



## Playing Pretend

Isaiah invites us into a wild possibility of tiny buds of hope and animals finding harmony together on God's holy mountain, and we see its power through a child-like lens.

### This week...

#### Ecumenical prayer calendar

Myanmar, Thailand

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. 48)

**December 6** – St. Nicholas

**December 6** – National Day of Remembrance and Action to End Violence against Women (Canada)

**December 8** – Bodhi Day (Buddhism)

**December 10** – Human Rights Day

#### Personal reflection

Isiah paints a hope-filled vision of harmony in all Creation and presents an unlikely subject for leading us toward this vision "a child."

By this time of Advent, children may be focusing on what toys await them under the tree. Play is foundational in how we learn to explore the world and live into new experiences.

- **How can we play with our children in ways that explore God's peace and harmony?**
- **How can we play as adults and try to experience the same feelings in our own lives?**

*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).*

#### December 4

Advent 2

#### Revised Common Lectionary (Year A)

##### Isaiah 11:1–10

The focus for age-level materials

Psalms 72:1–7, 18–19

Romans 15:4–13

Matthew 3:1–12

**Liturgical colour** purple or blue

#### Notes

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### Online Resources

#### Lection 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 11:1–10**

the focus in age-level materials

**Psalm 72:1–7, 18–19**

**Romans 15:4–13**

**Matthew 3:1–12**

God of imagination and all creation, help us to broaden our minds to see your desire for your Kin-dom. Open our hearts to allow us to live in harmony with all your people, and with all Creation. Let us imagine and live into your possibilities. Amen.

# Playing Pretend

In this second week of Advent, anticipation may be running high as we set our sights on Christ's coming, and the celebration of Christ's birth. As we enter this week, we wonder what it looks like to nurture the hope of God's reign as seen in the harmony on God's holy mountain. How does this vision challenge our own assumptions about God's reign, and our role in living into and promoting that reign?

**Isaiah 11:1–10** “A shoot shall come out from the stump of Jesse” (verse 1). Jesse was King David's father, so “stump of Jesse” is a reference to kings who followed David. To call that line of rulers a “stump” might have been shocking to those who thought the Davidic line would continue forever. Some scholars understand this reference as an indication that the passage comes from the time when the people of Judah were living in exile in Babylon in the sixth century BCE. It must have seemed that the Davidic dynasty had ended in that national disaster.

Verse 2 promises that God's Spirit will equip the “shoot” from Jesse's stump with qualities needed for just rule. The prophet is clear about the power of God's Spirit and God's intent for shalom for all creation. There is hope here, not despair. The Hebrew Scriptures often link Spirit and the leaders of a community. For example, God's Spirit possessed Saul on the day of his anointing as king (1 Samuel 10:10). When Samuel anointed David as king, “the spirit of the Lord came mightily upon David” (1 Samuel 16:13). God's Spirit was present in creation (Genesis 1:2). Now, God's Spirit is promised in the transformation of creation that the prophet envisions as coming through a righteous ruler and a peaceable kingdom.

The prophet's use of animal imagery is striking and hearkens back to the themes of creation and re-creation. Dramatic change is promised. How can we trust that God has the power to effect such change? For Isaiah, God's

power as Creator grounds our hope in transformation – God created all things, and God's power can renew all things. The prophet pairs predator and prey in this peaceable vision as a metaphor of God's power to renew. What is this passage asking us to do and to be today? How does this passage stir our imaginations to propel us towards God's peaceable Kin-dom?

**Psalm 72:1–7, 18–19** likely was written for a king's coronation. God's vision of peace takes form in the psalmist's prayer for a just ruler. The God of Israel, “who alone does wondrous things” is to be praised. The imagery in this passage describes sin, rain, and grasses which are not the normal depictions of Advent for those in the northern hemisphere. God is described as one who wants prosperity, justice, to provide nourishment, and wondrous things.

In **Matthew 3:1–12**, John the baptizer testifies to the nearness of God's realm. John's call to repentance insists that God's people seek integrity between God's vision of shalom and their daily lives.

