

# GOD WITH US

## Week 2: Advent of Peace

Luke 2:1-21

### OPEN

This is our first week of our series called “God with Us” based on Matthew 1:23 which says, “The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel” (which means “**God with us**”). The story of Christmas is really the story of God coming down in the person of Jesus to bring us back into relationship with the Father. Christmas reminds us that Immanuel, God with Us, gives us **hope, peace, joy and love**. Advent (meaning arrival) is a time of expectant waiting, preparation, with great anticipation, for the arrival of Jesus. We live between two advents. We look back at his birth which gives us hope for his return at the second coming. Advent invites us to slow down and experience Immanuel—“God with Us” anew, who came to bring us hope, peace, joy, and love in the midst of the messiness and busyness of the our lives.

### READ

The birth of Jesus fulfilled many of the over 300 Messianic prophecies written hundreds of years before Jesus’ advent in Bethlehem. Compare a few of these and their NT fulfillment to see the how purposeful God was in his promises.

- **Virgin Birth**—Read Isaiah 7:14 & Matthew 1:18,22-23
- **Line of King David**—Read Jeremiah 23:5-6 and Luke 1:31-33
- **Born in Bethlehem**—Read Micah 5:2 & Matthew 2:6
- **Herod’s Massacre**—Read Jeremiah 31:15 & Matthew 2:18
- **Fleeing to Egypt**—Read Hosea 11:1 & Matt 2:15
  - God meticulously planned the coming of Jesus giving prophets details centuries before they happened. How does this encourage your faith? How does this build your trust in God today?

### REFLECT

The angels announced the coming of Jesus with peace (Luke 2.14). Look at these scriptures about how Jesus offers us peace today.

- **Read John 14:25-27 and John 16:33**

**CONTEXT:** This section of John is called the farewell discourse where Jesus is preparing his disciples for his departure. Although trials will come he provides encouragement that in him they can have peace.

- In John 14:27 Jesus contrasts his peace verse the worlds peace.
  - What is the difference between the peace of God in our lives? How do trials provide an opportunity for us to experience God’s peace?
  - When have you experienced God’s peace through life’s storms?
  - What is one area of your life where you could use more of God’s peace?
- In John 16:33 Jesus warns his disciples that following him will be a life of troubles but to have peace because he has overcome the world.
  - What about the life and ministry of Jesus encourages you that he has overcome the world?
  - The way of Jesus is the way of the cross (Luke 9:23). There is a cost to following Jesus. What has following Jesus cost you? How has the Holy Spirit guided and guarded your heart in your journey of following Jesus?

### APPLY/PRAY

- **Read Romans 15:13.** Make this scripture a prayer in your group. God wants to offer us joy, peace, and hope through the Holy Spirit in us.
  - Which of those do you need to experience more in your life today?
  - Share that with one another and pray that into each others lives.
- **In Matthew 5:9** Jesus calls us to be peace makers. With who or in what situation do you need to extend the peace of Jesus in your life? Pray that God would give you his grace to show peace to others.
- Pray for peace and unity within our church during this time of transition. Pray that we would extend the grace of Christ to one another and be strengthened in the peace of Jesus as we follow his lead.