

[Light the first purple candle you lit last week. Wait to light the next candle for the end of the time together on the topic of Peace.]

The word peace gets thrown around a lot these days. Pray for peace in the Middle East/Israel, pray for peace in Ukraine, pray for peace in our violent major cities. While those are all valid prayers, the peace we celebrate during Advent is much more permanent, more rich and much more holy than peace won from a military campaign. On the second Sunday of Advent (normally second Sunday after Thanksgiving), we focus on the Peace Christ offers to those who trust and follow Him.

Let's watch this short video and understanding the richness of this word from a Biblical perspective. Access the video by scanning the QR code or follow the link (<https://spencerchristianchurch.subspla.sh/tqr6nwq>) The video is not needed but it might be helpful as a parent to watch it in advance to help teach your kids the significance of this word during this time of year. If you want to keep it simple and unplugged, skip the videos each week through the study and move to the next page.

Again, if you want to go simplistic/unplugged, skip the video and go straight to the Word. Read the following passages from God's Word.

Psalm 23:1-6 NASB The LORD is my shepherd, I shall not want. [2] He makes me lie down in green pastures; He leads me beside quiet waters. [3] He restores my soul; He guides me in the paths of righteousness For His name's sake. [4] Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I fear no evil, for You are with me; Your rod and Your staff, they comfort me. [5] You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; You have anointed my head with oil; My cup overflows. [6] Surely goodness and lovingkindness will follow me all the days of my life, And I will dwell in the house of the LORD forever.

Use these questions to start a conversation from this passage.

#### ADULT VERSION OF QUESTION

1. How can trusting God as your Shepherd, as described in Psalm 23:1-2, inspire you to actively pursue peace in your daily decisions and interactions, even in challenging circumstances?
2. In Psalm 23:4, David finds peace in God's presence despite walking through the valley of the shadow of death. How can you practically apply this confidence in God's guidance to bring peace to others through your actions in difficult or fearful situations?

#### KIDS VERSION OF QUESTIONS

1. Psalm 23:1-2 says God is like a shepherd who takes care of us and gives us peace. How can you trust God to help you stay calm and make peaceful choices when you're at school or with friends?
2. In Psalm 23:4, David feels safe with God even in scary places. How can you show God's peace to others by doing something kind or brave when you or someone else is afraid?

John 10:11-18 NASB "I am the good shepherd; the good shepherd lays down His life for the sheep. [12] He who is a hired hand, and not a shepherd, who is not the owner of the sheep, sees the wolf coming, and leaves the sheep and flees, and the wolf snatches them and scatters them. [13] He flees because he is a hired hand and is not concerned about the sheep. [14] I am the good shepherd, and I know My own and My own know Me, [15] even as the Father knows Me and I know the Father; and I lay down My life for the sheep. [16] I have other sheep, which are not of this fold; I must bring them also, and they will hear My voice; and they will become one flock with one shepherd. [17] For this reason the Father loves Me, because I lay down My life so that I may take it again. [18] No one has taken it away from Me, but I lay it down on My own initiative. I have authority to lay it down, and I have authority to take it up again. This commandment I received from My Father."

Use these questions to start a conversation from this passage.

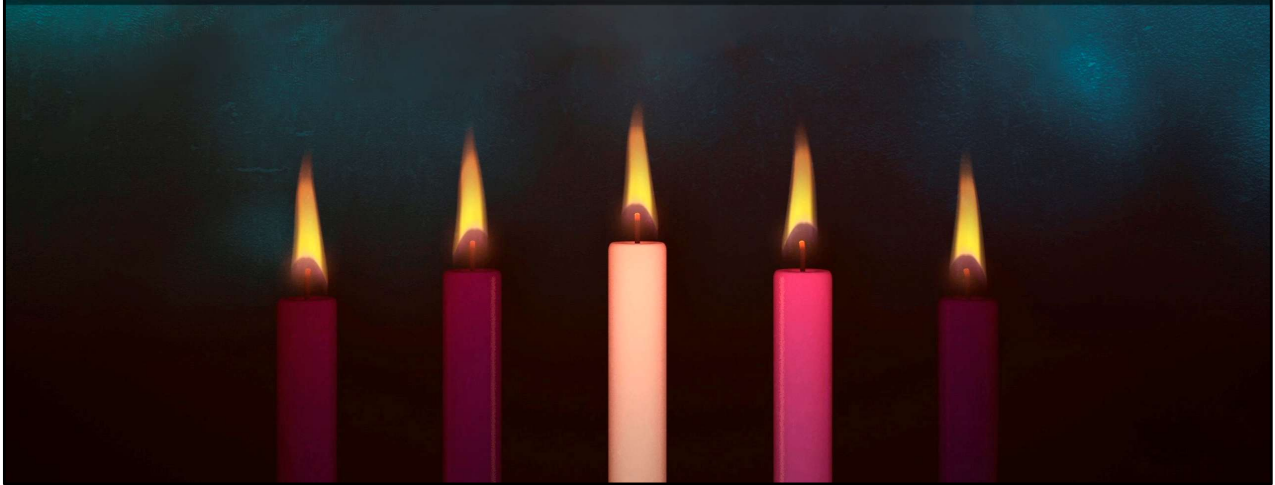
#### ADULT VERSION OF QUESTIONS

1. In John 10:11-15, Jesus describes Himself as the Good Shepherd who lays down His life for His sheep, demonstrating sacrificial love. How can you actively embody this kind of selfless love in your relationships or community to foster peace in challenging or divisive situations?
2. John 10:16 highlights Jesus' desire to bring unity among His diverse flock. What practical steps can you take in your workplace, church, or social circles to promote reconciliation and peace, reflecting the unifying heart of the Good Shepherd?

