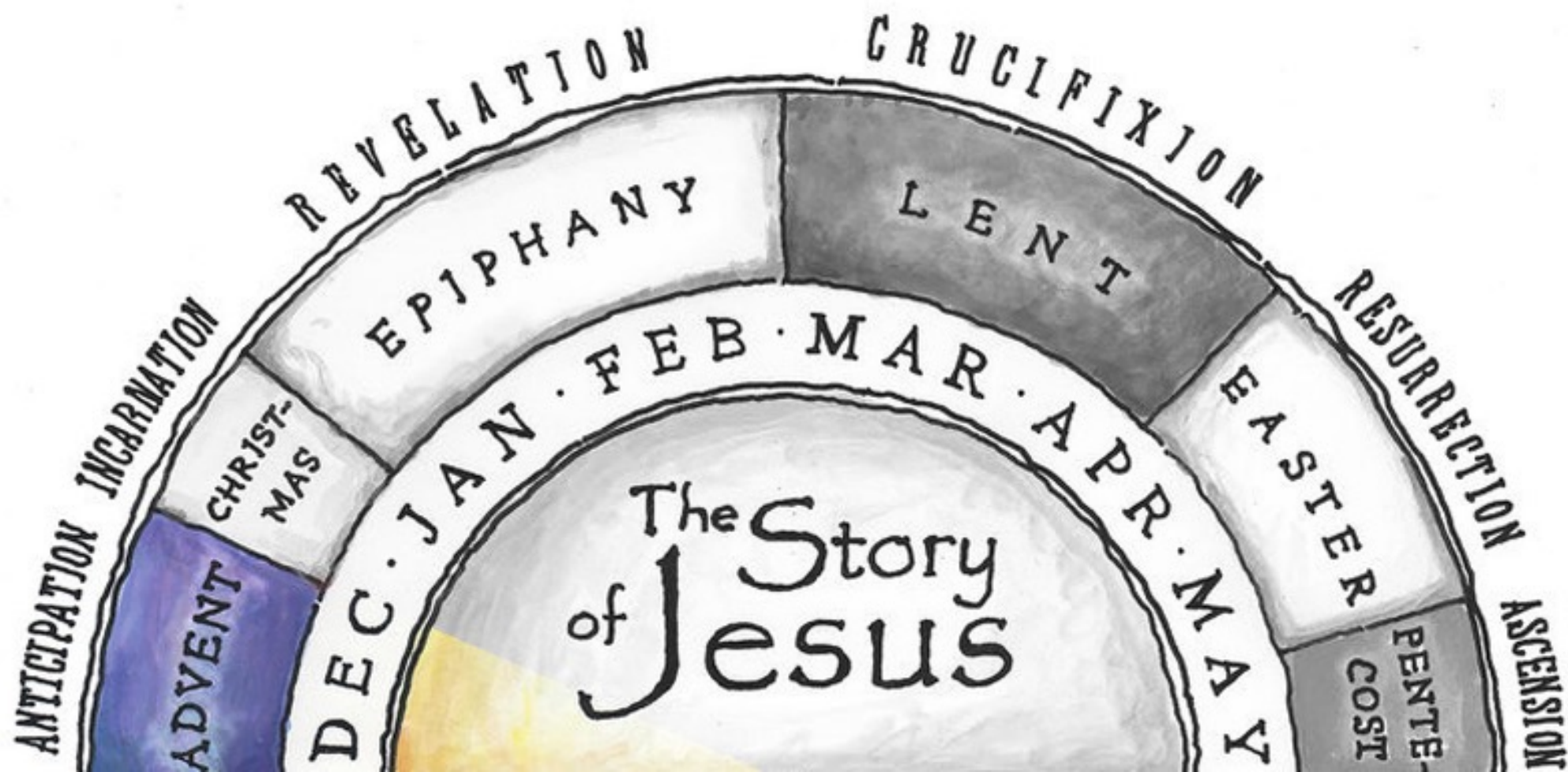


God of victory, who triumphs by the cross:
Clear our lives of hatred and despair,
empower us to sow seeds of joy and peace,
that shoots of hope may spring forth
and we may live in harmony
with you, and with one another.
Amen.

Opening Prayer







THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

A FILM BY

KEN BURNS, SARAH BOTSTEIN & DAVID SCHMIDT

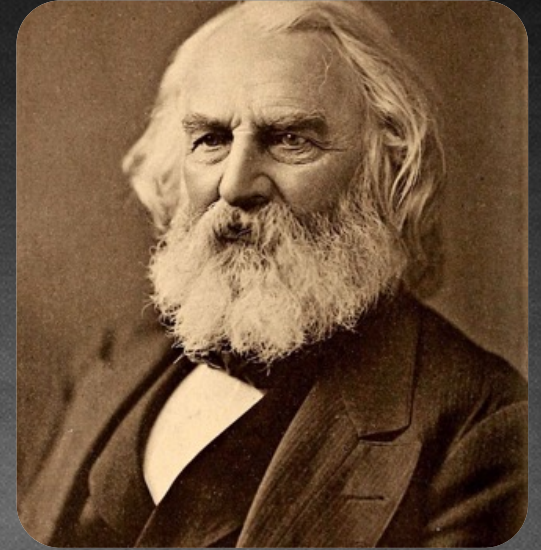


— THE —
CIVIL WAR
—
A FILM BY KEN BURNS



Christmas Bells

By Henry Wadsworth Longfellow
(1807-1882)



