

**Isa. 11:1–10**

**Ps. 72:1–7, 18–19**

**Rom. 15:4–13**

**Matt. 3:1–12**

# Peace All Around

**Goal for  
the Session**

*Children will hear the description of peace from Isaiah and translate it into a picture of peace for today.*

## ■ PREPARING FOR THE SESSION

### Focus on Isaiah 11:1–10

#### WHAT is important to know?

—From “Exegetical Perspective” by Bruce C. Birch

The vision of harmony in verses 6–10 is often referred to as the vision of “the peaceable kingdom.” The image is of a return to Eden when God’s reign is finally consummated. When the anointed one described in earlier verses ushers it in, broken creation becomes the completely harmonious creation God intended. The earth will now be filled with the “knowledge of the LORD” (v. 9). This Hebrew term for knowledge is more than cognitive information; it is the full entering into and experiencing of what is known. So the earth will be infused with the reality of God, and it shall be as comprehensive as the waters of the sea (v. 9).

#### WHERE is God in these words?

—From “Theological Perspective” by Noel Leo Erskine

The church is not the kingdom of God, but its relationship to the kingdom signals its mission. The realm of God shines through the witness and mission of the church as the poor have good news preached to them and are judged with righteousness and equity. The Messiah awaits the church in a future of righteousness marked off by the gifts of wisdom and understanding, counsel and might, knowledge and the fear of God, beckoning the church to a new future not of its own making but one made possible by YHWH. The challenge is not to be stuck in the traditions of the past but to be open to the new realm in which the proud will be punished, the humble will be exalted, and the practice of justice will be the order of a new day.

#### SO WHAT does this mean for our lives?

—From “Pastoral Perspective” by Stacey Simpson Duke

This is how hope gets its start—it emerges as a tiny tendril in an unexpected place. Where are the stumps in our own lives; where do we feel cut off? Can we imagine or believe that even now God might be nurturing the growth of something new and good from our old, dead dreams? Consider what areas of our lives most need the promise of new life, and how we might become open to such newness. Isaiah’s promise is not just a future one; even now there are tiny signs of hope and life in places that look dead and discarded.

#### NOW WHAT is God’s word calling us to do?

—From “Homiletical Perspective” by Paul Simpson Duke

What of the “little child” who leads them? Shall Christians think of Jesus again? We should not make this move too quickly. Like the calf, lamb, kid, and ox, the child stands for the vulnerable, and is joined by others even younger and more vulnerable, happily playing in a safe world at last. Why is it the child who leads the whole bleating, mooing, yipping, snuffling, roaring, giggling company? The new creation wants a human presence—new, bright, undefended, and free—to love and care for it all.

**FOCUS SCRIPTURE**

***Isaiah 11:1–10***

## Focus on Your Teaching

In this electronic culture, where news stories are immediately available, children cannot be shielded from terror and violence. Children of all ages express their longing for peace: at home, in school, throughout the community, and in the world. They find hope when they learn how adults are working to bring peace and that God desires peace for all creation. Children are accustomed to the idea of animals doing things out of the ordinary, and they will gravitate to the images of animals in Isaiah. This session concentrates on verses 1–2 and 6–10.

### YOU WILL NEED

- ❑ four purple or blue candles (real or battery-operated)
- ❑ purple or blue cloth
- ❑ offering basket
- ❑ Bible
- ❑ *Singing the Feast*, 2022–2023; CD player
- ❑ Color Pack 1, 29, 30
- ❑ matches
- ❑ Resource Sheet 1

### For Responding

- ❑ option 1: newspapers or articles, newsprint, 8½" x 14" plain paper, markers
- ❑ option 2: copies of Resource Sheet 2
- ❑ option 3: Color Pack 2, Bible, drawing paper, newspapers, watercolor paints, paintbrushes, paper towels, fine-tipped markers (optional)
- ❑ option 4: newspapers and magazines, copies of Resource Sheet 3, fine-tipped markers, ribbon, scissors, glue sticks, hole punch

*God of peace, I too long for peace in our world. Give me the courage to search the words of Isaiah for your message of hope. Amen.*

## LEADING THE SESSION

### GATHERING

*Before the session*, cut apart the animals on Color Pack 1. Place a bookmark in the worship table Bible at Isaiah. Use the color of candles and cloth that is used in the sanctuary.