Paul also encourages such integrity in **Romans 15:4–13**. To welcome one another is to mirror Christ's welcome of us. The stories of faith share God's shalom, even as they shape how Jesus' followers conduct their lives.

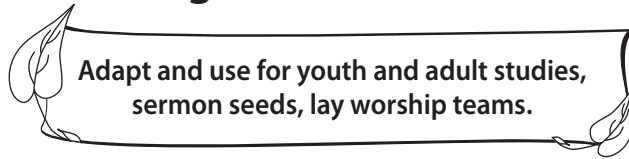
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In *Reimagining Christianity*, Alan Jones says, “The work of the imagination is serious business because through it we build or destroy the world.” These texts call us to imagine a world where opposites co-exist and thrive peacefully. They call us to imagine a God far more wondrous than we can comprehend. They ask us to imagine what our lives can be like if we dream of building God's world.

■ **What transformation might God's promises be calling us to make? What kind of world is God calling upon us to build?**



## Reflecting on the Word



### Connecting with life

There is an Nigerian proverb that says, “with a little seed of imagination you can grow a field of hope.” In some places, the land is thriving and almost ready for harvest. In others, seeds that were planted have begun to sprout. In other places, the land is frozen and resting, waiting for spring. When seeds are planted, the sowers imagine a future full of promise and hope. What seeds might our imagination plant about humanity living peaceable together? How might we allow ourselves to imagine, and then play into that future?

### Scripture

**Isaiah 11:1–10**

- **What hope might these words have brought to those originally addressed by them, for whom exile or its threat demanded recognition of a world that had changed?**

The prophet describes a reality that seems like an unlikely dream, given the ongoing violence that plagues our nations, our neighbourhoods, and our homes. It is easy to give up hope.

- **When have you given up hope in the prophet’s vision of God’s world only to be surprised by signs of its reality within your community?**

**Romans 15:4–13**

The Apostle Paul urges the Jews and Gentiles to live in peace together. Paul goes on to say the instructions given to God’s people in the past create hope within us.

- **How does God’s word create hope in you?**

For the community described in Romans 15:4–13, the Gentiles were outsiders.

- **When have you felt like an insider, or outsider?**
- **How is your community a place of hope for people pushed to the margins? Or what is needed to make it so?**

**Matthew 3:1–12** John the baptizer also quotes scripture as he delivers a challenging sermon in his day.

- **For whom will John’s words bring hope in our day?**

John calls us to repentance.

- **For you, does repentance feel like taking on yet another task, or like laying aside a heavy burden?**

Contrast the vision of a coming leader described in Isaiah 11:1–10 text with Matthew 3:1–12.

- **What parallels and differences do you find?**
- **In what ways do you find hope?**

**Psalms 72:1–7, 18–19** Put on a tape of water sounds (or run your fingers through a bowl of water) as you read the psalm. Think about God raining on the dry earth, on thirsty people and animals. The leader(s), God promises, will be like water: wearing away hardness, renewing barrenness, washing away burdens.

- **What hardness in your own heart or spirit might be worn away?**
- **What seemingly dead parts of your own life might put forth new life after a fruitful shower?**
- **Where does our world need fresh rain – literally and figuratively?**

### Connecting scripture and life

Traditionally, the shoot that comes out of the stump of Jesse in Isaiah 11:1–10 is said to be David and then Jesus. But what if we imagined these words to describe the baptized and anointed community in our midst?

- **How does your community create the realm of God’s shalom?**
- **How do you judge beyond what the eyes see and the ears hear to offer hospitality?**
- **How do you seek justice for all?**

## Focus for Worship, Learning, and Serving

The scripture passages are full of rich imagery: trees, roots, stumps, animals, the voice in the wilderness. Some of these images are familiar, some are unknown to us, and we must imagine them. This Sunday in Advent, congregations typically focus on the theme of hope. Does our hope lie in the abundance of this creation, or the possibilities to

come? What about our differences that sometimes make it difficult to co-exist? Who are the wolves and the lambs in our midst? How do we carry these different aspects and energies within us? This week, in worship, learning, and serving we hear the call to welcome one another, and live together in harmony.



