

Week 2

The Candle of Peace

For the second week of Advent, we relight the candle of Hope and add the candle of Peace. We give thanks that God is present in our relationships.

Candle Lighting

We light this second Advent candle, the candle of Peace.
This candle reminds us that God can create peace where there is trouble & conflict.

Wonder Together

I wonder how I can feel God's peace with me when someone is mean to me.
I wonder what a hug from God would feel like.

Candle Snuffing Prayer

May God's hope and peace keep growing in and through us,
even as we blow out these candles.



Week 2: Hands On Activity

Supplies:

- *3 magnets
- *1 skewer

700 years before Jesus was born, the prophet Isaiah wrote about a leader who was to come who would bring peace, "[he] will be like a banner that brings nations together. They will come to him. And the place where he rules will be glorious" (Isaiah 11:10). Jesus came to bring peace. Isaiah also gives us this wonderful description of what peace might look like. "Wolves will live with lambs. Leopards will lie down with goats. Calves and lions will eat together. And little children will lead them around" (Isaiah 11:6). It sure does not sound like the world we live in now! We know that not everyone gets along - can you even imagine predators and prey eating and sleeping together? What enemies, animals or otherwise, would you like to see at peace with each other?

Do: Arrange your 3 magnets with alternating polarities on your skewer leaving a gap between them (if the magnets snap together, flip one of them so it's facing the opposite direction). Think of groups of people that are not at peace with each other. How do you think peace can be brought to these people who do not get along? If you push the magnets together, will they stay together? Is there away to rearrange the magnets that will close the gap and put the magnets at peace with each other? Once you reverse the polarities of the magnets, they cling to each other and are hard to separate.

Through Jesus, God has come to close the gap between the way the world is now and the way God intends it to be. Jesus came to bring peace but expects our help. It is our job to help close the gap between people who do not get along. How can you be an agent of peace this week? Perhaps it starts in your own house, school or workplace.

Try praying this prayer when you see the need for peace: "May the God who gives hope fill you with great joy. May you have perfect peace as you trust in Jesus. May the power of the Holy Spirit fill you with hope" (Romans 15:13).



Nativity Story 3: Elizabeth

Read: When Mary entered Elizabeth's home, Elizabeth ran excitedly to greet her. Scripture tells us: "When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the baby inside her jumped. And Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit. In a loud voice she called out, 'God has blessed you more than other women. And blessed is the child you will have! ... As soon as I heard the sound of your voice, the baby inside me jumped for joy. You are a woman God has blessed. You have believed that what the Lord has said to you will be done!'" (Luke 1:41-45). Mary prayed aloud, "My soul gives glory to the Lord. My spirit delights in God my Savior. He has taken note of me even though I am not important. From now on all people will call me blessed. The Mighty One has done great things for me. His name is holy" (Luke 1:46-49). Mary stayed with Elizabeth about 3 months and then returned home to Nazareth.



Let's Talk: How do you think Mary felt when she heard Elizabeth's greeting? Mary's prayer is a very famous section of the Bible often called the Magnificat or Song of Mary. Many people have put Mary's words to music. Could you make up a song about the great things God has done in your life? Here is one example: <https://familyministrytools.org/2019advent/>

Elizabeth and Mary spent three months together. The Bible doesn't give us the details, but it does tell us the time. Why do you think this time was important to the women, one older and one much younger? Are there people in your life right now that you might benefit from spending time with? Are there people who might benefit from spending time with you?

Do: Find Elizabeth in your box and color her. In what ways could you make her look much older than Mary? Cut Elizabeth out and display her speaking with Mary.



Week 2: Interactive Prayer Activity

Supplies

Sharpie, rocks

Jesus told us that we are not only to pray for family and friends, we are also supposed to pray for people we do not like. In Matthew 5:44 Jesus said, "here is what I tell you. Love your enemies. Pray for those who hurt you."

We may think we do not have any enemies, but we all have people we do not like. Check out this video <https://familyministrytools.org/2019advent/>

How do you react when someone is throwing stones at you (being unkind)? Is your first reaction to retaliate (throw the stone or mean words back) or even escalate (throw a bigger stone or a bigger insult)? How do you think Jesus wants us to treat people who throw stones?

In Luke 6:27-28, Jesus says, "do good to those who hate you. Bless those who call down curses on you. And pray for those who treat you badly."

Do: Instead of throwing a rock at someone who treats us badly, we are going to use a rock as a reminder to pray for our enemies. Think about what you could write or draw on a rock to help you remember to pray for your enemies. Find rocks for each family member and then use your sharpie to write/draw on your rock. Place your rock somewhere that you will see it every night before going to bed. Each night take a minute to think back over your day and pray a blessing over anyone who may have hurt you. Not sure what to pray? Be honest. Tell God how you feel. Ask for help forgiving if that is needed. Ask God to bless your enemy and to show you how to do good in this situation.



Nativity Story 4: Joseph

Read: Joseph was engaged to be married to Mary, but before they started living together as husband and wife, it became clear that Mary was going to have a baby. Mary had become pregnant by the power of the Holy Spirit. Joseph was a godly man. He did not want people to say awful things about Mary, so Joseph decided to divorce her quietly. While Joseph slept, an angel appeared to him in a dream. The angel said, "Joseph, son of David, don't be afraid to take Mary home as your wife. The baby inside her is from the Holy Spirit. She is going to have a son. You must give him the name Jesus. That is because he will save his people from their sins" (Matthew 1:20-21). When Joseph woke up, he did what the angel commanded him to do and took Mary home as his wife.



Let's Talk: How do you think Joseph was feeling before his dream? How do you think Joseph felt after his dream? Do you think it was easy for Joseph to obey the angel's command? Why or why not?

There are not many facts recorded about Joseph in the Bible. He is mentioned only related to the events surrounding Jesus' birth, flight to Egypt, return to Galilee. Joseph obeyed the Lord without question during this time and he was blessed by God. God had an amazing plan for Joseph's life! Do you find it easy to obey without questioning? Like with Joseph, what amazing plan might God have for your life?

Do: Find Joseph in your box and color him. Cut Joseph out and display him speaking with the angel.

FMT

Left Blank Intentionally

FMT