As the children arrive, have them help you prepare the worship table with the purple or blue cloth, Advent candles, Bible, and offering basket.

When you are ready to begin, invite the children to be seated. Light two Advent candles.

Welcome the children to a new church year. Introduce any guests. Light two Advent candles. Have everyone stand in a circle. Ask the group to respond with “Come, Lord Jesus!” whenever you signal by raising your hand and to do what you do as they say it. Lead this ritual:

**Leader:** *Advent is looking back to Jesus’ birth in Bethlehem.*

**All: Come, Lord Jesus!** (Shield eyes with one hand as though looking into the distance, look back over one shoulder.)

**Leader:** *Advent is looking ahead to Jesus’ return to rule one day.*

**All: Come, Lord Jesus!** (Shield eyes with one hand, point forward with the other hand.)

**Leader:** *Advent is looking into our hearts for Jesus’ presence today.*

**All: Come, Lord Jesus!** (Cross arms over chest and bow head.)

**Leader:** *Come, Lord Jesus, teach us your word of peace. Amen.*

**All: Amen.** (Raise both hands above head.)

Read stanzas one and two of “Four Candles” (Color Pack 29). If you take an offering, receive it now. Extinguish the candles.

On Advent 1, review the message God had for Isaiah to give to God's people (Isaiah 2:1–5).

Place the animals cut from Color Pack 1 on a table. Invite the children to select one and tell all they know about that animal. (Some animals may be chosen more than once.) After the last animal has been described, explain that the Bible passage for this session includes these animals.

## EXPLORING

Have a child retrieve the Bible from the worship table and open it to the bookmark at Isaiah. Explain that the story today is also from the book of Isaiah in the Old Testament. Have the child turn to chapter 11.

Tell the story on Resource Sheet 1 (Another Advent Message from Isaiah). Review it with these questions:

- ✧ Why did Isaiah have a message from God for the people of Judah?
- ✧ What was the good news in this message?

Listen to “A Shoot Will Rise” (Color Pack 30; track 1 on *Singing the Feast, 2022–2023*).

Distribute the animals from Color Pack 1 to the children. Give some children two animals, if necessary to distribute them all. Read verses 6–10 as the children act out what is happening. Ask:

- ✧ What surprises you about the way the animals act in these verses?
- ✧ Why would these verses give the people hope for a better world?
- ✧ How would the world today be different if we had God's peace?

## RESPONDING

Offer at least two options so the children have a choice. One might be more challenging to interest children who can work on their own.

1. **Visual Prayers** Prayer is one way God's people participate in God's vision of peace. This visual prayer is a way for children to express their hope without words. Set out newspapers or selected stories about problems in the world for the children to read the headlines or the articles. Encourage children with advanced reading skills to help others. Ask:
  - ✧ What are some big problems in the world today?

List their answers on newsprint, capturing each one in two or three words. Distribute 8½" x 14" unlined paper. With the long side horizontal, help the children fold the two short ends so they meet in the middle. Crease the folds. Open the sides for the children to draw a picture of one big problem from the list. Have each child cover his or her picture with the side folds for him or her to draw a picture of how it would look if that problem were solved or wiped away. Save the visual prayers for Closing.


**EASY  
PREP**

Edward Hicks's famous painting *The Peaceable Kingdom* can be seen at: [bit.ly/HicksPeaceableKingdom](https://bit.ly/HicksPeaceableKingdom).

2. **Peace Table** Children learn ways to practice peace through conflict resolution. Distribute copies of Resource Sheet 2 (Peace Table). Ask a volunteer to read Isaiah 11:9 on it. Suggest that a place where nothing was harmed or destroyed would be a place full of God's peace. Read the paragraph after the verse on the resource sheet. Invite the children to follow as you read the nine steps about meeting at a peace table. Try out the peace table process by asking the children to name a problem or disagreement between two people, such as an argument over what is the best sports team or how to share a bedroom with a sibling. After they have seen how the peace table works, ask:

✧ When do you think you could use the peace table?

✧ If you wanted a third person, who would you ask?

3. **Mural of Peace** Today's focus scripture has inspired many works of art. Show Color Pack 2. Invite the children to study it for a few minutes. Read Isaiah 11:6–10 aloud slowly as the children find visual images for the words. Invite the children to think of places in their schools or community where peace is needed. Provide paper, watercolor paints, and brushes for them to paint what peace would look like in those places. If time allows, they can add details with fine-tipped black markers. Display the children's artwork on a mural that includes the text of Isaiah 11:9 written out.