# Playing Pretend

## 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: two for Psalm 72.
- ❑ Choose an option for hearing Isaiah 11:1–10. For the Bible story, arrange for a storyteller to present “[God’s Mountain](#)” on p. 50. Alternatively, for younger children, arrange for a storyteller to present “[Another Message of Peace](#)” in Exploring Our Faith at the end of this week’s materials. For the participatory reading, create a display of stuffed or toy animals, or a photograph or a model of a variety of animals. An alternative is to print pictures of animals and place them on a table for worshippers to select when they arrive.
- ❑ Bring items for setting the worship space: Advent wreath from Advent 1 and this week’s items for building the wreath – basket full of local greens. 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.
- ❑ “I Am Becoming Peace” (*Seasons Songbook*, vol. 9, #6 on *Seasons Music CD*, vol. 9, and available for purchase as an MP3 download at <https://www.seasonsonline.ca/order>).
- ❑ Set [stations](#) as described on pp. 51–52.



## Music Suggestions

### I Am Becoming Peace

Linnea Good; *Seasons Songbook*, vol. 9

### The Anointing

James Maher; *Seasons Songbook*, vol. 9

### All We Long For

Trisha Watts; *Seasons Songbook*, vol. 6

### Hope Is a Candle

Richard Leach; *Seasons Songbook*, vol. 6

### Justice Cry

Trisha Watts; *Seasons Songbook*, vol. 6

### Advent News

Donald Schmidt; *Seasons Songbook*, vol. 3

### “I Have a Dream,” A Man Once Said

Pamela J. Pettitt

### O Come, O Come, Emmanuel

John Mason Neale



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](http://www.seasonsonline.ca). Click on Library; Seasons Music Information. Please contact a licence holder for permission to duplicate.

## Gather

### Call to worship

Imagine with us,  
**a world where God takes shoots and buds and uses them for large purposes.**

We imagine a world,  
**where baby cows and baby bears play together in peace and harmony. Where lions and lambs live together in safety.**  
Imagine God’s world,  
**where God’s Holy Mountain provides refuge, peace, and safety.**

We come to worship; we come to the mountain  
**to worship the One who takes the tiniest shoot and uses it to signal the peace of 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 to find  
a way through the wilderness together.  
Let us imagine how  
we might turn around  
and learn from that  
tiny green shoot of new life.

*Invite the people to come forward to find a basket full of local greens.  
Invite them to arrange the wilds of possibility into this new creation  
without moving anything on the table. When all who have chosen  
to participate have finished, continue with these words.*

In the wildness of this moment,  
we wait for the dawn  
to break and to give light



## Worship Outline • December 4, 2022

to all who find the landscape  
bleak and full of shadow.  
We need light to guide our feet  
into the way of peace  
and so today we bring one candle  
to join our HOPE  
in our constant need for PEACE.

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

### 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.**

*Candles are lit or switched on.*

**Sing** song, such as “I Am Becoming Peace” (*Seasons Song-*

*book, vol. 9, #6 on Seasons Music CD, vol. 9. Printed music and recording are also available at <https://www.seasonsonline.ca/order>).*

### Prayer of confession

#### Call to confession

John the baptizer called us to repent as the kin-dom of heaven comes near. Yet, we often decide that we would rather not change our lives to see that realm. Let us come to God and ask for a spirit of repentance as we confess our sins to God and to one another.

**Prayer** Hear our hearts, God of peace and justice. We hear your call for repentance, and we often ignore it. We find it is easier not to change than to reorient our lives to you. We find it is more convenient to continue our lives than re-examine them. We would rather glorify being busy than take time to explore the wonders of your Word and your world through play. Turn our hearts. Open us to the wonder of your peace and cultivate a desire in us to seek it. Let us know the freedom of your grace. Amen.

