

Advent

2023

Devotional & Activity Guide



Table of Contents Advent

Introduction - Pastor Shawn Carpenter

Week 1: "Hope in the Darkness"

Old Testament Anticipation by Harley Anderson	p. 1-2
New Testament Fulfillment by Kristi Stoughton	p. 3-4
Coloring Art by Maxsyne Mathis	p. 5
Activities (with online printables)	p. 6

Week 2: "Peace from the Conflict"

Old Testament Anticipation by Laura Carpenter	p. 7-8
New Testament Fulfillment by Chip Lorig	p. 9-10
Coloring Art by Lou Catanzaro	p. 11
Activities (with online printables)	p. 12

Week 3: "Joy of Salvation"

Old Testament Anticipation by Tyler North	p. 13-14
New Testament Fulfillment by Haley Roundtree	p. 15-16
Coloring Art by Finn Allen	p. 17
Activities (with online printables)	p. 18

Week 4: "Love on Display"

Old Testament Anticipation by Ruth Pack	p. 19-20
New Testament Fulfillment by Doug McKay	p. 21-22
Coloring Art by Madeleine Small	p. 23
Activities (with online printables)	p. 24

Christmas Day

Grace Upon Grace by Kim Gay	p. 25-26
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Introduction

Trinity Family,

Welcome to Advent! To help us celebrate Advent this year, we have put together this Advent devotional to encourage our hearts to rest in the hope, peace, joy, and love brought near by Jesus Christ.

This devotional is special because it is made by many of our gifted and humble-hearted folks at Trinity! All of the devotions, and all of the coloring art, were put together by our very own!

Here's how to use this Advent devotional:

Beginning the week of Monday, November 27th, you will have two devotionals to prepare your hearts. There is an Old Testament Anticipation devotional and a New Testament Fulfillment devotional.

You will also find a coloring page and activity page to use each week! Now, your family may have more than one kid, and so we made a web page where you can download and print off more copies of the coloring page and activity pages. Scan the QR code below or go to trinitynh.org/resources/advent.

You will also find a digital version of the whole Advent booklet on our Advent resource page!

Be sure to express encouragement and gratitude to our many great contributors! You can find their names in the Table of Contents.

Many blessings to you and yours,
Pastor Shawn Carpenter
Advent 2023



Old Testament Anticipation

Lamentations 3:19-24

By Harley Anderson

At 87 years of age, I am amazed at the number of changes that have taken place in my life and the assortment of advisors, professionals, family, and fellow Christians who have helped me and shaped me. I was dreaming and hoping, but in a sailboat with a broken mast and no rudder going wherever the wind blew me. Going with the flow: college, courtship, military, marriage, grad school, employment, and starting a family.

My future father-in-law, a solid Christian, spoke to me about the future ahead for me and his daughter. He had more confidence in me than I had in myself. I felt at peace with his advice and the prayers that were sent. I started college and the ROTC program. I knew someone was watching over me. During the college years, a new Harley was grown. After graduation, I faced a new challenge as to what's next in life: military assignment or an MBA program fellowship. I wanted both. After much prayer and a letter requesting a deferment, I started the fellowship, teaching Accounting 101.

A year later we were granted one more year of deferment. While waiting for orders from the military, we received orders for Fort Bragg, North Carolina, and the 5th Logistical Command. We now had a young daughter and had to break "piggy banks" for food. My boss, a Colonel, suggested that I contact North Carolina State University about part-time teaching at the Army base education center. The Colonel arranged for no duty two evenings a week and Saturday mornings. God was in control, as we were able now to save for a down payment on our first home rather than live short of money every week. Praising God always who is always merciful every morning.

Eventually, I had a job offer at Northeastern University and realized that I would need a doctorate for tenure and began law school. I started law school 3 evenings a week and had Army reserve meetings 1 night a week. I had a very heavy workload, so I requested a deferment for 4 years until law school was completed. It was granted.

There are so many times when God's mercy to us was so evident. God met our needs again and again. One example was when He providentially provided the top thoracic surgeon the day I needed surgery while fighting throat cancer. A 2-hour surgery that saved my life by the best surgeon who happened to be on rounds that day! God's mercy is new every day, and I continually thank Him for it.



Now I am retired. But God continues to be so good to me and our family, even to finding a wonderful church for us in Trinity.

Thank you, God, for all these many lessons of Your mercy.

Think and Talk About

Take time to remember the many ways that God has shown His mercy and goodness to you.

As you look at your life now, instead of asking “Why is this happening,” try, “What is God teaching me?”

New Testament Fulfillment

1 Peter 1:3-5 (CEB)

By Kristi Stoughton

What do you hope for?

We all hope for something. Sometimes our hopes are simple: “I hope we have good weather this weekend” or “I hope that gift arrives in time for Christmas.” Sometimes our hopes are more pivotal: “I hope I get that job.” And sometimes our hopes are the cries of our heart: “I hope God heals my loved one” or “I hope my child comes back to God.”