4. **Peaceable Kingdom Ornaments** These ornaments can be hung on the Christmas tree as a reminder of God's peace as described in Isaiah. Set out old newspapers and magazines, and have the children cut out words or small pictures that suggest peace. Distribute copies of Resource Sheet 3 (Peaceable Kingdom Ornaments), scissors, fine-tipped markers, and glue sticks. Cut out the circles on the resource sheet and glue the words and small pictures on the blank side. Color the animals. Punch a hole in the top of the circle, and thread a 6" length of ribbon through it. Tie the ends to make a hanger.

#### Four Candles

Light one candle, Messiah  
is coming;  
wait and watch for his  
Advent is near.

He will meet us on God's  
holy mountain;  
how shall we prepare for  
his coming?

One. One candle to light  
the darkness.

One. One candle to light  
his way.

Light two candles, Messiah  
is coming;  
wait and watch for his  
Advent is near.

He will come from the  
family of Jesse;  
how shall we prepare for  
his coming?

Two. Two candles to light  
the darkness.

Two. Two candles to light  
his way.

#### CLOSING

Gather at the worship table. Light two candles. Read the second stanza of "Four Candles" (Color Pack 29), inviting children to echo each line. Ask:

✧ What in these words reminds you of Isaiah 11?

Sing stanzas one and two of "Four Candles" (Color Pack 29; track 8 on *Singing the Feast, 2022–2023*).

Look at any visual prayers from Responding. Ask children to name ways they can show God's peace to others in the coming week.

Tell the children that you hope to see them next week. To each child, say:

(Name), *remember that God's love can be found in peace and hope. Amen.*

## Another Advent Message from Isaiah including Isaiah 11:6–10

God chose men and women to give God's message to the people. These men and women were called *prophets*. Isaiah was one of the most famous prophets of God. Isaiah lived about 700 years before Jesus was born. His message was for the people who lived in Judah.

When Isaiah was a prophet, countries were at war all over the place. Each king wanted power. It was so terrible that the people of Judah who were God's people trusted the leaders of these countries instead of trusting God.

Not only did they not trust God, but they were not living in the ways that God had shown them. They did not treat others fairly. They were mean. And they worshiped other gods.

God's message to Isaiah for the people of Judah was that their nation would be destroyed by a foreign army. But the message from God also included hope. Listen for signs of hope in this part of the message given to Isaiah by God:

Someone from the family of Jesse will come. This one will be wise and strong.

This one will know and worship God. This one will be filled with God's spirit.

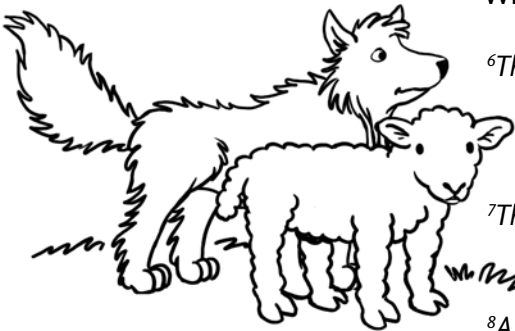
When this one comes, the world will live in God's peace.

<sup>6</sup>The wolf will live with the lamb,  
and the leopard will lie down with the young goat;  
the calf and the young lion will feed together,  
and a little child will lead them.

<sup>7</sup>The cow and the bear will graze.  
Their young will lie down together,  
and a lion will eat straw like an ox.

<sup>8</sup>A nursing child will play over the snake's hole;  
toddlers will reach right over the serpent's den.  
<sup>9</sup>They won't harm or destroy anywhere on my holy mountain.  
The earth will surely be filled with the knowledge of the LORD,  
just as the water covers the sea.

<sup>10</sup>On that day, the root of Jesse will stand as a signal to the peoples. The nations will seek him out, and his dwelling will be glorious.



## Peace Table

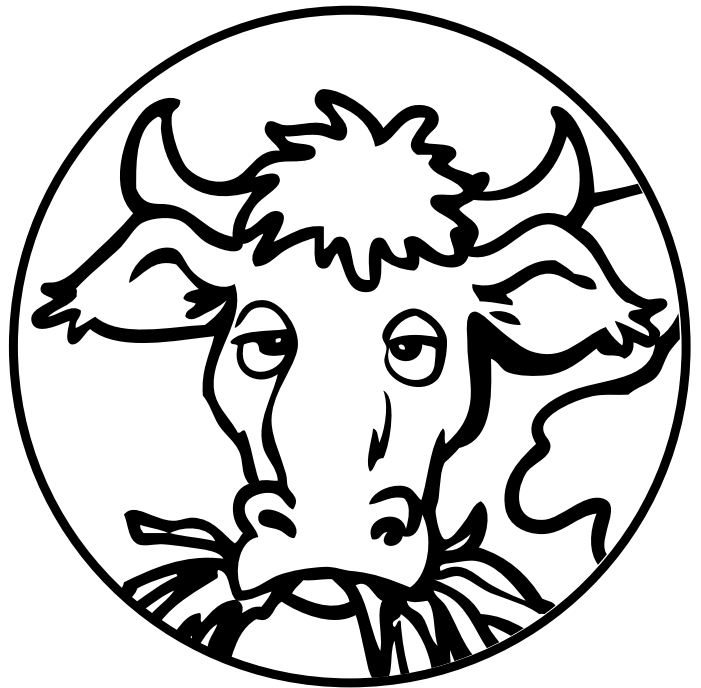
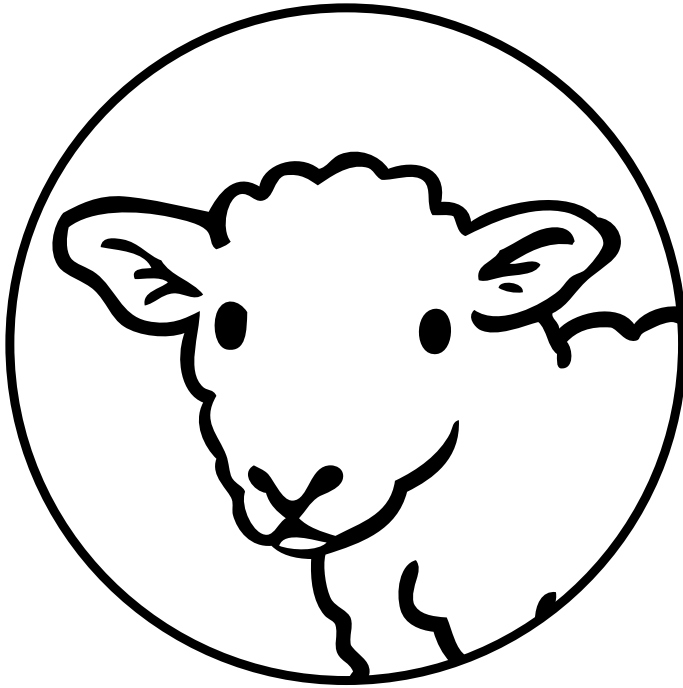
*They won't harm or destroy anywhere on my holy mountain.  
The earth will surely be filled with the knowledge of the LORD,  
just as the water covers the sea (Isaiah 11:9, CEB).*

You have a part to play in bringing peace to the world. When you have a problem with someone, come together at a peace table. This can work with friends, brothers, sisters, cousins, parents, or just about anyone. Here's how it works!

1. Choose a place to be your peace table. It can be a table in your house or two chairs outside. Really, any place can be a peace table, but look for a comfortable and safe space.
2. When there is a problem between you and another person, say, "We need a peace table." (Sometimes it helps to have a third person at the peace table.)
3. Begin with a short prayer, asking God's Spirit to be with you and to guide you to a way of peace.
4. Take turns talking and listening. Say how you feel. Admit where you made a mistake. Here are some ways to get started:
  - I felt angry when . . .
  - I made a mistake when . . .
5. Ask the other person to forgive you for your part in the problem. Tell the other person that you forgive her or him.
6. Together, think of solutions to your problem or disagreement. Here is where a third person can be helpful.
7. Tell each other what you want to do next to make things better between you.
8. Thank the other person for coming to the peace table.
9. Thank God for showing you the way to peace.



## Peaceable Kingdom Ornaments





**Isa. 11:1–10**

**Ps. 72:1–7, 18–19**

**Rom. 15:4–13**

**Matt. 3:1–12**

# Peace-Filled Kingdom

**Goal for the Session** Adults will express visions of the peaceable kingdom following Isaiah’s radical vision of peace.