### Words of affirmation

“Blessed is God alone who does wondrous things.” Through Jesus Christ, we are forgiven, redeemed, and loved. Amen.

## Engage

### Opening the word

**Isaiah 11:1–10** *the focus scripture for age-level materials in*  
*ENCORE*

**Introduction** Many paintings and drawings have been inspired by Isaiah 11:1–10, which is often known as “The Peaceable Kingdom.” Ask the participants what the words “Peaceable Kingdom” mean to them. What does peace look like? Is it just the absence of conflict, or are there other things that define peace? Have them share their ideas of what peace means to them and what makes them a leader for peace. What is it about childhood that brings a sense of comfort and hope to the world? The world today is full of conflicts, just like the world of Isaiah. Invite the people to listen for how the passage gives comfort during the difficulties of the world today.

Choose from the following

**Bible story** Have a storyteller present “[God’s Mountain](#)” on page 50.

**Participatory reading** Invite people to consider whether the animals in the display or the photographs they collected as they entered worship are predator or prey, and share with those near about where the animals fit into the predator/prey categories. Notice how almost every animal is both! Invite them to listen for power words in Isaiah 11:1–10 and how God turns our ideas about power upside-down.

Invite people to pause, if they would like, and think about the predatory and prey-like ways we each hold in ourselves, and to consider offering up a prayer. Suggest that we can embody the kind of peace God intends.

**Psalms 72:1–7, 18–19** Have two different speakers read aloud this passage. After the first reader, ask people to listen the second time for Creation words (sun, rain, Earth) that are not animals. Notice the importance with which God holds all parts of Creation, not just creatures.

**Romans 15:4–13** Choose two readers. One will read the “as it is written” parts in quotations. We are about to hear, in the focus text, just what this “root of Jesse” is all about!

**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 the song “I Am Becoming Peace,” changing the word peace to “hope” (*Seasons Songbook*, vol. 9, #6 on *Seasons Music CD*, vol. 9. Printed music and recording also available at <https://www.seasonsonline.ca/order>).

**Prayers of the people**

God of hope,

we give thanks for how you sustain us with air to breathe  
and water to drink.

We celebrate that you have created a beautiful world full of  
plants, animals,  
rivers, oceans, woodlands, grasslands, and mountains.

Help us, God, to find balance in ourselves.

Forgive us for the times when we hurt others with careless  
words and actions.

Give us courage to be voices crying out in the wilderness  
for those who are vulnerable and may be preyed upon  
by the injustice of bullying, exclusion, poverty, and  
violence.

We ask that you be near to those who are feeling hopeless,  
both in our community and other communities around the  
world.

Sustain us with your hope, O God.

We lift up to you, aloud or in the silence of our hearts, all  
those in need of healing and peace (*pause for silence*).

We pray now the prayer that Jesus taught us, saying...

**Amen.**

**Prayer of dedication or offering prayer**

Almighty and All-loving One, we lift up today our thanks  
to you. Can we ever catalogue all the ways you have blessed  
our lives? We dedicate those to you today. Take our very best;  
may it help bring about peace on your holy mountain. With  
gratitude and anticipation, we pray. Amen.

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**Bless**

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Go forth as a little child.

Go forth seeking to see as God sees,

with unending love for every creature.

May it be so! Alleluia. Amen.

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**Special Days Commentary**

**December 6 – St. Nicholas**

Nicholas was a fourth-century bishop of Myra in southern Turkey. Known for loving and caring for children, Nicholas fed the hungry, healed the sick, and cared for the oppressed. However, it is the story of Nicholas saving three young women from a life of prostitution that has spawned numerous legends and traditions. Whether Nicholas threw money in the window (as one story goes) or tossed it down a chimney (as goes another), with the money landing in stockings hanging by the fire is questionable. But tradition says that a gift of money spared and rescued the women from poverty. Whatever the story, there has long been a tradition of bearing gifts to children on the feast day of St. Nicholas, which is still observed with great enthusiasm in the Netherlands and some other places. This practice (complete with stockings hung by the fire) was folded into Christmas celebrations for many others.

