



Group Discussion Guide

November 28, 2021: HOPE

Key Scriptures: Isaiah 40:1, 3-5; John 1:1-5

Hope is a curious thing. On the one hand, hope can give us something to cling to when we face struggles and challenges in our lives. On the other hand, sometimes our hopes can build an expectation in our hearts and minds that, if not met, could be devastating. Sometimes daring to hope is a risk that feels too raw for even the most optimistic among us.

On this first week of Advent, we explore the gift of hope that we have in Christ and what it looks like to find hope at Christmas.

Discussion Questions:

1. What is something you hope for?
2. When you need to feel some hope, where do you turn to find it?
3. What is something you hope to experience or feel this Christmas season? This can be an event, activity, something emotional or spiritual.

December 5, 2021: PEACE

Key Scriptures: Matthew 2:13-14, 16; John 14:27

We could all use a little more peace, but how do we find it?

On this second Sunday of Advent, we learn some valuable clues for finding peace from a young girl named Cindy Lou Who and more importantly, from the life and words of Jesus. The good news is that peace can be found even when life and the world is filled with chaos.

Discussion Questions:

1. How do you define peace?
2. Share a time in your life when you have experienced a deep and meaningful peace.
3. In what ways do the holidays make peace easier or harder to find?
4. What is the peace of Christ? How does it differ from other sources of peace?
5. What is one thing you will do this holiday season to find peace? What is one thing you will do to share peace with others?

December 12, 2021: JOY

Key Scripture: Luke 2:8-20

On this third Sunday of Advent, we explore the meaning of joy. By celebrating the story of the shepherds in the field, an elf named Buddy, and a church member named Austin, we learn that joy is something far more life changing than the fleeting emotion of happiness.

Discussion Questions:

1. How do you define joy? How is it the same or different than happiness?
2. Buddy, the main character in the movie *Elf*, is the embodiment of joy and he brings light into the world in so many ways. Have you ever known someone like that? If so, what made them so joyful?
3. What is something that brings you happiness? What is something that brings you joy?
4. How can you focus more on the things that bring you joy this holiday season?

December 19, 2021: LOVE

Key Scriptures: Matthew 1:18-25; 1 John 4:8; 1 Corinthians 13; John 15:12-13; Matthew 25:34-40

On this last Sunday of Advent, we explore the greatest of all of God's gifts. Love.

Through the story of Jesus' birth in the gospel of Matthew and the movie *It's a Wonderful Life*, we learn some powerful things about love and where we find love at Christmas.

Discussion Questions:

1. Read 1 Corinthians 13. Based on that passage, what is love?
2. Read 1 John 4:7-21. What does this passage say about love? What does it say about God? What does it say about how we treat others?
3. What are some of the things you love most?
4. When have you felt most loved? What was that like?
5. How can you practice the art of loving well this holiday season and beyond?