Our hopes say something important about us, about the things we value or long for. Peter opens his letter to believers facing hardship with the assurance that they’re reborn into a “living hope.” What does that mean? How does that impact us in our day-to-day lives?

First and foremost, we who are part of God’s family have a living hope. It’s not ephemeral, abstract, or just wishful thinking. The hope that we have is alive, active, and flourishing because we serve a living God. Our hope is rooted in something, someONE, who is bedrock solid.

This is important because the world can be pretty dark. When we look around at this broken world, when we see war and illness and death, hope may sound like a naive dream. And in our own lives, sometimes it may seem that none of our hopes are coming to fruition. When the darkness is all around, it can be hard to have hope.

But there is light in the darkness.

Because our hope is not in this world or in our circumstances. It’s not about getting what we think is best. Instead, it is a hope that transcends our lives.



The Asbury Bible Commentary notes that this living hope “equips Christians with ability to see all of life in the light of the glory to be revealed when Christ returns.”

The “light of glory.” Even in a dark place.

And notice that our hope is not that circumstances will go our way or that we’ll get that thing we really, really want. Our hope is in a living Lord who has overcome the grave and who extends to us eternal salvation.

We can have confidence in that kind of hope.

So, when it comes down to it, the question isn’t really “What do you hope for?” The question is “Who is your hope in?” Because that is what makes the difference. We can have hope – in the darkness of the world or in the darkness of our circumstances – because of who God is and because of what Christ has done for us.

Think and Talk About

Think about some of the things that you hope for. How can these hopes be reframed in light of the living hope that we have in Christ?

When the world feels dark, what are some of the spiritual practices that can help us “see all of life in the light of the glory?”



**“I wait for the Lord, my soul waits, and
in his word I hope.”
- Psalm 130:5**

Key Word Activity: HOPE

Prepare: playdough

Do: Have the children use playdough to form the word “hope”. While you’re playing, review what they have learned about the hope that Jesus gives. You can also repeat the Key Phrase (“Jesus gives hope!”) together in fun ways while you use your playdough to form the shape of a baby and a cross to remember the sacrifice Jesus made to give us hope.



Hope Ornament Craft



Prepare: Hope Ornament Craft printable, crayons or colored pencils

Do: Using the provided printable, decorate the “hope” ornament.

**Bring your finished ornament back to church to help us
decorate our special Trinity Kids tree!**

Pass The Present Game

Prepare: small gift box, small surprises (optional)

Do: Place a small gift box in the center of your dining room table as a decoration. At mealtimes, pass this present around the table as each person says “thank you” to God for something they appreciate. This is a fun and simple way to plan praise into your daily routine in the weeks leading up to Christmas.

Ideas: You can also occasionally hide a small surprise (candy, stickers, a note announcing a fun activity, etc.) in the box for your family to discover and enjoy together.



Go to trinitynh.org/resources/advent to download the printables mentioned above, as well as additional coloring art pages!

Old Testament Anticipation

Isaiah 26:1-3

By Laura Carpenter

Isaiah was a prophet to Judah during a time of conflict, when the massive Assyrian Empire was rising to power. Judah watched Assyria defeat Israel and take them into captivity. And in their fear, they turned to Egypt for protection. In the opening verses of Isaiah we read, "Ah sinful nation...they have forsaken the LORD, they have despised the Holy One of Israel, they are utterly estranged."

There is no avoiding the constant reminders of the devastation of wars, natural disasters, public violence, and political chaos that pervade our world. To say that we live in the midst of "conflict" is an understatement. And yet, I would venture to guess that those larger-scale conflicts are not typically the ones that keep you up at night. Each one of us has shadows of darkness that pierce our hearts, steal our sleep, and wage war within our minds: mental health struggles, family disunity, financial strain, relational difficulties, failing health, trauma, or the fallout from our own sinful actions. Our hearts yearn with the refrain: this is not the way life is "supposed" to be.

Into the chaos of Old Testament Judah and into your life, God declares the answer to that brokenness: peace, in Hebrew "shalom." Shalom is much more than ending war, gun violence, or family arguments. Shalom refers to wholeness, harmony, and prosperity.



Shalom is what we need, what we must have, to repair an eternal estrangement from God and to "right" all that is incomplete, lacking in harmony, and NOT whole in our lives.

Isaiah 26:3 actually says, “You will keep him in peace, peace whose mind is stayed on you.” Double peace. Perfect peace. For those who trust in Christ there is now an eternal wholeness and completeness in relationship to God. There is shalom that was heralded into a dark sky by angels: “Glory to God in the highest and on earth peace among those with whom he is pleased” and which now fills and seals our hearts. And while there is relational, judicial peace with God, there is also the gift of peace in spite of a world of conflict for those whose minds are “stayed” (Hebrew: “rested” or “leaned) on Christ.

“In that day, this song will be sung...We have a strong city!” There will be a once-and-for-all day when God establishes an unshakable city for His people! How does He do it? It is beautifully contained within our verses. Stop and read verse 1 once more from your Bible, and then read it here with one English word replaced by the original Hebrew. “We have a strong city; He sets up Yeshua as walls and bulwarks.” Thanks be to God! “For He himself is our peace!” (Ephesians 2:14).

This Advent season, rest your mind on Christ. Delight in the unshakable peace you have been given with God and the shalom available to you no matter what your days may hold.

Think and Talk About

In what areas of your life are you currently experiencing the tension of conflict and lack of peace?

Just as Judah sought to make an alliance with Egypt for protection and peace, to what things are you tempted to look for peace (completeness, wholeness, and prosperity) instead of resting your mind on Christ?

Have you trusted in Christ as your savior, looking to Him alone for your salvation, and receiving from Him the gift of peace, completeness, wholeness, and harmony with God? If not, let that be your greatest gift this Advent season!

New Testament Fulfillment

John 14:27

By Chip Lorig

Peace in conflict. These seem like two nouns that can never coexist. It’s a concept that surpasses all understanding. Throughout history, one always follows the other. Since the fall of mankind the days of peace have been all too quickly interrupted by conflict. In Matthew 24, Jesus reminds His disciples that the pattern of conflict in which there will be “wars and rumors of wars...Nations will rise against nations” is something that will happen until the end of days.

From political conflict on a global scale to neighborly conflict and down to our families, it seems as if there is no way to escape it. The holidays are never immune to strife brought on by family members and the opinions they bring to the table, quite literally.



However Jesus’ birth was announced by a multitude of angels proclaiming “peace on earth.” And before Jesus leaves His disciples He tells them, “Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you.” (John 14:27). So where is this elusive peace?

Jesus adds clarity as He continues on in verse 27 stating, “I do not give to you as the world gives.” Meaning the world’s view of peace is the absence of conflict. But what Jesus gives us is something different, something better.

Because of our sins that Jesus bore on the cross, He offers us a pathway back to God’s presence. Through Him, we no longer need to live a life where we live in conflict with God. And that good news helps us to live in a world that is in conflict with each other.

Your visits with family and friends this season can often seem like a countdown to conflict. Who’s going to say the wrong thing, and how are you going to respond? Or is it going to be you that says something wrong? Take heart knowing that Jesus was no stranger to conflict amongst His closest friends.

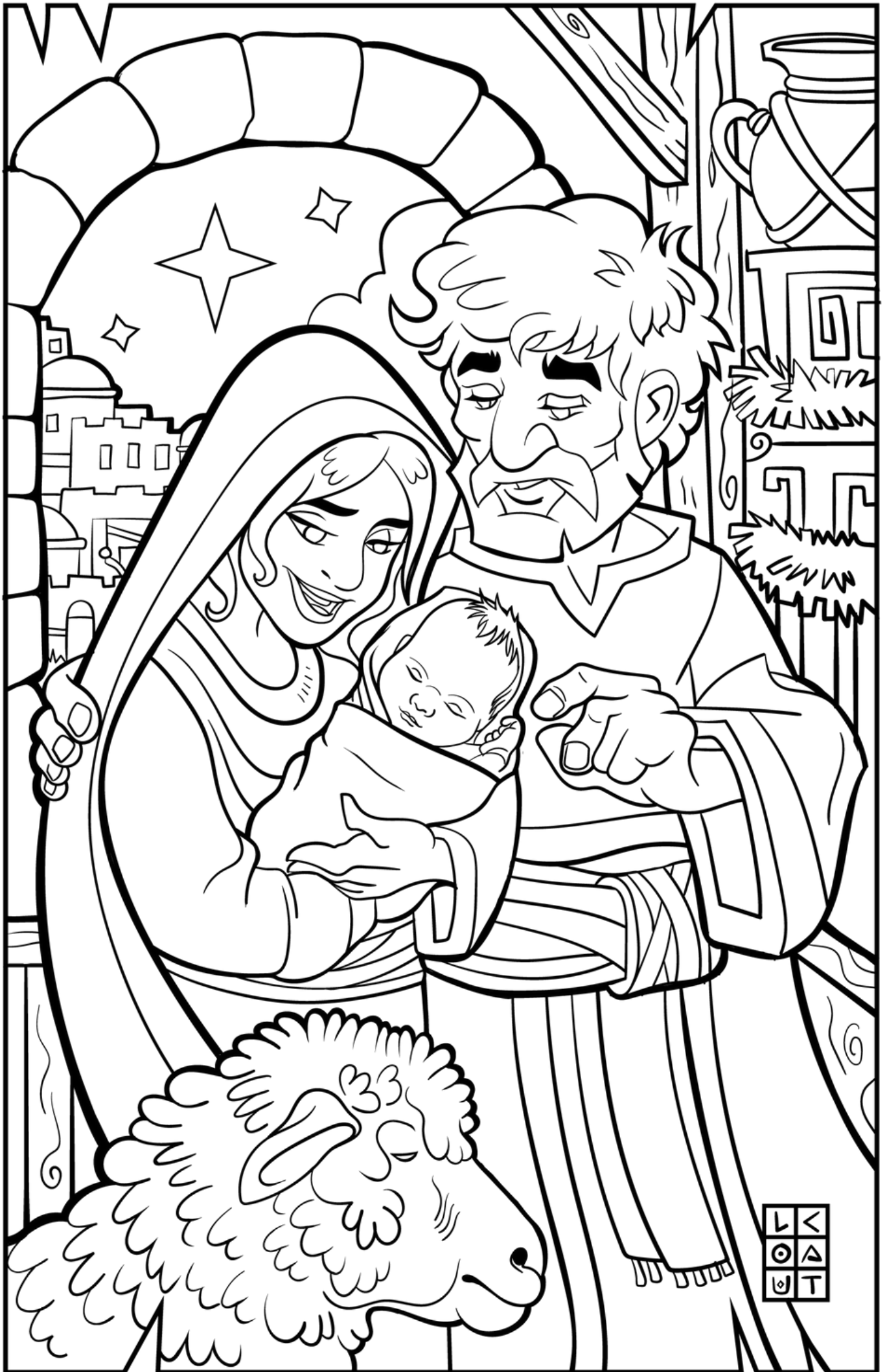
So when you are with others this Christmas and “peace on Earth” seems more cliché than anything else, know that it’s the same peace that Jesus offers, allowing God to love us in spite of our sins, that we need to use to love others in spite of their sins (and ours).