**December 6 – National Day of Remembrance and Action to End Violence against Women (Canada)**

This day commemorates the tragic Montreal Massacre on

December 6, 1989, where women were killed at the Université de Montréal because of their gender. The Centre for Research on Violence against Women and Children was established in 1993 with funding from the Canadian government to conduct community-centred research to help end the violence. While this is primarily a Canadian observance, it provides an opportunity for any group to focus on violence against women and hate crimes in general.

**December 8 – Bodhi Day (Buddhism)**

On this day in 596 BCE, Siddhartha Gautama (the Buddha) vowed to meditate under the Bodhi Tree until he attained enlightenment. Some Buddhists decorate their homes with lights on this day.

**December 10 – Human Rights Day**

Human Rights Day recognizes the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights at the United Nations on December 20, 1948. Following World War II and the Holocaust, there was a strong desire to ensure that such human rights violations would never happen again.



# Hunting for Signs of Hope

We want to move into hope. We are alert and paying attention to the signs of hope that tell us that the good news of God's realm is already here. It might take a big imagination

☐ A tiny green shoot

☐ A child leading

☐ Wise leadership

☐ Flowing water

☐ Pinecone

☐ Act of kindness

☐ A manger

and a great story about a wolf lying with a lamb. Or we could venture out together in our neighbourhoods to look for signs of hope. Check off items as you find them.

☐ Holly sprig

☐ A young tree

☐ A banner of good news

☐ A big party

☐ Candle in a window

☐ Evergreen wreath

☐ A change of heart

Many of these things are full of meaning and symbolism, like the evergreen that reminds us of eternal life and the pinecone that symbolizes resurrection. Many more things could symbolize the hope we long to see in the world. What

other things did you find on your walk that reminded you that the good news is already here? Which of these things was most powerful for you to see? What would you still like to see?

# God's Mountain

Based on Isaiah 11:1–10

**H**ello. My name is Isaiah, and I am a prophet. A prophet is someone who tells people about God. A prophet wants all the people to listen and learn about who God is and what God does. Life is difficult for the people of Judah, where I live. The people of the land are afraid and sad that other nations are trying to take over, and they feel that God is not listening to them.

I was thinking about all of this, and suddenly a picture came into my mind. I knew that God wanted the leaders and people of Judah to hear about it.

The picture was of a tree that had been cut down; it was just a stump, its life and beauty gone. But from the root of that tree, a new branch would grow, and it would become a strong tree again. I told the people not to give up hope; just like the new branch that grew from the stump of the tree that seemed dead, a new leader would come. This leader would have the Spirit of God and all of God's knowledge and understand-

ing. This person would be happy and really enjoy knowing God by seeing and hearing about all the good things God has done and will do. Caring for the poor and teaching bad people to be good would be something for this person to do.

The rest of my story was about what would happen if God made all things good and safe. I told about a mountain where no one would be hurt, and all the animals would live together. No animal would hunt and kill another animal for food. All the animals would live peacefully on the mountain, and a child would lead them on the mountain. The child would teach the world about God and all the good things God can do. No one would harm or destroy anyone or anything else on this mountain. Everyone and everything in the whole wide world would know about God. They would know that God is everywhere, even in the biggest ocean. They would know that all the people have been a part of God's plan, and all the people will be a part of that plan in the future.

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 "[God's Mountain](#)"
- Alternatively, arrange for a storyteller to present the story

## The practice of storytelling

### Directions

1. Listen to the story "God's Mountain."
2. Ask yourself:
  - **What, for you, was the biggest surprise in the story?**
  - **What do you think Isaiah wanted all the people to know?**
  - **If you were a prophet, what would you tell all the people about God?**
  - **Imagine that you are the child in the story and leading all the people in your church.**
  - **Where would you lead them? What would you want them to see and do?**





## 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 hope

### Materials

- Beautiful cloth from Advent 1
- Permanent markers
- 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 hope" near it.
- (Use different images from last week if you are continuing the path of peace.)



