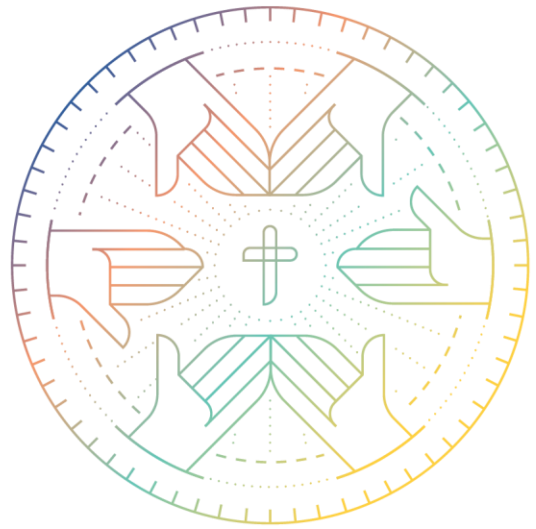


Group Life.

WE ARE BETTER TOGETHER



MEETING AGENDA

WELCOME (10 MINUTES)

This material is a recap of the first four weeks of our advent series, The Promise. This is not connected to David's Christmas devotional.

ICEBREAKER (10 MINUTES)

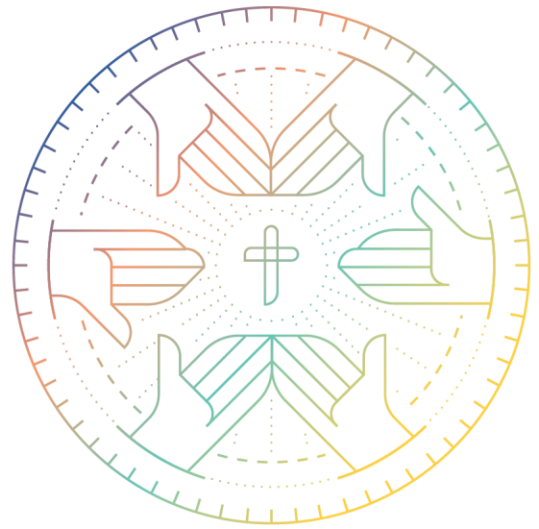
What does Christmas mean to you? Use one word to describe it.

INTRODUCTION (5-10 MINUTES)

In week one, we looked at God's promise through the story of Adam and Eve. We saw how, through the fall of man, God promised a coming savior. In week two, we looked at Abraham and his willingness to offer his son Isaac as a sacrifice to God of what trusting God looks like while foreshadowing the sacrifice of Jesus that takes our place. In week three, we looked at the genealogy of Jesus through David and saw the differences between the first advent and the second advent. In week four, we looked at the importance of one's name, what the name of Jesus means, and how it speaks to God's promises throughout time.

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INTO THE WORD (25 MINUTES)

1. Read 2 Corinthians 11:3, Revelation 12:9, John 8:44, Matthew 4:1-11, Galatians 4:8 and 1 John 3:8. The devil has been sinning from the beginning, he is the father of lies, a thief, a destroyer and a murderer. Can you think of a few ways we might be led astray in our relationship with Jesus by the enemy?

H.O.S.T. GUIDANCE

[Discernment is a term that we sometimes associate with our relationship with the Lord or with Godly wisdom. This is a tool that we can utilize by the power of the Holy Spirit within us (1 John 4:4). Consider how important it is to be aware of computer hackers or identity theft and ways to avoid being deceived in this way. In a similar fashion, the Holy Spirit can open our eyes to the enemy and his tactics.]