Think and Talk About

This Christmas, look for opportunities to remind others that the same peace God gives you is available to them. What will that look like for you?

Who is someone in your life that needs to know the love and peace of Christ?

And how will you be the one who demonstrates “the peace of God, that surpasses all understanding” (Philippians 4:7).

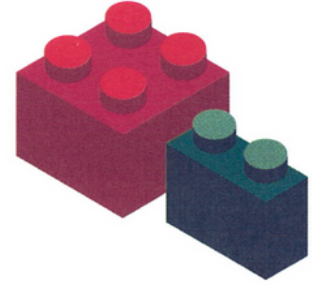


**“For unto us a child is born... his name shall be called
Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.”
- Isaiah 9:6**

Key Word Activity: PEACE

Prepare: building blocks, Peace Definition Printable

Do: Have the children use building blocks to form the word “peace”. While you’re playing, review what they have learned about the peace that Jesus gives. You can also repeat the Key Phrase (“Jesus gives peace!”) together while you use blocks to form the shapes of a heart and a cross to remind you of what Jesus did to give peace with God to all who believe in him.



Peace Ornament Craft



Prepare: Peace Ornament Craft printable, crayons or colored pencils

Do: Using the provided printable, decorate the “peace” ornament.

Bring your finished ornament back to church to help us decorate our special Trinity Kids tree!

Peace to Troubled Hearts

Prepare: Peace to Troubled Hearts ornament printable, pencils, craft supplies

Do: Give each child a heart ornament and instruct them to write their worries on the heart and then decorate it with crayons, stickers, or other craft supplies.

Say: When our hearts are troubled and worried, we want peace. We want to know that someone cares and that someone can make things right. Jesus is the Prince of Peace. He cares about the things that trouble you more than you will ever know. Sometimes Jesus will make everything right. Other times, Jesus will bring peace to our hearts even when things are still going wrong. He wants us to bring the things that trouble our hearts to him. He wants you to trust him with them. (Read 1 Peter 5:7.) You can hang your paper heart in your window or on the Christmas tree. When you’re tempted to worry about these things, go to Jesus and ask him to give you peace about them. (Close in prayer.)



Go to trinitynh.org/resources/advent to download the printables mentioned above, as well as additional coloring art pages!

Old Testament Anticipation

Isaiah 35:5-10

By Tyler North

Today's passage comes from the latter part of Isaiah 35, and it's like taking a wonderful journey with the author as they guide us through the hopeful anticipation of what lies ahead. It beautifully illustrates God's amazing plan and the great hope it offers to all of us. The pain and suffering in the world will no longer be a burden.



In verses 8-9, this passage shares what both the forgiven and those who seek purification can expect when they walk the Path of Holiness. And finally, in verse 10, we witness a joyous celebration that will resonate with everyone who finds redemption in these words!

In verses 5-7, we are shown through various examples of how we will find release from sin and from suffering. Our fears and anxieties will go away, and our bodies will be transformed into something new and wonderful. Moreover, it uses vivid illustration to show us the amazing changes to come. It goes beyond the realm of our physical bodies to explain how this renewal extends to every aspect of our lives.