**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 a need of prayers for hope 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, continuing the path from the previous week. 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."

This is an extension of the path of peace from last week.

## Seeds of hope

### Materials

- A small paper cup
- Potting soil in a basin or bucket with a scoop
- Garden, or disposable gloves
- Fast sprouting grass seeds
- Markers to decorate the cup
- Hand sanitizer or wipes



**Suitable for all ages**

### The practice of hope

#### Directions

1. Hold a cup in your hands and think about something you hope for. Maybe it is something in the vision the prophet Isaiah explained; perhaps it is healing for someone who is sick or to see relatives or friends you miss, or something else. Write or draw what you hope for on your cup.
2. Using the scoop, fill your cup almost  $\frac{3}{4}$  full with soil. Scatter grass seeds across the top of the dirt and fill the cup to the top.
3. Take your cup home and water the seeds. Place it in a sunny window (or outside if in a warmer climate). Water it when the soil looks dry.
4. As the grass grows, give thanks to God and remember what else we hope for in our lives and God's kingdom.

Hope is a hard concept for some to understand. We think of hope as knowing that something good will happen in the future, not just wishing it. We can ask one another what we hope to see in God's Kingdom and watch seeds grow to remind us that simply because we cannot see something now, that does not mean it will not happen.



## What if....?

### Materials

- List of different kinds of animals, plants, things found in nature, such as tree, ocean, whale, lion, lamb, mountain
- Timer
- Space to move and play



**Suitable for all ages  
working together**

Often we do not take time to imagine and pretend. These activities are essential to development and often give adults respite from busy lives and opportunities to engage the creative parts of their minds.

## The practice of pretend

### Directions

1. Ask each person to select an item from the list or something else they would like to pretend to be.
2. One individual is the "Connector." Ask them to pair up participants in groups of 3.
3. Each group has five minutes to make up a story about why they are together. A possible prompt could be, "what would happen if these three things were together at church? On the beach? In outer space?" The Connector is the timekeeper.
4. When the Connector says, "time is up," each group of three shares or acts out their story with the rest of the group.
5. If time allows, mix up the groups and give another person the chance to be the Connector.

## Banner of hope

### Materials

- Basic supplies
- Magazines
- Large piece of banner paper with the word "HOPE" outlined on it, hung on a wall or laid on a table so that pieces may be glued to it



**Suitable for all ages  
working together**

## The practice of creativity

### Directions

1. Cut out pictures of objects and people that inspire hope or remind you of hope.
2. Glue the pictures inside the outlines of the letters of the word hope.
3. As you cut and paste, wonder to yourself or with others:
  - **What reminds me of hope?**
  - **How can I offer hope to others?**
  - **What do I hope for the future??**

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.

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## Another Message of Peace

A story based on Isaiah 11:1-10

Isaiah was talking to all the people.

"Now imagine a world filled with God's love. Imagine everyone living together peacefully. Even the animals will live together peacefully."

A wolf and a lamb will live together.

A leopard and a baby goat will sleep near each other.

A calf and a baby lion will play together safely.

A cow and a bear will share the same food.

A lion will eat straw just as an ox does.

Isaiah looked at the children. "And God said that a little child will show everyone how to live in peace!"

"What a wonderful world that would be!" thought the people. "Let's celebrate!" they said.

So the children led everyone in a parade and everyone sang about a world of peace.

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## Walking Stick

Isaiah shared a wonderful picture of a child leading the way of love and peace.

Make a walking stick to lead an imaginary parade of hope.

**You will need** 60 cm/2ft dowel or stick, vinyl or masking tape (or paint and paintbrushes), yarn, ribbon, stickers, white glue, pictures of peace, feathers.

### Directions

1. Decorate your sticks with pictures or stickers of peace.
2. Tie a feather to the end of the stick.
3. Practice leading an imaginary parade as you call out ways of peace.



Decorate the picture below and share your finished artwork with your family, friends, and church. You may want to put it up at home to remind you of HOPE during Advent.

