

**Responsive Reading** from Isaiah 40 and Martin Luther King Jr.

Leader: Have you not known? Have you not heard? The Lord is the everlasting God, the Creator of the ends of the earth.

People: Faith is taking the first step even when you can't see the whole staircase.

Leader: He does not faint or grow weary; his understanding is unsearchable. He gives power to the faint, and strengthens the powerless.

People: The ultimate measure of a man is not where he stands in moments of convenience and comfort, but where he stands at times of challenge and controversy.

Leader: Even youths will faint and be weary; and the young will fall exhausted.

People: In the end, we will remember not the words of our enemies, but the silence of our friends.... Our lives begin to end the day we become silent about things that matter.

Leader: But those who wait for the Lord shall renew their strength. They shall mount up with wings like eagles; they shall run and not be weary; they shall walk and not faint.

People: Our capacity to deal creatively with shattered dreams is ultimately determined by our faith in God.

**Lighting of the 1<sup>st</sup> Advent Candle – Faith**

*During the candle lighting the congregation will sing "Peace be with you" in Arabic.*

**As-salaamu Lakum**

**204**

*Peace Be With You*

*♩ = 56*

As - sa - laa - mu la - kum, As - sa - laa - mu la - kum, Sa -  
- laam, Sa - laam, As - sa - laa - mu la - kum.

**Unison Prayer**

Gracious and merciful God, without you the way seems long, and we grow weary and faint. But you give us strength to stand in the face of adversity, to walk when the terrain is difficult, to run when others hesitate. Our faith in you leads us toward that vision of the beautiful Kingdom, where swords are beaten into ploughshares and nations learn war no more. Strengthen our faith, good Lord, that we may always move toward the coming of that Realm of peace and justice. In Jesus Christ, we pray. Amen.