Moving on to verses 8 and 9, we are introduced to the Way of Holiness and given rules for traveling it. In verse 8, Isaiah beautifully describes the Way of Holiness as the path God desires us to take. It is a path characterized by purity, righteousness, and unwavering faith.

However, in verse 9, Isaiah warns that the path will not be traveled by the wicked fools and the unclean. He adopts striking imagery of lions and ravenous beasts to depict those who choose unrighteousness.

Finally, in verse 10, we witness a heartwarming celebration of the redeemed. It portrays the utmost happiness and joy we could possibly imagine. The celebration is a glimpse of what is to come, should we choose the Way of Holiness and fulfill God's divine plan.

Jesus paid for our sins, through His sacrifice, so that we could follow Him, and enjoy this everlasting joy and jubilant celebration! In summary, these verses offer us a profound message of hope, renewal, and the enduring power of faith. They encourage us to walk the Way of Holiness and find strength and joy in our journey towards Jesus.



Think and Talk About

Why does God care about our actions?

How does this everlasting joy affect the trials life throws at us?

Besides our physical bodies, can you think of any way that this renewal will affect us?

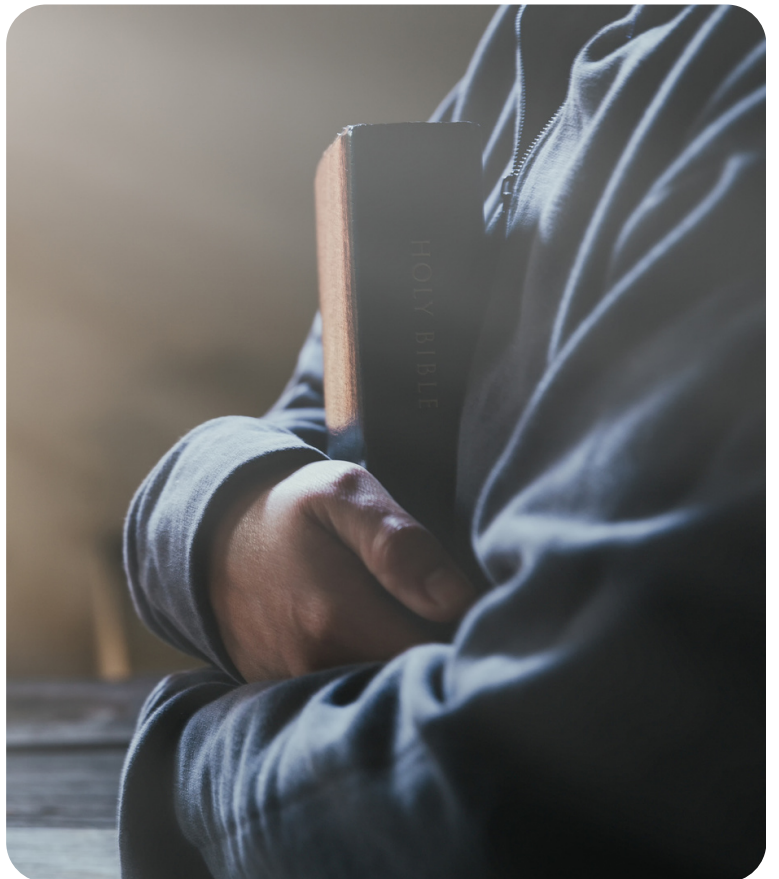
New Testament Fulfillment

1 Peter 1:6-9

By Haley Roundtree

At times, it can feel very difficult to look at life and feel joy for where we are, where we’ve been, and where we’re going. In 1 Peter 1:6-9, Peter encouraged believers who were being persecuted for their faith to consider the magnitude of it and God’s work in it. He explained that while gold is of incredible value and strength, it still does not compare to the worth of their salvation in Christ.

Though currently, we might not be experiencing the same kind of persecution, this life is certainly not easy, either. When Peter writes, “for a little while,” he is referring to our lives on earth. Our time here is short in the grand scheme of things, but grieving, pain, and suffering often feel everlasting. Even in our struggles, there is still reason to praise the Lord – our glorious and magnificent Creator.



In Milton Vincent’s *A Gospel Primer*, he exclaims that the Gospel makes good news out of every aspect of our lives, even the most severe trials. Perhaps the season of life you’re in currently is not where you’d like to be, but it is where you are. Even so, God is in control. He ordains all that we experience, so our experiences should lead us to bring praise to Him!



With God leading our lives, we can look back on previous seasons and think, “There was joy in that!” And, with God continuing to lead our lives, we can consider our current season and the seasons to come with joyful expectation. Eventually, we will get to spend eternity in the presence of God, rejoicing with Him forever. For now, we’re taking the long way home, making much of God and showing others His love and compassion for those He’s created.

