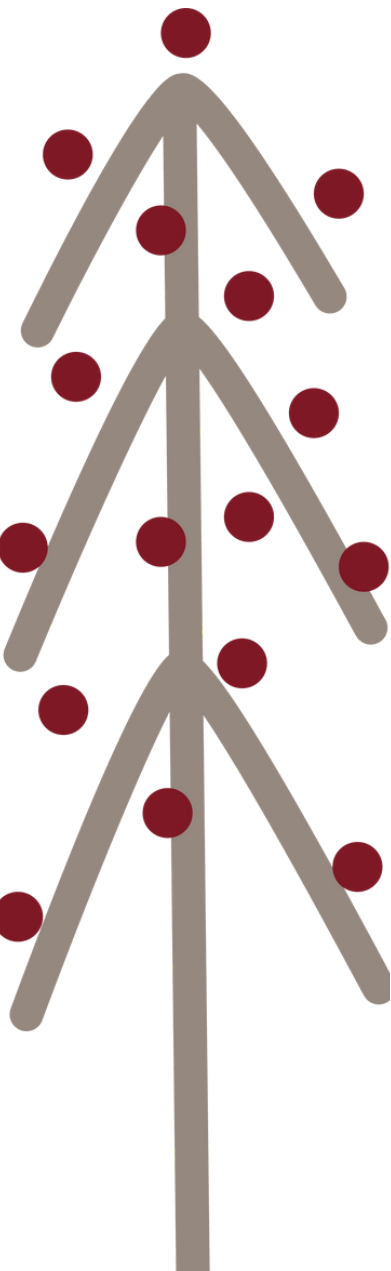
At that time there was a man in Jerusalem named Simeon. He was eagerly waiting for the Messiah to come and rescue. That day the Spirit led him to the Temple. So, when Mary and Joseph came to present the baby Jesus to the Lord as the law required, Simeon was there. He took the child in his arms and praised God, saying, “Sovereign Lord, now let your servant die in peace, as you have promised. I have seen your salvation, which you have prepared for all people. He is a light to reveal God to the nations, and he is the glory of your people Israel!”

Isaiah 53:4–5 (NLT)

Surely he took up our pain and bore our suffering, yet we considered him punished by God, stricken by him, and afflicted. But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was on him, and by his wounds we are healed.

Ephesians 2:14–15 (NLT)

For he himself is our peace, who has made the two groups one and has destroyed the barrier, the dividing wall of hostility, by setting aside in his flesh the law with its commands and regulations. His purpose was to create in himself one new humanity out of the two, thus making peace . . .



As Simeon sings over the infant Jesus, he recognizes that this child is the Messiah, the One he has been waiting for to rescue Israel. Simeon recognizes that he is holding the One who would fulfill God's promise to Israel. He sees that Jesus is the suffering servant from Isaiah, who would be punished so that we would have peace, and that by His wounds He would bring healing. Simeon recognizes that Jesus would rescue all people. Jesus is the light.

When light shines, it exposes things that are hidden in the darkness. In the last year God has shone His light into some dark places in Canadian society. One of these places involved the discovery of precious little bodies buried in the ground. God exposes systemic racism, prejudice and injustice - this is something none of us can ignore.

In order to have lasting peace and justice, we must first allow God to shine His light into our hearts. God promises to give His people - us - new hearts. He gives *all* of us His love to share with others. He gives *all* of us His love so that we would act on behalf of others. He gives *all* of us His love so that we would advocate for others.

But loving others also means that we allow our hearts to be broken . . . by the stories of struggle, pain and suffering that our BIPOC neighbours, colleagues, friends and family share. We can choose to not get involved. We can choose to assume someone else will do the work of justice and reconciliation. We can assume this is not our battle. But this is not what Jesus wants from us. This is not why He came.

We are told in Ephesians that Jesus has taken down the barriers that we build between ourselves. Jesus has done the work. The barriers that now exist are there because we have put them there. Do we hear that Jesus is inviting us to be a part of the one humanity He is building?

We must accept this invitation from Jesus. It is up to us to embrace the unity He offers us. We need to allow our human hearts to be freed from racism, prejudice, and injustice. We can bring His light to those dark places and expose the racism, prejudice and injustice we see in our homes, communities, cities, Canada, the world and . . . in our churches.

We can pray that barriers would come down.

We can pray that where we may be blind, our eyes would be opened to seeing racism.

We can pray that we will have the courage to call out prejudice and injustice.

We can advocate on behalf of the vulnerable.

We can create platforms for voices to be heard.

I encourage you to listen to Jamila tell her story as she models for us what it looks like to use our platforms as voices of influence.

**BIPOC = Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour*