



Tiptoeing toward Peace

As we begin the season of wonder, looking to see where we might find Christ in our ordinary lives, a prophet inspires us with what it looks like to cease war and learn peace.

This week...

Ecumenical prayer calendar

Brunei, Malaysia, Singapore

As listed in *Pilgrim Prayer: The Ecumenical Prayer Cycle*, edited by Ester Pudjo Widiastih and Karen L. Bloomquist. (Geneva: World Council of Churches, 2018). <https://www.oikoumene.org/resources/prayer-cycle> offers valuable aids for intercessory prayers, prayer on behalf of and in solidarity with others.

Special days ([commentary](#) on p. 36)

November 30 – St. Andrew

December 1 – World AIDS Day

Personal reflection

The prophet Isaiah invites us to look forward into this season of wonder to see where we find Christ at work in our ordinary lives and envision where we are called to find and demonstrate peace.

Isaiah proclaims peace to a people surrounded by war and conflict and explains that peace is not just an absence of fighting but working together with our enemies. It's the kind of peace that requires our watchfulness and involvement and is made of justice and well-being for all. As we look forward into this season of wonder, be attentive to where we find God's reign evident in our ordinary lives, and envision where we are called to find and demonstrate peace.

This week, seek to replace three habits with new ways that lift up the well-being of others.

The planning page is provided in text format for copying, adapting, and adding to your bulletin or online worship resources or website or social media (see Text folder, Worship Outline).

November 27, 2022

Advent 1

Revised Common Lectionary (Year A)

Isaiah 2:1–5

the focus in age-level materials

Psalms 122

Romans 13:1–14

Matthew 24:36–44

Liturgical colour purple or blue

Notes

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Online Resources

Lesson Connection

Essays and discussion prompts linking current events with this week's scriptures. Use for sermon preparation, Bible studies, and small groups or share on social media at <https://www.seasonsonline.ca/10/>.

Nurturing Faith and Spirituality at Home

An easy-to-share, weekly online resource supports the spiritual lives and faith formation of individuals and families at home. It is provided in the [Nurturing Faith and Spirituality at Home](#) folder.



**Isaiah 2:1–5**

the focus in age-level materials

Psalms 122**Romans 13:1–14****Matthew 24:36–44**

We see you in the ordinary, Holy One. You make your way known in small ways, and encourage us to take small steps towards your peace. Help us to tiptoe to the peace of your reign as we enter this Advent season. Amen.

Tiptoeing toward Peace

As Advent begins this year, we recognize that as much as we want to be people of peace, we are, in fact, people who live in a world at war or in conflict. War may look like oppression, violence, upheaval. And yet, we have the example of God's peaceable reign that we strive towards. How do we live as people of peace in a world that seems to be set up to reward the opposite? Perhaps, by taking baby steps – perhaps tiptoeing – we will see that we can move closer to God's reign every day.

Isaiah 2:1–5 War was common in ancient Israel, primarily because of the nation's small size and valuable location. A parcel of land smaller than the U.S. state of Vermont, less than half the size of Tasmania, Australia or Nova Scotia, Canada, ancient Israel was surrounded by nations who wanted to own it. Biblical scholars remind us that in the lives of ancient Israelites, there was only "wartime" and "preparing-for-war time." In this context, to speak of peace and pacifism (a vigorous debate throughout the Hebrew Scriptures) showed especially audacious faith.

Prophets like Isaiah often announce unexpected reversals. Just as war is learned, so is peace. Like his contemporary Micah (4:1–3), Isaiah proclaims that in God's new world, not only must the weapons be destroyed; they are to be transformed and repurposed.

God's "holy mountain" is a key image in this passage. Jerusalem was built on a ridge. "Zion" was the name of one portion of that ridge. Over time, Zion became synonymous with the temple and Jerusalem itself. Mountains were often identified as "holy." They were seen as places of encounter with God. We encounter God in places on high mountains and in the ordinary living of our lives. In that everyday living of our lives, we can make choices that enable us to find the peace that is envisioned in Isaiah. We choose to

live in ways that honour the earth, support movements that honour every person and promote living in peace, not war.

Psalms 122 points to the interconnectedness of inner peace and outer peace. The vision of the psalmist is one of community and peace for all.

In **Romans 13:1–14**, Paul writes with urgency, telling us the time is near and to wake from the various ways we find ourselves numbed or distracted. Paul's call for believers to "put on the armour of light" invokes a sense of battle or violence and is a stark contrast to Isaiah's image of turning swords in ploughshares. Why might this image of armour be powerful to early Christians? How might metaphors of violence or revenge continue to be appealing to us today? As Isaiah's vision suggests, what objects, behaviours, words, or beliefs do we need to transform from violence to peace-building?

Matthew 24:36–44 can stir fearful anticipation. In pursuit of peace and justice in God's realm, what is our responsibility? What is the role of God's judgment? Interpreters of this passage have at times tipped it in the direction of anxiety, despite all that scripture tells us about our judge, the loving God who continually acts to establish a relationship with us. God's reign has arrived in the person of Jesus Christ, even as we continue to pray for it to come this Advent season. The author encourages us to prepare, to be on the alert and ready, and to expect the unexpected.

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War may not always be fought with swords and guns. Often war is fought with economics and systemic oppression. Reversing systems often requires us to glimpse God in different ways. Perhaps as we remake swords into ploughshares, we also re-envision God's mountain into one where all of God's people gather in safety and love.



Reflecting on the Word



Adapt and use for youth and adult studies,
sermon seeds, lay worship teams.

Connecting with life

When children tiptoe, they usually take very small steps. Sometimes they move quickly, sometimes they race.

- **As we tiptoe towards peace, what are small steps you can take to welcome all people, promote the welfare of others, or transform violence and hate?**

Scripture

Isaiah 2:1–5 challenges and inspires us with images of what it looks like to cease war and learn peace: swords into ploughshares and spears into pruning tools.

- **What would change if we put emphasis on feeding rather than war?**
 - **What modern images might capture Isaiah's challenge in a slogan? (for example, weapons into wind farms, bombs into bracelets, drones into..., assault rifles into...)**
 - **How do such images and visions help us to unlearn war?**
- Isaiah suggests that we are waiting for God's reign or realm.
- **What are we waiting for in this time and space?**
 - **What images come to mind as you imagine God's reign or realm?**

This passage from Isaiah has sometimes been cited in support of Christian triumphalism, the theological belief that Christianity is superior. But note, it is peace-loving God who triumphs, and the ones who lead the way to the top of Zion are foreigners.

- **What common concerns do we share with other faith communities that might guide us together to God?**

Psalms 122

- **As you reflect on Isaiah 2:1–5 and Psalm 122, what are some of the tools of violence and destruction in the world – and in your community – that need to be turned into tools of hope and healing?**

Materials Article: "The Reign of God is Like" by Jan Edmiston (found at (<https://achurchforstarvingartists.blog/2021/12/20/the-reign-of-god-is-like/>))

Romans 13:1–14 Paul suggests that we are waiting to awaken to a new world – God's realm – which is honourable and enlightened.

- **As we wait to celebrate the incarnation, what does the image of "putting on Jesus Christ" suggest to you?**
- **How do you respond to the urgency in this passage and to the suggestion that we are almost at the end of our waiting?**

Connecting scripture and life

Read "The Reign of God is Like" by Jan Edmiston (<https://achurchforstarvingartists.blog/2021/12/20/the-reign-of-god-is-like/>). In this December 2021 blog post, Rev. Jan Edmiston describes an establishment in her community called The Common Market. Here, "you can get a sandwich, locally roasted coffee, a craft beer or a PBR and sit with friends and strangers on the patio. You can choose a bottle from The Wall of Saki or stocking stuffers that remind me of Toy Joy in Austin.

You might meet bankers or dishwashers, firefighters or college students. There are people on dates and friends meeting after work and strangers sharing a table. It's the kind of place where I can leave my dog with someone while I run in to grab some crackers."

The Common Market is a place where Rev. Edmiston sees the Reign of God in the real world and in real time. The powerful and the powerless share their love of coffee as the included and excluded share space at the bar. In this place, the unexpected happens as she glimpses God.

The Common Market offers what one vision of the reign of God could look like.

- **Are there places in your community that offer glimpses of the reign of God in the ordinary, everyday?**

Focus for Worship, Learning, and Serving

Tiptoeing is walking lightly and carefully on the balls of one's feet. Often, this requires small steps so as not to trip and fall. As we look at moving towards peace, how might we too make small steps towards God's peace? In worship, we can make small steps towards peace by considering how our worship practices may marginalize or oppress others, even unintentionally. Perhaps an accessibility audit to see how those who need wheelchairs, walkers, or canes access the building could be a small step to those who use them feeling fully included in God's reign. How might our prayers point towards injustices and seek God's

will in resolving them? How do our ordinary, every day experiences allow us to move towards peace? Consider the verbs "look" and "examine" as invitations to look closely, and examine the everyday ordinary experiences of our lives. In those small experiences there is a rich possibility to see those in our community we are called to serve. The texts for today call us to look around and notice that we are not not only waiting for Christ to come again, we are also called to notice Christ in our midst today as we seek to promote peace.



Tiptoeing toward Peace

Prepare

NOTE: The following suggestions are mere starting points. You are invited to adapt, delete, add according to your local needs and context. If a community is gathered in person, they may speak the **bolded** lines. If worshippers are not physically present, consider having a different individual say the bolded responses. Instructions are *italicized*.

- ❑ Recruit volunteers needed for worship.
- ❑ Choose an option for hearing Isaiah 2:1–5. For the Bible story, arrange for a storyteller to present “[The Voice of the Prophet](#)” on p. 38. Alternatively, for younger children, arrange for a storyteller to present “[Peace Is Coming!](#)” in *Exploring Our Faith* at the end of this week’s materials. For “[Transforming Tools of War](#),” prepare to project images of guns, bullets, and shells transformed into shovels and art. Please be aware of any copyright restrictions. (Links to stories and images on can be found at http://www.huffingtonpost.com/shane-claiborne/ beating-ak47s-into-shovels_b_3762948.html; <http://www.theplaidzebra.com/this-artist-melted-1527-guns-and-turned-them-into-shovel-heads-for-planting-trees/>; www.rawtools.org.)
- ❑ Bring items for setting the worship space: this week’s items for building the Advent wreath – battery-operated pillar candles (or pillar candles covered by hurricane lamps), baskets of newspapers and magazines. See “[Advent Wreath Prayers](#)” on p. 14.
- ❑ You might choose to print “[Earth Has Hope](#)” on or in your bulletin. See “[Connecting with the Art](#)” on p. 8 for background to the art and artist.
- ❑ Bring song such as “Prepare the Way” (*Seasons Songbook*, vol. 2, #13 on *Seasons Music CD*, vol. 2. Printed music and

recording are also available at <https://www.seasonsonline.ca/order>).

- ❑ Set [stations](#) as described on pp. 39–40.



Music Suggestions

A World of Difference

Monica O'Brien, Gina Ogilvie; *Seasons Songbook*, vol. 9

I Am Becoming Peace

Linnea Good; *Seasons Songbook*, vol. 9

The Peace of the Earth

Guatemalan traditional; *Seasons Songbook*, vol. 9

Behold, I Make All Things New

Iona Community; *Seasons Songbook*, vol. 6

Hope Is a Candle

Richard Leach; *Seasons Songbook*, vol. 6

Advent News

Donald Schmidt; *Seasons Songbook*, vol. 3

Like a Candle

Craig Mitchel; *Seasons Songbook*, vol. 3

We Will Bring Your Peace

Maria Millward, Damien Halloran; *Seasons Songbook*, vol. 3

Come Now, O Prince of Peace

Geonyong Lee



A chart that shows the licence holder(s) for each song in each of the 9 *Seasons of the Spirit* Music Volumes can be found at www.seasonsonline.ca. Click on Library; Seasons Music Information. Please contact a licence holder for permission to duplicate.