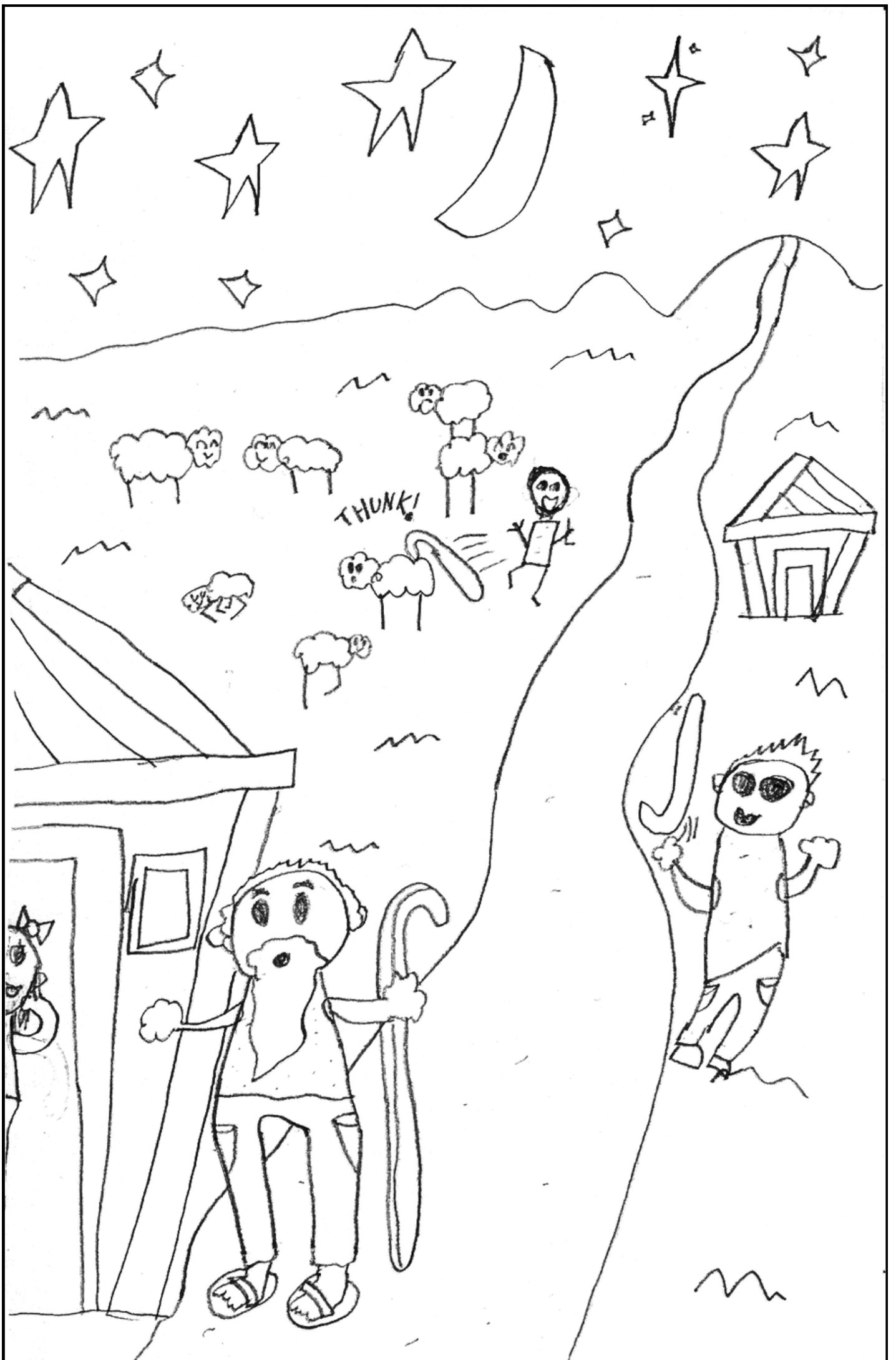
Think and Talk About

What do these verses say about who God is?

How valuable does Peter say our faith in Christ is? Do you feel as though it is more worthy than the trials you face?

What are some areas in your life that may have been difficult, but also allowed for moments of praise and adoration toward God?

How can we continue to rejoice in our salvation as we walk through life?



“I will take joy in the God of my salvation.” - Habakkuk 3:18b

Key Word Activity: JOY

Prepare: pipe cleaners (aka chenille stems), beads, jingle bells

Do: Have the children string beads and jingle bells onto pipe cleaners and then bend them into letters to spell the word “joy.” While you’re playing, review what they have learned about the joy that Jesus gives. Afterward, ring the jingle bells and repeat the Key Phrase (“Jesus gives joy!”) together.



Joy Ornament Craft



Prepare: JOY Ornament Craft printable, crayons or colored pencils

Do: Using the provided printable, decorate the “joy” ornament.

Bring your finished ornament back to church to help us decorate our special Trinity Kids tree!

Jumping for JOY!

Prepare: Bible, paper, pencil

Do: Make a list of things the individuals in your family or class enjoys (i.e., walking, running, hiking, reading, dinosaurs, painting, talking, watching movies, chocolate, pizza, pumpkins, presents, popcorn, etc.) Read the list out loud and tell the children to “jump for joy!” each time you read something they enjoy.

Say: These things bring us a little bit of joy. We enjoy them a lot. But all these things we enjoy come from God. (Read James 1:17.) The greatest gift God gives us is Jesus! He is the one who brings us real joy. He wants us to enjoy him most of all!

Do: Close by sharing thoughts about how Jesus brings joy to you and your family. Pray and thank God for the many things you enjoy and especially for Jesus, the source of everlasting joy.



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Old Testament Anticipation

Micah 7:18-20

By Ruth Pack

Have you ever lost anything in the sea? If so, you know that with few exceptions, it's gone. Glasses, cell phones, money—lose these overboard and you're unlikely to ever find them again. Did they exist? Do they still? Of course, but for all intents and purposes, they're not coming back, even with a lot of effort...or a very long fishing rod!

Micah uses this illustration to describe how God's steadfast love leads Him to deal with our sin. He writes that God will cast our sins into the depths of the sea and will tread them underfoot. It doesn't say God will ignore our sin, that it isn't sin, or that it doesn't grieve Him. Treading underfoot and sweeping under the rug are entirely different. Micah calls us out with strong words like iniquity, transgression, and sin. He does not sugarcoat and call them struggles or habits, because God doesn't take our sins lightly. Rather, He calls sin *sin* and then deals with it.

Of course, a holy god might distance himself from sin, and a benevolent god would forgive, but our God doesn't stop there: He also destroys our sins. Why? So that we can't keep trying to fish them out of the water or up from the mud to toy with again. God knows our sins are harmful to us, to others, and to our relationship with Him; thus He destroys them so they can't cause more harm.



A good parent doesn't gloss over the sins of his or her children; that would be harmful and unloving and would ignore the responsibility to train them up in the way they should go. Instead, by passing over your sins, pardoning them, and then throwing them into the sea, God banishes your sins so that you never have to be burdened with them again.

Micah wrote these words centuries before the Advent of the Messiah, but his knowledge of God's faithfulness in the past enabled him to describe the redemptive work God would do in the future—not because we could ever possibly earn it but because God's steadfast love, compassion, and faithfulness were so great that He would send His own Son to die for us. Micah's descriptions of sin aren't the only strong words he uses: "He will again have compassion on us; he will tread our iniquities underfoot. You will cast all our sins into the depths of the sea. You will show faithfulness to Jacob and steadfast love to Abraham." There is no hesitation, no qualification, no caveat. God has done this great work through His Son, and He will continue it until you stand before Him in glory, blameless and as far away from sin as from your lost keys at the bottom of the sea. Praise Him for His steadfast love, compassion, and faithfulness to you this Advent season!

Think and Talk About

Can you think of a time that someone forgave you for something you did and honestly let the offense go? How did that make you feel? How did it affect your relationship with that person?

What about when you forgave someone in this way? Did you find it difficult? Did they?

Is there a sin you're still fishing for? Is it because you don't want to let the sin go, or is it because you can't quite believe that it's really gone? God has already done the work of destroying the sin through His Son; embrace His forgiveness and live free of this burden!

New Testament Fulfillment

Romans 8:31-39

By Doug McKay

The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel - which means, "God with us." (Matthew 1:23) These prophetic words from Isaiah, the angel tells Joseph, are fulfilled in the birth of Jesus Christ. The name Immanuel, "God with us," conveys the idea of God dwelling with man in intimate proximity, Deity in communion with humanity. Jesus' embodiment of this reality as God in the flesh (John 1:1-2) connects Creation - when He walked in the garden with the first human beings, before communion between man and God was shattered by sin - with ultimate Renewal, when God will dwell with His people forever in communion permanently restored (Revelation 21:1-3).



But there is a slightly larger sense in which the name Immanuel can be viewed. In Isaiah's day, the name could mean "God is with us." Stated this way, it conveys not only physical presence or Divine visitation, but also the idea of an advocate, protector, and ally. It's similar to the sense of loyalty of Jonathan's armor bearer when he says, "I am with you heart and soul" (1 Samuel 14:7), or the confident assurance of Elisha when he tells his servant, "Those who are with us are more than those who are with them" (2 Kings 6:16). Simply put, the sense of the term is "God is on our side."

