

DECEMBER 18, 2016
FOURTH SUNDAY
OF ADVENT



Advent is a season of peace.

DAILY BIBLE READINGS

These passages are related to the Lectionary texts for this Sunday.

Sunday	Matthew 1:18-25	Immanuel — God with us
Monday	Luke 1:26-45	An angel appears to Mary
Tuesday	Romans 1:1-7	To God's chosen
Wednesday	Psalms 80	Prayer for restoration
Thursday	Isaiah 7:10-16	Sign of Immanuel
Friday	Isaiah 52:7-10	Burst into songs of joy
Saturday	Luke 2:1-20	The birth of Jesus
Sunday	John 1:1-14	The Word became human

SCRIPTURE VERSE FOR THIS WEEK

"Then after her baby is born, name him Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins." **Matthew 1:21 (CEV)**

PRAYERS AND BLESSING

A Prayer for the Week:

Come Immanuel. Come and fill us today with your light, grace, and peace. Amen.

Mealtime Prayer:

Bless our table, gracious God, and all who sit at it. As we wait to celebrate Jesus' birth, give us the gift of sharing with others. Amen.

A Blessing to Give:

May God our Creator and our Lord Jesus Christ be kind to you and bless you with peace. (Romans 1:7)



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HYMN OF THE WEEK

He Came Down



CARING CONVERSATIONS

Discuss in your home or small group:

- What does your name mean? Do you know why it was chosen for you?
- The angel told Joseph to give Mary's son the name Jesus, which means "the Lord saves us." What did Jesus' name indicate about his life? What does it mean to you that Jesus was born?
- A title for Jesus is Immanuel, which means, "God with us." How have you experienced God with you recently?

DEVOTIONS

Light all four candles on your Advent Wreath and say these words.

Say: This is the fourth and last week of Advent. Together with the candles of waiting, hope, and joy, we light the candle of peace. At the birth of Jesus the angels sang, "Praise God in Heaven! Peace on earth to everyone who pleases God." Jesus came to give us peace with God. Through him we can live at peace with one another. [The candles are lit.]

Read: Luke 2:8-14.

Pray: O God, as the season of Advent comes to a close we are excited at the coming of Christmas. In our excitement, help us not to forget the reason for our celebrations. Thank you for Jesus, our Savior and Prince of Peace. Bless our home with your peace. Amen.

SERVICE

Simple acts of kindness can be as good a gift as those bought and wrapped. Make up "kindness vouchers" to give to one another as gifts this Christmas. Each voucher should list a kind deed that is redeemable during the year (e.g. inviting someone to dinner, making a bed, cleaning a room). Have fun thinking of voucher ideas and preparing them for one another.

RITUALS AND TRADITIONS

Many homes and communities prepare special light displays at Christmas time. Take a "Christmas lights tour" of your community this week. As you travel, sing Christmas carols or listen to Christmas music. You may also wish to set up a Christmas lights display in your front yard or window. Offer thanks to Jesus, who is the true light of the world.



In addition to *Taking Faith Home*, celebrate milestones in your daily life as an effective faith formation tool. Go to: www.milestonesministry.org