## ■ PREPARING FOR THE SESSION

### Focus on Isaiah 11:1–10

#### WHAT is important to know?

—From “Exegetical Perspective” by Bruce C. Birch

The vision of harmony in verses 6–10 is often referred to as the vision of “the peaceable kingdom.” The image is of a return to Eden when God’s reign is finally consummated. When the anointed one described in earlier verses ushers it in, broken creation becomes the completely harmonious creation God intended. The earth will now be filled with the “knowledge of the LORD” (v. 9). This Hebrew term for knowledge is more than cognitive information; it is the full entering into and experiencing of what is known. So the earth will be infused with the reality of God, and it shall be as comprehensive as the waters of the sea (v. 9).

#### WHERE is God in these words?

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The church is not the kingdom of God, but its relationship to the kingdom signals its mission. The realm of God shines through the witness and mission of the church as the poor have good news preached to them and are judged with righteousness and equity. The Messiah awaits the church in a future of righteousness marked off by the gifts of wisdom and understanding, counsel and might, knowledge and the fear of God, beckoning the church to a new future not of its own making but one made possible by YHWH. The challenge is not to be stuck in the traditions of the past but to be open to the new realm in which the proud will be punished, the humble will be exalted, and the practice of justice will be the order of a new day.

#### SO WHAT does this mean for our lives?

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This is how hope gets its start—it emerges as a tiny tendril in an unexpected place. Where are the stumps in our own lives; where do we feel cut off? Can we imagine or believe that even now God might be nurturing the growth of something new and good from our old, dead dreams? Consider what areas of our lives most need the promise of new life, and how we might become open to such newness. Isaiah’s promise is not just a future one; even now there are tiny signs of hope and life in places that look dead and discarded.

#### NOW WHAT is God’s word calling us to do?

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What of the “little child” who leads them? Shall Christians think of Jesus again? We should not make this move too quickly. Like the calf, lamb, kid, and ox, the child stands for the vulnerable, and is joined by others even younger and more vulnerable, happily playing in a safe world at last. Why is it the child who leads the whole bleating, mooing, yipping, snuffling, roaring, giggling company? The new creation wants a human presence—new, bright, undefended, and free—to love and care for it all.



**FOCUS SCRIPTURE**

**Isa. 11:1–10**

## Focus on Your Teaching

The Bible’s vision of peace may seem unrealistic to some in your group. Conflicts in families, churches, communities, and the world may have made them skeptical that peace can or should be pursued. Others may be so familiar with biblical messages of peace that they are not stirred anymore, and it doesn’t seem any more likely to happen than an old stump sprouting again. This session and this season are about helping adults read the familiar text with new eyes and ears, looking and listening with our hearts rather than just our eyes or ears.

*Open the eyes of my heart, Lord, that I may see and embrace your vision of peace. Amen.*

### YOU WILL NEED

- blue or purple cloth or placemat
- Advent wreath with candles or 4 votive candles
- lighter or matches
- Bibles
- newsprint or board
- marker
- copies of Resource Sheet 1
- copies of Resource Sheet 2
- paper, pens
- copies of Resource Sheet 1 for December 11, 2022

### For Responding

- option 2: materials listed at activity
- option 3: newsprint or board, marker

✠ Isaiah 1:4  
✠ Isaiah 1:21–23  
✠ Isaiah 2:7–8  
✠ Isaiah 3:12b–15  
✠ Isaiah 5:20–23  
✠ Isaiah 24:4–6

## LEADING THE SESSION

### GATHERING

*Before the session*, place a blue or purple cloth or placemat in the center of your space, using the same color your church uses in worship during Advent, and put the Advent wreath or votive candles on it. The words for the closing song are provided on Resource Sheet 2 (“Lo, How a Rose”); however, the words with music are found in most church hymnals and many YouTube clips are available online which may be downloaded and shown to accompany the group.

Welcome the group to the Second Sunday of Advent. Dim the lights, if possible. Light two candles. Invite participants to take a few deep breaths and release any worries they have brought with them today, and then to gaze at the candlelight and quietly reflect on God’s gift of peace, given through Christ Jesus. Conclude this time by praying aloud:

*Come to us today, Lord Jesus. Amen.*

If it is not safe to leave the candles lighted, extinguish them and light them again for Closing. Turn up the lights.

Form pairs or groups of three. Have each group pick one of the following world events that many people at the time never expected to occur and discuss what all had to happen for it to take place: desegregation in the southern United States (1960s); the fall of the Berlin Wall (1989); the end of apartheid in South Africa (1990). After a few minutes, discuss responses. Ask:  
✠ What small signs of hope were evident even before the events took place?

### EXPLORING

Set the context for today’s lesson by explaining that in earlier chapters, Isaiah gave a gloom-and-doom report of wars, corruption, and social injustice that filled the land. Have adults work in pairs to look up the verses in the sidebar from Isaiah and describe the condition of the nation and society to which Isaiah is speaking.

Today's focus scripture from Isaiah is addressed to the people and leaders of Judah, the southern portion of the now divided kingdom. Judah was once a tribe of Israel; Jesse's son King David came from Bethlehem in Judah.

After sufficient time, invite pairs to call out descriptions of the society. Note them on newsprint or board. Discuss the connections Isaiah makes between social justice and peace.

Ask:

- ✿ How would the prophet's words have given hope to people to continue looking even when nothing seemed to change?

Explain that the first part of the focus text describes the type of leader who was to come. Have adults read Isaiah 11:1–5 silently and select the phrase from these verses that he or she finds most hopeful and promising. Invite each person to read the phrase selected. Ask:

- ✿ What does it mean that the new leader will judge by righteousness rather than by what his eyes see or what his ears hear?
- ✿ Who in Judah would have been most encouraged by these words?
- ✿ Who would have been most threatened?

Return to the pairs and pretend you are living back then and this is very good, hopeful news. You are working on a campaign for the new leader. What one phrase would you use in a campaign poster or bumper sticker? Have the pairs report.

Explain that the second part of the focus text describes the new type of world this leader will lead. Read Isaiah 11:6–10.

Distribute Resource Sheet 1 (Focus on Isaiah 11:1–10). Have a volunteer read the “What?” excerpt. Allow a few moments for participants to discuss their reactions to the idea that the prophet expects a leader to come first, followed by a radical return to Eden where all animals are at peace with one another. Ask:

- ✿ How might people living under poor conditions react to the idea that predator animals and their prey could live together?

Note that this idea might have been a challenge for oppressed members of society who only wanted revenge on their human predators.

Read the last sentence of the “Where?” excerpt. Ask:

- ✿ How might being stuck in the traditions of the past close people's recognition of this new realm described by Isaiah?

In preparation for Responding, ask a volunteer to read the “So What?” and “Now What?” excerpts on Resource Sheet 1. Invite the group to think about signs of shoots in their lives, your church community, or local or world events.

## RESPONDING

Choose one or more of these activities, depending on the length of your session:

- 1. Personal Reflection** Participants will express visions of the peaceable kingdom by imagining where peace is happening in the world. Invite the participants to reflect on the implications of Isaiah 11 for the world today. Have them think of some conflict or

EASY  
PREP

issue that seems hopeless. It may be a family fight or conflict with a church member, or it may be an event on the world stage. Invite the participants to envision peace as a shoot popping up in the midst of conflict. Ask them to think of actions they might take that promote Isaiah's vision. Have them choose one action and commit to taking it the following week.

The peace tree activity may be done individually on paper or as a group on newsprint. A more elaborate version might include a three-dimensional tree with ornaments to display in the church's worship space or other visible area.

- 2. Peace Tree** Participants will express visions of the peaceable kingdom by drawing a peace tree. Throughout the history of God's people, there are examples of renewal and rebirth, when what seemed dead and lifeless was given new life and new hope. Make available art supplies to create a peace tree for display. Encourage the group members to draw the outline of a tree and include ornaments that remind them of the promise of Isaiah 11. When complete, hang the "tree" somewhere in the church for all to see.
- 3. Successors to Isaiah** Participants will express visions of the peaceable kingdom by recalling pleas for peace today. Invite participants to name modern prophets who have called people, communities, and nations to peace (e.g., Martin Luther King, Jr., Nelson Mandela, John Lennon, Dorothy Day, Cindy Sheehan, and so forth). Write the names on newsprint or board. Ask:
  - ✪ What visions of peace did these peacemakers provide? How did they communicate their visions?
  - ✪ How did people respond to their calls for peace?
  - ✪ How are you involved in reflecting God's vision for peace in the world?
  - ✪ What more might God be calling you to do?

## CLOSING

Gather around the Advent wreath or votive candles. Invite participants to offer a word or phrase that summarizes how they understand Isaiah's prophecy of peace.

Next, ask them to reflect quietly on what difference this will make for their lives in the coming week. Invite participants to take a few minutes to write these reflections on a piece of paper and then keep the paper in a place (perhaps with their Bibles) where they can return to it throughout the week for further reflection and prayer.

Gather around the Advent candles. Distribute copies of Resource Sheet 2 ("Lo, How a Rose"). Sing or read the hymn from the resource sheet, and then conclude with this prayer or one of your choosing:

*We pray for your Spirit to rest upon us and all leaders in the world, to give wisdom and understanding, that we may seek peace and justice in our land and in all the earth. Amen.*

Distribute copies of Resource Sheet 1 for December 11, 2022, or e-mail it to the participants during the week. Encourage class members to read the focus scripture and resource sheet before the next session.

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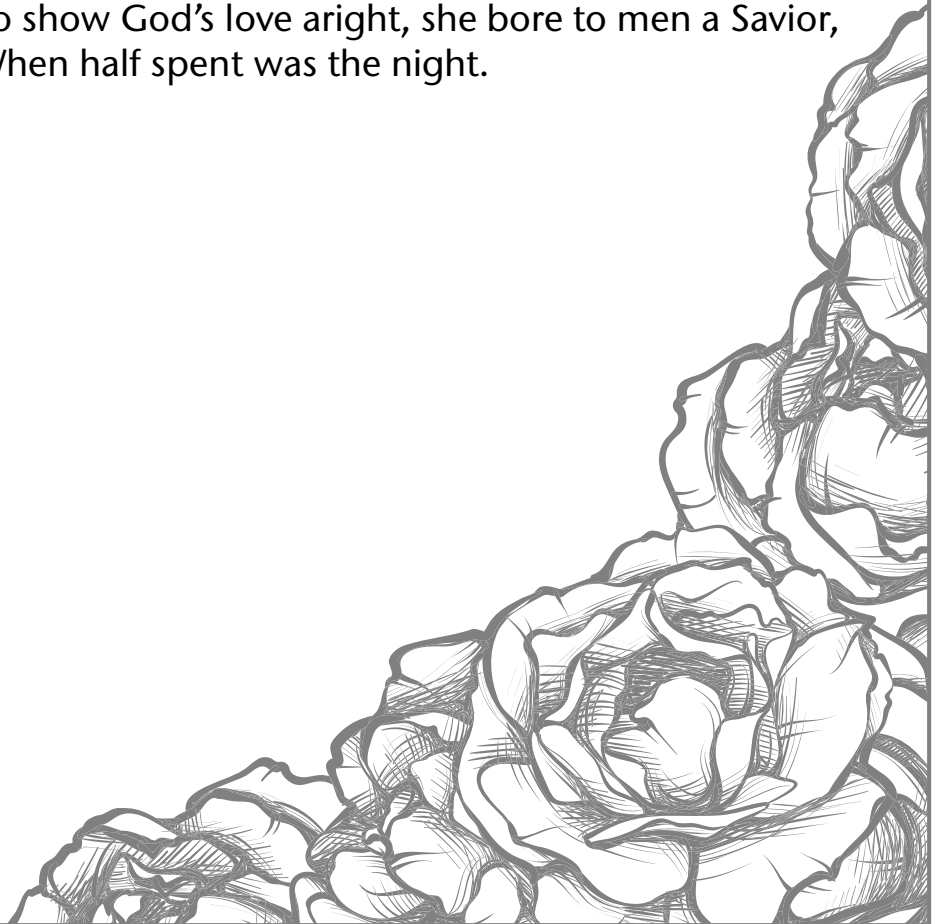
## “Lo, How a Rose”

### “Lo, how a Rose e’er blooming”

Music: Es Ist Ein Ros’  
German carol, 15th century  
Translated: Theodore Bake

Lo, how a Rose e’er blooming from tender  
stem hath sprung!  
Of Jesse’s lineage coming, as men of old  
have sung.  
It came, a floweret bright, amid the cold of winter,  
When half spent was the night.

Isaiah ’twas foretold it, the Rose I have in mind;  
With Mary we behold it, the virgin mother kind.  
To show God’s love aright, she bore to men a Savior,  
When half spent was the night.