In Jesus' birth, life, death, and resurrection, we experience both senses of Immanuel – God is present, and He is on our side. Jesus took up our infirmities and carried our sorrows (Isaiah 53:4). He was tempted in every way, just as we are—yet was without sin (Hebrews 5:15). He paid the penalty for our sins and made possible true and permanent reconciliation between sinful man and a holy, righteous God (2 Corinthians 5:17-19; Colossians 1:19-22; 1 John 2:2). He continues to dwell in us through the Holy Spirit (Galatians 4:6).

The implications of this reality are staggering. Nowhere are they more clearly stated than in Romans 8:31-39. There Paul reminds us that God, the Judge, is for us, and Christ, our Intercessor, is pleading our case. God is on our side – He is for us. In short, once we believe in Christ, the whole system is rigged in our favor!

Because of Jesus' sacrifice, we have at our disposal all the riches of the Father's kingdom and a gracious God who lavishes those riches on us. Further, God's favor and advocacy are not capricious; His love for us is permanent and comprehensive. No circumstance or experience in life can change that. We can take great confidence in the fact that we cannot be separated from the love of Christ. By the same token, when we face hardship or trouble in life, we should remember the same truth rather than succumbing to sorrow, anxiety, or despondency. Through Him, whether in life or death, we are more than conquerors. His love is unchangeable. In Christ, Almighty God is with us and he is for us.

Think and Talk About

As a Christian, when do you find it most difficult to remember that God is present and on your side?

How can focusing on the fact that nothing can separate us from the love of God help us deal with trouble or difficulty in life?

What are some specific things that remind you of the love Christ has for you?



In this is love, not that we have loved God but that He loved us and sent His Son. - 1 John 4:10

Key Word Activity: LOVE

Prepare: glow sticks, Love Definition printable

Do: Have the children use glow sticks to form the word "love". While you're playing, review what they have learned about the love that Jesus gives. Afterward, turn off the lights, say the Key Phrase ("Jesus gives love!") and use the glowsticks to illuminate and read the kid-friendly definition of love from the Love Definition printable.



Love Ornament Craft



Prepare: Love Ornament Craft printable, crayons or colored pencils

Do: Using the provided printable, decorate the "love" ornament.

Bring your finished ornament back to church to help us decorate our special Trinity Kids tree!

God's Love Bible Drills

Prepare: God's Love Bible Drills printable, Bibles for kids, pen for keeping score (optional)

Do: Print the Bible drill questions about God's love ahead of time. Ask the Bible drill questions and have kids race to locate each Scripture reference and find the answer in their Bible. Depending on the age and skill level of the children in your group, you may choose to have them play individually or as teams. After they find each verse, have everyone shout, "Jesus gives love!" together.

Q: According to John 3:16, who does God love?

A: God loves the world (the people in the world).

Q: According to Romans 5:8, how does God show His love for us?

A: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

Q: According to Jeremiah 31:3, how long will God love you?

A: God's love is everlasting.

(More questions are included in the God's Love Bible Drills printable.)



Go to trinitynh.org/resources/advent to download the printables mentioned above, as well as additional coloring art pages!

Grace Upon Grace

John 1:14-18

By Kim Gay

Grace is something that is freely given. This makes me picture in my mind what the Christmas tree looks like in many homes before they hear the word “okay” to open the gifts. The gifts are piled on each other...a beautiful sight. So piled gifts make me think of “Grace upon Grace.”



Our Bible passage for today’s devotional is John 1:14-18. In verse 14, Jesus is called the “Word” as He is called in verse 1 in this same chapter in John. He came to live among us and show us His glory, the glory of God’s Son. He came from the Father. Here we find our word of the day, “grace.” Jesus is full of grace and truth.

In verse 15 (a parenthesis), John comes right out and makes it clear that He knows that Jesus has always existed. The person who comes after me is greater than me because he was before me. John, the prophet, through the Holy Spirit knew much about Jesus Christ, “He was in the beginning with God” (the gospel writer states in verse 2).

The next verse, 16, gives us still more teaching about Jesus. He is so full of grace that we have “received grace upon grace.” I love Ephesians 1:8 where it talks about God lavishing His grace on us. What a picture to imagine!

The source of grace? Verse 17 tells us that grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. Jesus later says:

“... I am the way, and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.” - John 14:6

“We have been blessed with every Spiritual blessing in heavenly places in Christ...” - Ephesians 1:3

This is grace from the “True Light,” Jesus (verse 9).

The last verse of our passage includes more privileges of the Son, Jesus. He is the only one who has seen God, ever! Then the Bible tells us that Jesus has made God known to us or has explained God to us.

In the end of John’s gospel it says Jesus did so many things that there would not be enough books in the world to write them all down (John 21:25). Grace upon grace indeed!

Think and Talk About

The Bible says that Jesus came from the Father and that he was full of 2 important things; what are they and can you explain them?

John the Baptist said that Jesus was before him, and we know John was 6 months or so older than Jesus. How do you make sense of that?

How did Jesus explain God to us?



TRINITY