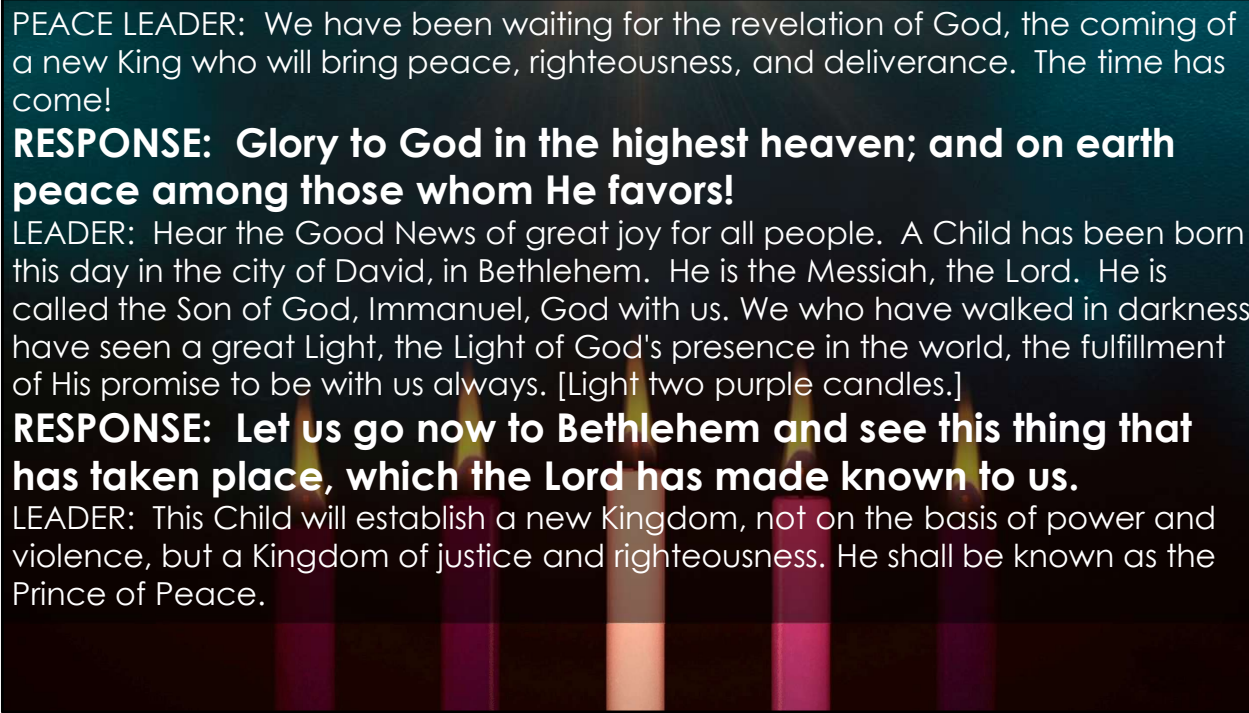
#### KIDS VERSION OF QUESTIONS

1. In John 10:11, Jesus says He is the Good Shepherd who loves and protects His sheep. How can you show Jesus' peaceful love to your friends or family by helping or caring for them when they're upset or scared?
2. In John 10:16, Jesus talks about bringing all His sheep together to be one big family. What can you do at school or home to help others get along and feel peaceful, like Jesus wants?

Psalm 34:11-14 NASB (Emphasis added) Come, you children, listen to me; I will teach you the fear of the LORD. [12] Who is the man who desires life And loves length of days that he may see good? [13] Keep your tongue from evil And your lips from speaking deceit. [14] Depart from evil and do good; Seek peace and pursue it.



Psalm 34 indicates there is action involved in having peace... that is an interesting thought. Take a moment to think about or discuss the action of seeking and pursuing peace.



PEACE LEADER: We have been waiting for the revelation of God, the coming of a new King who will bring peace, righteousness, and deliverance. The time has come!

**RESPONSE: Glory to God in the highest heaven; and on earth peace among those whom He favors!**

LEADER: Hear the Good News of great joy for all people. A Child has been born this day in the city of David, in Bethlehem. He is the Messiah, the Lord. He is called the Son of God, Immanuel, God with us. We who have walked in darkness have seen a great Light, the Light of God's presence in the world, the fulfillment of His promise to be with us always. [Light two purple candles.]

**RESPONSE: Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us.**

LEADER: This Child will establish a new Kingdom, not on the basis of power and violence, but a Kingdom of justice and righteousness. He shall be known as the Prince of Peace.

As you prepare to light the second candle, have one person read the “Leader” lines and others read the “Response” line.

If you are using this as a personal devotional, read both parts and then light the first purple candle. Take a few moments of solitude to appreciate how Jesus is the light and hope of the world.

If you have small children, use the “Response” lines as a short prayer before you light the second purple candle known in many traditions as “The Peace Candle”. Enjoy the glow of the candle together in a quiet moment with your kiddos. Now reward the one who was the most attentive the joy of blowing out the candle. If you have more than one kiddo, let one blow out the first then the second.