PEACE



A d v e n t



2 0 2 5

GOD WITH US

FAITH IN THE FACE OF GENOCIDE

2023



2025



AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL

At least 347 people, including 136 children, have been killed in Israeli attacks since the ceasefire on 9 Oct. Israel continues to restrict access to critical aid and relief supplies, including medical supplies and equipment necessary to repair life-sustaining infrastructure, violating multiple orders from the International Court of Justice (ICJ) for Israel to ensure that Palestinians have access to humanitarian supplies...

PEACE

2023



2024





A d v e n t



2 0 2 5

GOD WITH US

FAITH IN THE FACE OF GENOCIDE

SHANE CLAIBORNE

From the cradle to the grave, Jesus felt the pain of the human condition. Indeed, if we believe the Bible is true, then Jesus felt the heaviness of the world in such a crushing way that even He asked, “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?” God felt the absence of God. That’s how close God is to the pain.



PEACE

SHANE CLAIBORNE

17,000 children in Gaza are now orphaned. There is even an acronym for it: WCNSF—Wounded Child, No Surviving Family. Children in Gaza are now the largest group of child amputees in the world. If we aren't heartbroken and outraged, there is something wrong in our souls.



PEACE

SHANE CLAIBORNE

As we pray through this season, let us ask, “Lord, what else would you have me do?” For we know that faith without works is dead. Sometimes we are waiting on God to act, even as God is waiting on us to act.



PEACE

DEC.06

THE MOUNTAIN OF THE LORD & THE PROMISE OF PEACE



Isaiah 2:1-5

THEY SHALL BEAT THEIR SWORDS INTO
PLOWSHARES, AND THEIR SPEARS INTO
PRUNING HOOKS; NATION SHALL NOT LIFT
UP SWORD AGAINST NATION, NEITHER
SHALL THEY LEARN WAR ANY MORE
ISAIAH

ISAIAH 2:1-2

*In the last days
the mountain of the LORD's
temple will be established
as the highest of the mountains;
it will be exalted above the hills,
and all nations will stream to it.*

PEACE

ISAIAH 2:3-4

*Come, let us go up to the mountain of the LORD,
to the temple of the God of Jacob.*

He will teach us his ways,

so that we may walk in his paths

*They will beat their swords into plowshares
and their spears into pruning hooks.*

*Nation will not take up sword against nation,
nor will they train for war anymore.*

PEACE

REV. DR. MUNTHER ISAAC

But how tragic when this prophecy is misused. Some imagine Isaiah was predicting the political success of ancient Judah. Worse, others today twist it to justify the modern state of Israel, even while it wages oppression and apartheid. Isaiah's vision is far greater than nationalism/empire/politics, it is God's vision for all creation/peoples.



PEACE

REV. DR. MUNTHER ISAAC

The church's task today is to embody Isaiah's vision in miniature, to live it out even while the world resists it. Peace begins within us—between us and God, and then between one another. It shows in how we speak, how we pray, how we resist injustice, how we advocate, how we hope.



PEACE

REV. DR. MUNTHER ISAAC

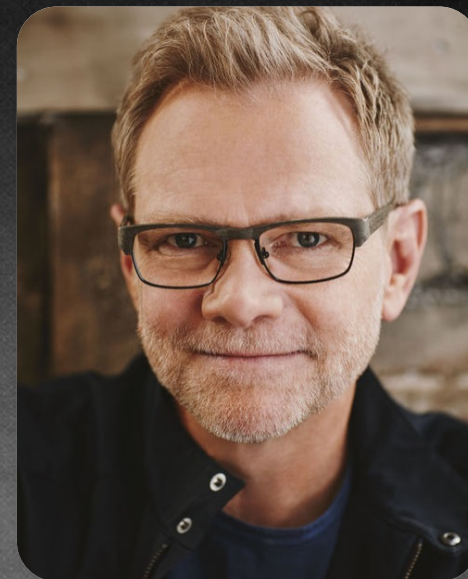
So let Isaiah's vision steady us in these dark days. Let us not surrender to cynicism. Let us imagine, believe, and embody the kingdom that has begun in Christ and will one day be fulfilled. And let us pray as Jesus taught us: "Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven."



PEACE

I Heard the Bells *on Christmas Day*

By Steven Curtis Chapman
(Released 2005)



PEACE

God of victory, who enters the war zone
of humanity as a child and triumphs
over empire by the power of the cross:
Cleanse our lives of hatred and despair,
empower us to sow seeds of joy,
that shoots of hope may spring forth
that we may live in the peace
of authentic justice. Amen.

Closing Prayer

