

THE ROAD OF HOPE

FACILITATOR GUIDE

NOTE TO FACILITATORS: Text or email this reminder to your group:

REMEMBER: “YOU are the reason for this season!” —Pastor Chris

Keep in touch with your people through the week. It’s really important during this time of Covid.

CPC HAPPENINGS... (Leaders, please share with your group. We want to do everything to keep people connected to the entire church family.)

Communion

CPC will end the 2020 year with communion on Sunday, December 27. Be sure to join us. If you can’t be with us in person, prepare a “virtual” communion with a bit of juice (or water, milk, etc.) and a cracker or piece of bread. Remember: It’s not what you eat/drink but what your heart is focused on—the sacrifice of Jesus for your sins.

Baptism Opportunity

As of right now, the next CPC Baptism Service is planned for Sunday, January 10. If you would like to participate, please go to the church website (yourcpc.church/events) to sign up.

THE GREATEST CHRISTMAS GIFT

What was your favorite Christmas gift?

Do you enjoy giving gifts to others?

Why?

Do you have a difficult time buying gifts for “the person who have everything?”

What can you give to God for Christmas?

What do you think He wants the most?

Luke 2:1-20 — In those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that the whole empire should be registered. 2 This first registration took place while Quirinius was governing Syria. 3 So everyone went to be registered, each to his own town.

4 Joseph also went up from the town of Nazareth in Galilee, to Judea, to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and family line of David, 5 to be registered along with Mary, who was engaged to him and was pregnant.

6 While they were there, the time came for her to give birth. 7 Then she gave birth to her firstborn son, and she wrapped him tightly in cloth and laid him in a manger, because there was no guest room available for them.

8 In the same region, shepherds were staying out in the fields and keeping watch at night over their flock. 9 Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were told good news of great joy that will be for all the people. 11 Today in the city of David a Savior was born for you, who is the Messiah, the Lord. 12 This will be the sign for you: You will find a baby wrapped tightly in cloth and lying in a manger.”

13 Suddenly there was a multitude of the heavenly host with the angel, praising God and saying: 14 Glory to God in the highest heaven, and peace on earth to people He favors! 15 When the angels had left them and returned to heaven, the shepherds said to one another, “Let’s go straight to Bethlehem and see what has happened, which the Lord has made known to us.” 16 They hurried off and found both Mary and Joseph, and the baby who was lying in the manger. 17 After seeing them, they reported the message they were told about this child, 18 and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds said to them. 19 But Mary was treasuring up all these things in her heart and meditating on them. 20 The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things they had seen and heard, which were just as they had been told.

Did you ever play a part in a children’s nativity? If so, what part did you play?

What was the angels’ message to the world? [The message of Good News of the birth of the Savior of the world.]

What gift would God have you to give others? [We need to share the same message today.]

Do you purposely try to find ways to share the true message of the birth of Christ at Christmas time? If so, in what way?

What is the difference between what the world calls peace today and the peace that the angels declared to the shepherds? [The peace that the world experiences is temporary—maybe a moment when all is quiet—a day when there are no sirens, no fighting, nothing bad on the evening news, etc. But the kind of peace that heaven wants to give is what Paul described as “peace that passes all understanding.” (Philippians 4:7) It is a peace that comes into your heart even though all the world is in chaos around you.]

Who did the angels say that this peace was for? [“Peace on earth to people He favors.”]

Do you think YOU are a favored one of God? What makes you “favored?”

[Last week, we read where Mary was called “favored” by the angel who spoke to her. David gave us the answer to who gets favored: Psalm 84:11 —For the Lord God is a sun and shield; the Lord bestows favor and honor. No good thing does he withhold from those who walk uprightly. So if we live a life that is right in the sight of God, we are recipients of His favor. And the by-product of favor is peace!]

Can you imagine the sounds in the air when the angels filled the night sky before the shepherds? What do you think it sounds like?

THE DIFFICULTY OF CHRISTMAS

What is some of the most difficult things about Christmas for you? [Finding the right gifts for everyone? The crowds? The wrapping? The cooking? The clean-up afterward? The planning?]

Is it worth it in the end?

What is the most “peaceful” part of Christmas for you?

What are some of the things in the world that rob you of your peace? [Lack of money. Worries. Death of a loved one. Chaos in the government. Violence in our world. Etc.]

What kind of perspective does Christmas put into your world?

Isaiah 9:6 — For a child will be born for us, a son will be given to us, and the government will be on His shoulders. He will be named Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, Prince of Peace.

We have looked at each of these titles in this sermon series. The last one is the Prince of Peace. Jesus came to give you a peace greater than the chaos in your life. Though your problems may not go away, He gives an inner peace that trusts in Him to carry you through the trouble.

Which of the Isaiah 9:6 titles is your favorite at this time in your life? [Are you most thankful right now for a God who gives wise counsel? Or a Mighty God that fights your battles? Are you most thankful for the Eternal Father that draws you close to Him? Or are you most in need of the Prince of Peace?]

We know that 2020 has been quite a difficult year for many people.

List some of the distresses that people might be going through this Christmas.

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| Grief | Exhaustion (physically and mentally) |
| No money | Hunger |
| No job | Separated from loved ones this year |
| Sickness | Homeless |
| Pent-up anger issues | Depression |

How important is the Christmas message to those people?

As you celebrate, as you shop, as you meet others this season, watch for open opportunities to share the message of Peace and the Good News of Jesus with others. It's the best gift you can give them this year.

PRAYER TIME

- Give God praise for His favor on you!
- Thank Him for the peace that He gives over the difficulties of your life.
- Ask God to help you see His presence in every area of your life.
- Pray that God will use you to be an “angel” to someone this season, bringing to them the message of hope and peace.
- Have you truly received God’s gift of peace? If you have not, now is the best time to do so. Tell God that you want His favor on your life. Ask Him to forgive your sins and help you to live rightly for Him. Invite Him to be the Lord of your life and live for Him everyday! Ask your small group friends to pray for your strength as you now walk this faith journey!

MERRY CHRISTMAS!