Gather

Call to worship

Adapted from Romans 13:11–14.

If possible, darken the worship space at the beginning of this call to worship, and gradually lighten it to fullness by the closing line.

Brothers and sisters, awake, awake!

What time is it?

The night is far gone, and the day is near!

What time is it?

Salvation is near! How should we live?

Let us lay aside the works of war.

Let us put on the armour of peace.

Let us live honourably.

Let us worship God!

Advent candles

See “[Advent Wreath Prayers](#)” on p. 14 for instructions on building an Advent wreath.

Invitation

Come and let us build

a new creation because

the world feels bleak.

Salvation is nearer to us

than it ever has been before

but right now – in this very moment –

as the great season of Advent begins

it feels like we might never

learn war anymore.



Worship Outline • November 27, 2022

Invite the people to come forward to find newspapers and periodicals with world's news in one of the baskets where they are invited to tear off a piece of paper. They might choose to rip long strips for the release of anger or fear. Or they might find a headline that grabs their sense of what could be and capture that shred of hope to put on the table. When all who have chosen to participate have added their newspaper shreds, continue with these words.

In the bleakness of this moment,
we yearn for light that shines
through all our fears
as a beacon for all people.
That light comes into the world
and is never extinguished.
We need light to hold on to that hope
and so today we begin with one candle
for our HOPE.

Invite one person to come forward and put an unlit candle on the table among the newspapers.

Prayer

With this one light, we pray:
O God, we place this light in this holy space
as a reminder that we are on this journey together.
**Be light along all our paths.
Lead us to a more just world
and help us to stay awake
and present to your love
in each ordinary day. Amen.**

Candle is lit or switched on.

Sing song, such as "I Am Becoming Peace" changing "peace" to "hope" (*Seasons Songbook*, vol. 9, #6 on *Seasons Music CD*, vol. 9).

Prayer of confession

Gracious and Almighty God,
you know that we fail to live as you would have us fully live,
and we fail to love as you would have us fully love,
and the result is a world where so many live in various kinds
of conflict.

Consumed by the worries of the world, we struggle to think
about anything other than ourselves and our own.

It seems our failings only fuel our bad habits of forgetting
about you.

We lay before you, Holy God, our broken promises, hurtful
words, bad intentions, and sinful ways,

that you might somehow love us into wholeness and help us
take small steps towards your greatest peace.

We pray in Christ's name. Amen.

Words of affirmation

Friends, hear the Good News.

Our gracious God gathers us from our warring ways and
grants us the freedom to join God's new vision of a
peaceful world.

Friends, we are free from the prison of war, free to construct
peace.

I declare to you now that in Jesus the Christ, we are forgiven.

Engage

Opening the word

Isaiah 2:1–5 the focus scripture for age-level materials in
ENCORE

Choose from the following.

Bible story Have a storyteller present the story "[The Voice of the Prophet](#)" on page 38, or "[Peace Is Coming!](#)" in Exploring Our Faith at the end of this week's materials.

Transforming tools of war

Arrange for two readers to present stories of transforming guns into shovels. If possible, project images of guns, bullets, and shells transformed into shovels and art. Please be aware of any copyright restrictions. (Links to stories and images on can be found at [http://www.huffingtonpost.com/shane-claiborne/](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/shane-claiborne/beating-ak47s-into-shovels_b_3762948.html)[beat-ak47s-into-shovels_b_3762948.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/shane-claiborne/beat-ak47s-into-shovels_b_3762948.html); <http://www.theplaidzebra.com/this-artist-melted-1527-guns-and-turned-them-into-shovel-heads-for-planting-trees/>; www.rawtools.org.)

Reader 1: At the Simple Way community in Philadelphia, United States, people are taking the words of Isaiah 2:5 literally. Shane Claiborne, a community founder, states that one person dies every day because of gun violence in their city. So they asked some friends who are blacksmiths and

welders to help them pound guns into shovels. Shane remarks how the process of pounding and changing the metal is healing, and the result, making a shovel, is a powerful symbol for new life. The community converts city spaces, such as old parking lots, into vegetable gardens – an important opportunity for poor and hungry people in the inner city of Philadelphia.

Reader 2: Others are also changing weapons into art and garden tools. Pedro Reyes from Mexico used an asphalt (road) roller to flatten hundreds of guns then melted down the metal. He made over 1,500 shovels. Some were displayed in art galleries in Canada, the UK, and the USA. Others were used for planting trees in cities. Benjamin Somah from Liberia makes crosses and Christmas ornaments out of bullets and bombshells left over from the civil war that tore his country apart. His bronze colour crosses can be found in churches around the world.

Read Isaiah 2:1–5.

Psalm 122 invites us to "pray for the peace of Jerusalem." This longing for safety and security is true in today's divided Jerusalem and Palestine; churches there call us to continue to pray for the peace of the city and surrounding region.



Many Palestinian Christians and Muslims are denied access to the Holy City, and some who do live there face the threat of displacement. The Israeli Jewish peace group, “Women in Black,” meet every Friday evening on a busy street corner in Jerusalem in silent vigil to end the military occupation

of the Palestinian territories. At one of the stations, you are invited to write your prayers for Jerusalem, for those working for peace, and other places and people in need of peace at this time...

**If gathering in person, invite children, young people, and all who wish to move to the stations.
Others will remain seated for proclaiming the word. For those participating at home,
you might encourage them to use materials that have been sent.**

Respond

Sing or listen to a song such as “Prepare the Way” (*Seasons Songbook*, vol. 2, #13 on *Seasons Music CD*, vol. 2. Printed music and recording are also available at <https://www.seasonsonline.ca/order>).

Prayers of the people

O God of new vision and hope,
on this brink of Advent, as we start new steps towards the
manger,
we are acutely aware of your presence,
but we are also aware of the echoes of gunfire, explosions of
landmines, and roar of tank engines.
War may feel far away sometimes, and other times it feels
very close to home.
How do you want us to manifest change?
How can we take small steps and large steps to turn swords
into ploughshares?
How do we become people who crave peace and not war?
How did we become complicit in such war? How did the
world become strange?
We don't know all the answers, but we do know to whom
we may pray. We pray to you, creator God,
redeemer God, loving and holy God.
Healer of the nations and teacher of peace,
save us from our power,
save us from our violence,
save us from our fear and hatred.

We will hold vigil, stay awake, watching for how we might
next act in peace,
love in truth and live without fear.
We pause now in silence, lifting up to you, aloud or in the
silence of our hearts,
those nations, those households, those workplaces, those
marriages, those schools,
where we know that conflict of some kind rages; places
where your peace is needed.
(Pause for silence.)
We pray now the prayer Christ taught, saying...
(the prayer that Jesus taught)...Amen.

Invitation to the offering

The psalmist says, “I was glad when they said to me, let us go to the house of the Lord!” We come to God's house to pray for peace, justice, and hope. And our offerings help us as a community of faith and support us as we work towards God's call. Let us worship God with God's tithes and our offerings.

Prayer of dedication or offering prayer

God, may our gifts to you – these ordinary gifts of the work of our lives – be used for extraordinary things. We dedicate what we receive to your work for peace, justice, and hope in the world. May our gifts, no matter how small, help us take small steps towards your greatest peace. Amen.

Bless

May God give us courage,
give us vision,
and give us unending peace –
the kind of peace that God knows is possible.
May God guide our journeys
that we may bear Jesus' gifts of love and life and hope.

May God bless you and keep you.
May God's face shine upon you,
from here to the top of Mount Zion.
May God look on every one of us with kindness,
and give us sweet, perfect peace.
Amen.

Special Days Commentary

November 30 – St. Andrew

Andrew, like his brother Simon Peter, was a Galilean fisherman. According to tradition, Andrew undertook several missionary journeys and was crucified on an X-shaped cross. He became the patron saint of Scotland because of a legend that his relics had been brought there in the eighth century.

December 1 – World AIDS Day

World AIDS Day began in 1988 to focus global attention on the HIV/AIDS epidemic. People around the world wear red ribbons on December 1 (and throughout the month) to remind others of the devastating impact of HIV/AIDS in the world. Check with your denomination for resources to use on this day, as well as information about how your church can respond to HIV/AIDS in your community.



Advent's First Movements

By Patricia Bays

The Advent readings this year begin, not with gentle stories of the birth of a child in a stable, but with frightening images of the day of the “coming of the Son of Man.” People will be going about their daily business. Some will be snatched away; others will be left. Judgment will come at an unexpected hour. Why do we begin Advent in this way, and what might the passage mean for us today?

To use this passage in Advent reminds us that Advent is a season with its own themes and images. It is not primarily an introduction to the Christmas story. To speak of the coming of God is to speak of more than the coming of the infant Jesus to a particular time and place. And so the framers of the lectionary remind us of the Advent themes by choosing texts that are not connected with Christ’s birth. These texts point us to a future fulfillment of God’s reign among us at a time we cannot predict.

The style of writing Matthew uses here is called “apocalyptic,” from a Greek word meaning “revelation.” Apocalyptic writing, found in the Hebrew Scriptures and in the other gospels, contains visions or prophecies of the end times or the age to come. The community of Matthew’s gospel has a very real sense of living at the end of an age. It seems to them that their world is crumbling. Palestinian Christians live in an occupied country, at odds both with the Jewish community and the Gentile society around them. The Temple in Jerusalem has been destroyed in 70 CE, and people were scattered. Jesus had promised the disciples that he would return. Surely this distress must mean that this return will happen soon. God will not abandon the people. Surely God is coming to restore the faithful and bring an end to trouble and distress.

The gospel writer cautions that no one knows when this will occur and attempts to answer the question, “How shall we live in this in-between time?” The gospel of Matthew sets out five great blocks of Jesus’ teaching to show the new way of life to which Jesus calls us. From John the baptizer’s very first call to repentance, Christians are called to shape their lives according to the example of Jesus.

These are themes then that shape our Advent experience: stay awake, be alert, watch. The gospel of Matthew reminds us that we must change our manner of life now, must begin to live according to Christian values, even though God’s reign is not yet fully established. We do not know how long a process that will be. But we affirm our belief that history will reach its fulfillment, that God’s reign will be established, transforming the world into a world of justice and unity and peace. Jesus’ birth at Bethlehem signals an important new stage in God’s plan to bring this about. The writer of the gospel of Matthew says that rather than trying to predict future events, we must make good use of the time we have been given.

God calls us to live as though God’s reign is a present reality in our lives. We are called to play our part in bringing that reign to completion. Advent is the time to think again about those values and to make them part of our everyday lives.

Directions

1. Read “Advent’s First Movements.”
2. Follow this reading with reading aloud Matthew 24:36–44.
3. Notice how the essay informs your shared understanding of the gospel.
4. Wonder what questions remain.
5. Enter into these first movements of Advent with your bodies.
 - **Act out the gospel together, experimenting with different actions.**
 - **Use one verse, like verse 42, as a chant. Notice what it feels like in your body to repeat these words.**
 - **Dance as if you are ready for anything. Imagine this dance as part of your morning ritual.**
6. To close your time together, discuss how it feels in your bodies to “play (your) part in bringing that reign to completion.”



The Voice of the Prophet

based on Isaiah 2:1–5

God sent prophets to God's people to tell them what they were doing wrong and what they were doing right. The prophets also explained God's feelings for them, how powerful God is and that God loves them all. They talked about things that were happening right then and ideas about what might possibly happen later.

After dreaming through the night, Isaiah the prophet woke up worrying about the land of Judah and its largest city of Jerusalem. The Assyrian army was heading in their direction. The people were frightened. They wondered what would happen when the army arrived and if they would be able to keep their homeland. They wondered what was going to happen to them.

Isaiah had been telling the people about how God was feeling about them and all that they were doing. Isaiah wanted to tell them about God's hope for them and the good things

God wanted for all people. On this beautiful morning, the message was all about the best ideas that people could have about God and God's hope for all. Isaiah told about future days when the holy mountain of God would be the highest and the best mountain forever. All nations would see it and come. It would be like a big parade. The people would say, "Let us go up to the mountain of God to learn about God and how to live in God's ways."

Isaiah dreamed that the people would live in peace. The countries would take their weapons, melt them, and then make good gardening tools and make things grow. God would help them take the things used for war and turn them into things that help people and bring peace to the land.

A recording of this story is available in MP3 format in the Audio Stories folder.



Bible story

Materials

- Basic supplies
- Paper or drawing pads
- Recording of today's story "[The Voice of the Prophet](#)"
- Alternatively, arrange for a storyteller to present the story

The practice of storytelling

Directions

1. Listen to the story "The Voice of a Prophet."
2. What do you think of when you hear the word "prophet"?
3. Talk together or think about these questions:
 - **What was the first name of the prophet in the story?**
 - **What is the first picture that comes to mind when you think about this story?**
 - **What are you waiting for and hoping for the world?**
4. Draw some of your feelings of the story. You might draw a picture of Isaiah's dream.



Living, Learning, Growing as Disciples

The following stations might be set up around your worship space, or in other places around the church, in your home, or outdoors. Choose one or more practices, depending on your space and numbers. Display the [directions](#) for all to see onscreen or in person. Adapt stations for use when physically distancing and above all, follow the safe practices of your congregation and local health officials.

For your convenience, directions are formatted for printing and available in the Stations folder.

Health and Safety Practices

Basic supplies pens, pencils, markers, crayons, white glue/glue sticks, scissors, hand sanitizer, wipes placed in a basket or bin, two containers marked “clean” and “used”

Setting the space Utilize large spaces where people can maintain a safe physical distance. Spread out chairs around a large table or use tape to mark off the space around stand alone chairs.

Keep it clean Wipe down and disinfect places used for stations. Provide enough arts and crafts supplies to reduce sharing and mark containers “clean” and “used.” Remind people to use hand sanitizer as they begin and as they end stations.

Stepping stones on God’s path of peace

Materials

- Beautiful cloth
- One large candle with several small candles
- Images of people and nature from around the world set around the large candle
- Small stones large enough to write on and set along the table with a sign “God’s path of peace” near it.
- Permanent markers in container marked “clean”
- Container marked “used”
- Hand sanitizer or wipes



Suitable for all ages

The practice of prayer

Directions

1. Looking at the candle and the images, pause and take a deep breath. You may want to close your eyes and think about what and where there is need of prayers for peace at this time.
2. Once you have decided for what you want to pray, take a moment to imagine those hurting places as something beautiful and fragile that also evokes your appreciation (such as a flower, a butterfly, or an infant). Imagine this delicate object is resting in your arms, and you are sending all your care, attention, and love towards it.
3. When you are ready, open your eyes. You are welcome to light a candle and imagine sending love and light to the places and people for whom you are praying.
4. Using one of the markers, write a word on one of the stones lined along the table like a path. These are words of prayer and intention, ways we want to act and be as we try our best to follow “God’s path of peace.”

Go, go, go, peace!

Materials

- A space where people can run and make some noise



Suitable for all ages

Advent is a time of waiting before Christmas. Sometimes we need patience. Today’s Bible stories teach about paying attention as we wait for the fullness of God’s love to be born in the world. This game helps us to pay attention and feel what patience is like when our bodies have to stop and wait and to have fun!

The practice of playfulness

Directions

1. One person, we’ll call them “the peacekeeper,” stands at the front of the room or space with back to everyone else. Everyone stands in a line a distance behind the peacekeeper. When the peacekeeper calls out “go, go, go,” everyone runs towards the peacekeeper.
2. As soon as the peacekeeper says another word (it could be the name of an animal, plant, object), everyone has to stop running and imitate the word they just heard (for example, on the word “monkey,” everyone stops running, stands in one spot, and pretends to be a monkey). If the peacekeeper says “peace,” each person finds a partner and shows what peace might look like (smile at each other, shake hands, and so on). Whoever reaches the peacekeeper and taps them gently on the shoulder gets to take a turn to be the next peacekeeper.



Collage

Materials

- Basic supplies
- Magazines



**Suitable for all ages
working together**

The practice of creativity _____

Directions

1. Cut out pictures of objects and people moving.
2. Make a collage from the images on paper.
3. As you cut and paste, wonder to yourself or with others:
 - What movements am I making toward peace?
 - When does my body move with hope?
 - What does it feel like to move my body?

Letter writing

Materials

- Basic supplies
- Paper
- Envelopes



**Suitable for
ages 12–adult**

After growing up, we don't tiptoe often. It's something children do when trying to be quiet or sneaky, or even mischievous.

The practice of making peace in our lives _____

Directions

1. Reflect and remember when you tiptoed as a child.
 - What were you doing?
 - Why did you feel you needed to walk that way at that moment?
 - What other ways do you remember moving?
 - How are those ways different from how you move now?
2. Pick up pen and paper and write a letter to that tiptoeing child.
 - What wisdom would you like to tell that child?
 - What wisdom might that child have to share with you?
3. Fold the letter and seal it in an envelope to read at another time when you need to remember this wisdom.

The article "[Connecting with the Art](#)" on page 8 provides background to this season's posters and art engagement ideas for individuals and groups. You might add an Art station and select one of the art engagement ideas.



Story and activities for the very young to use in church or at home.

Peace Is Coming!

A story based on Isaiah 2:1-5

Isaiah stood on the city steps. He could see people walking along the streets. They looked worried. Isaiah knew that it had been a long time since people had felt safe and happy.

Isaiah lived a long time ago. He wanted to help people feel safe and happy.

Isaiah called the people together. "Listen, everyone," he called out. "I have a good news message from God."

"In God's world of peace and love, we will use kind words."

Yes! Yes!

"In God's world of peace and love, we will share with one another."

Yes! Yes!

"In God's world of peace and love, we will help one another."

Yes! Yes!

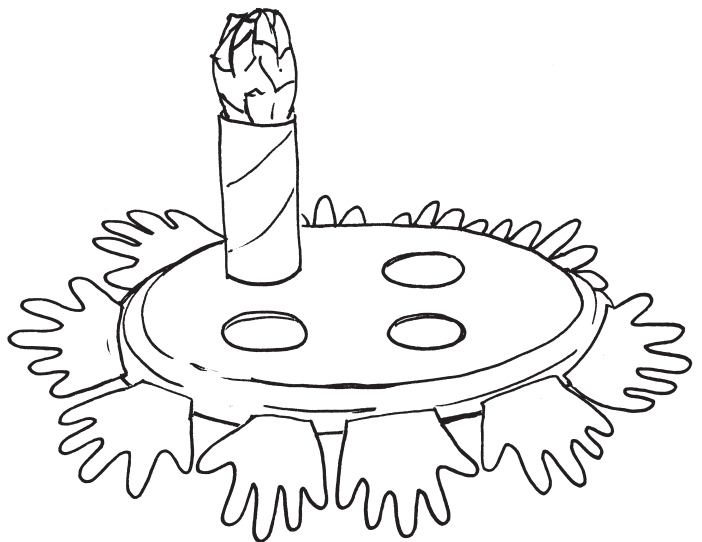
The people had heard God's message of hope. They all shouted, "Peace is coming!"

Peaceful Hands Wreath

You will need a paper plate, four small cardboard tubes, green construction paper, yellow tissue paper, glue, pencils and crayons, glue

Directions

1. Trace and cut out many hand shapes (you might ask someone to help you).
2. Write, or have someone help you write the words "hands for a peaceful world" around the edge of the plate.
3. Ask a grownup to cut four holes in the middle of the plate to fit the cardboard tubes.
4. Turn the plate upside down and glue hand shapes to the edge of the plate.
5. Insert the four cardboard tubes into the four holes in the middle of the plate.
6. Push yellow tissue paper into the cardboard tubes and pull up to "light" the candles.



Peace throughout the world will depend on everyone coming together and living in harmony.

Decorate the dove below with as many markers, pencils, or crayons as you can, representing the many flags and people all around the world.

