

Read: Isaiah 9:6; Matthew 16:25; Philippians 4:6-7

Living It Out

- When you hear the word “*peace*” what comes to your mind?
- Reflect on the above verses. What does it mean to live these out?
- What other verses of Scripture do you know that speak to you of peace?
- Inventory Questions:
 - Does my life really reflect the reign of Christ?
 - Are my finances under the rule of Christ
 - Am I content? Do I give thanks for what I have or do I find myself being more frustrated by what I don’t have?
 - Are our priorities and our time submitted to Christ?
 - Am I making quality time in the way that I budget my time?
 - Is there quality time for family
 - Do I have quality time alone with Christ, where I just enjoy him enjoying me, where I hang out with Jesus and let him love me as I love Him?
 - Do I have Sabbath time, a time to relax and recharge?
 - Are my relationships, in-person and on-line, submitted to the reign of Christ?
 - Do you have other questions that you ask yourself?
- How does the peace you have by being “*in Christ*” make a difference...
 - in your life?
 - in your interactions with family and friends?
 - in how you interact with store clerks, with people on social media?
- Are there areas where you need to (re)evaluate?

Practicing Peace

- **Planned Pause:** include intentional periods of pause in your daily rhythm to simply rest in God’s presence.
- **Breathe in Peace:** Light a candle, inhale and exhale to invite God’s peace to invade your physical, mental, emotional and spiritual space.
- **A Long Exhale:** when the darkness of our current time (COVID-19 related sicknesses, economic issues, injustices continuing to be perpetuated on our neighbors across the globe) invades your heart, mind, and soul, begin with a long exhale as an act of releasing them to the Lord Almighty.
- **Connect with God’s Creation:** a few minutes each day, walk around your neighborhood, sit in a park, or go on a hike or a run (yes, even in the chilled days in which many of us may now find ourselves). As you do, notice, consider, and take in God’s creation that surrounds you.
- **Pray God’s Promise:** focusing on your family, neighborhood, community, social media friends lists, and people groups across the world. Pray that others may see the darkness replaced with light and intimately know and experience the Son that has been given for our redemption.

This Week:

During the season of **Advent**, we are reading the Christmas accounts. Don’t rush through your reading. Take time to let the text sink in.

Hearing God’s voice with confidence takes practice. A great way to learn is through what we call Listening to and Dwelling in the Word (this ancient, historical practice was called Lectio Divina)

Here are some prayer, journaling and reflection prompts

1. What is one word or phrase the Holy Spirit impresses on you?
In silence meditate on that.
2. Depending on the passage, you may find that you identify with one person in the text.
Why is that? What about the story or the person connects with you?
3. How does today’s reading speak to what you are experiencing in your life right now?
4. Share what God is showing you online