# *Joining the Feast*

Year A  
Winter 2022–2023  
Second Sunday of Advent  
to First Sunday in Lent



# What you will find in *Joining the Feast!*

## The Church Year Calendar

Describes the important church festivals and special days for the coming season. It provides theological reflections on their importance for the church's life and our own lives.

## The Shape of the Season

Presents an overview of the focus scriptures for the weeks in the coming season. It discusses the biblical and theological significance of each of the passages.

## Joining Worship and Learning: Making the Connections and Time with Children

In this section of *Joining the Feast*, you will find charts that list connections between activities in the age-level materials and worship. A story to use in the children's time during worship follows the chart for each week. Notice that some songs are used by several age levels but not in the same session. If you are interested in including a prayer, poetry, or artwork from an age level, speak with the leader in advance. May your congregational worship be enlivened by these suggestions to join worship and learning.

## Joining Mission and Learning

Help the participants in *Feasting on the Word Curriculum* resources connect with existing service opportunities in your congregation. Review this list, and offer suggestions to the leaders. Give this chart to the chair of the mission or outreach committee so that the work of the committee can be strengthened through the church school.

## Litanies and Prayers

A selection of poetic prayers and responsive readings that helps worship leaders connect the church's educational and worship experiences to find fullness and blessing in the praise and service of God.

## Children's Bulletins

A fun activity page is provided weekly to give children a sense of belonging and help them feel welcome in the worship experience. These special children's bulletins connect their worship experience to the education themes.



## Joining the Feast

We invite you to “Join the Feast”!

Our exciting *Feasting on the Word Curriculum* offers great opportunities for the local church. Pastors, educators, and participants can experience the wonder of God’s nourishing word to us. For church schools, for study groups, and in preparation for teaching and preaching, the resources here will deepen and strengthen our faith. We have an amazing “feast” set before us! We desire and can find further understanding in our faith—of who God is and what God has done!

*Joining the Feast* helps pastors, educators, and worship leaders plan for education and worship. We want to assist in reflecting on how to incorporate scriptural and seasonal emphases across different parts of the church’s life.

*Joining the Feast* can be shared in education and worship committees. It enables important biblical themes to be integrated into the church’s study and worship experiences. A chart of suggestions for ways educational emphases can be used in worship is a feature of what follows here. Church school teachers can discuss these materials with each other to enhance education for all age levels in the church. Pastors who plan their lectionary preaching will find taking an overall look at this church season to be useful for their preparations. In all this we want to join teaching and preaching. We want the church’s educational and worship experiences to find fullness and blessing in the praise and service of God!

An important goal for pastors and educators in the church is to connect or join the church’s educational experience with the church’s worship experience. People of all ages who participate in church school study can find their Christian faith enhanced when the Scriptures read and proclaimed in worship reinforce and expand what they have been considering in their educational time. Education and worship can be mutually supportive in helping God’s word in Scripture come alive in the Sunday morning experience. Consideration of the same lectionary reading in preaching can deepen the insights gained in church school.

Pastors who want to build on what has been done in education welcome this *Feasting on the Word Curriculum* as a way to prepare congregational members for directions into which the sermon can lead. Those who participate in the education time will find the insights gained there enhanced by preaching which considers the same passage and brings God’s word to bear in fresh and nourishing ways. So as we “Join the Feast,” joining the church’s educational and worship dimensions can bring to life the richness of God’s word in Scripture.

Donald K. McKim



## An Advent Message from Isaiah

including Isaiah 11:6-10

Isaiah was a prophet of God. During a time of war, God's message was a message of peace:

*<sup>6</sup>The wolf will live with the lamb,  
and the leopard will lie down with the young  
goat;  
the calf and the young lion will feed together,  
and a little child will lead them.*

*<sup>7</sup>The cow and the bear will graze.  
Their young will lie down together,  
and a lion will eat straw like an ox.*

*<sup>9</sup>They won't harm or destroy anywhere on my holy  
mountain.*

*<sup>10</sup>On that day, the root of Jesse will stand as a signal  
to the peoples. The nations will seek him out, and his  
dwelling will be glorious.*

From Common English Bible. Copyright 2011 by Common English Bible.



## Second week of Advent

Color the candles that we light during  
the second week of Advent.

Do you have an  
Advent wreath  
at home?