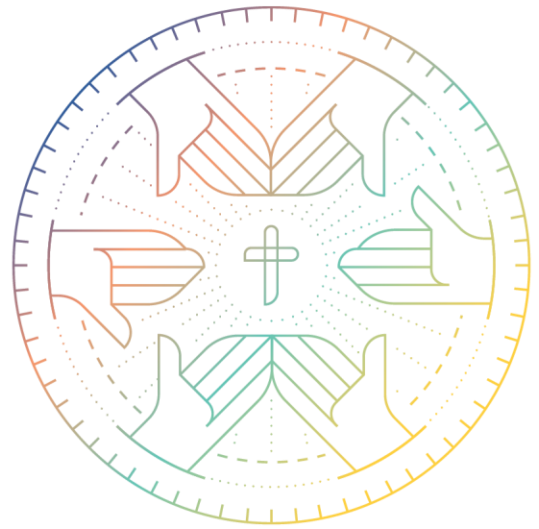
2. Read Hebrews 11: 17-19 and Romans 4:3,17. What do you think strengthened Abraham's resolve to trust God and follow His instructions to sacrifice Isaac even when it didn't make sense?

H.O.S.T. GUIDANCE:

[The quotation is taken from Genesis 15:6, where it appears as a comment upon Abraham's belief in the promise that he should have numerous posterity. The same passage is elaborately commented upon by Philo and others so that it would seem to have been a common topic in Jewish schools. It should be noticed that the word "faith" is not used in quite the same sense in the original and the application. In Abraham's case, it was trust in fulfilling the divine promise. In St. Paul's sense, it is rather enthusiastic adhesion to a person. This is part of the general enlargement and deepening of the Old Testament terminology by St. Paul. A writer of less profundity (though marked by striking and elevated qualities), the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews applies the word more strictly. (See Hebrews 11:8 et seq.) In James 2:23, the word has the still thinner meaning of merely intellectual assent. St Paul quotes the same passage in the same sense as here in Galatians 3:6. (www.biblehub.com)]

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3. Read 1 Chronicles 17:11-14, Daniel 2:44, and Matthew 6:33. We see that the Kingdom of God is:

- Where brokenness doesn't exclude us
 - Where we make sense of life
 - Where we can never say that God doesn't understand us
- What sticks out to you about the Kingdom of God?

H.O.S.T. GUIDANCE:

["The kingdom of God has several aspects. The Lord is the Sovereign of the universe, and so in that sense, His kingdom is universal ([1 Timothy 6:15](#)). At the same time, the kingdom of God involves repentance and the new birth, as God rules in the hearts of His children in this world in preparation for the next. The work begun on earth will find its consummation in heaven (see [Philippians 1:6](#))."] (gotquestions.org)]

4. Read Matthew 1:21, 2 Corinthians 5:18-20, and Romans 16:20. Jesus's name means Jehovah is salvation. We see that His name was precisely who He was because he:

- Rescues us from sin and death.
- Restores our relationship with God.
- Provides love that lasts forever.
- Defeats evil.

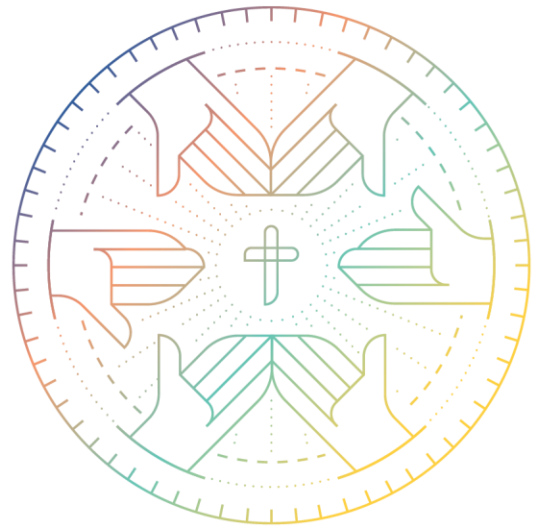
Which of these attributes sticks out to you?

H.O.S.T. GUIDANCE:

["Jesus was sent by God for a particular purpose, and His personal name bears witness to that mission. Just as the Yeshua/Joshua in the Old Testament led his people to victory over the Canaanites, the Yeshua/Jesus in the New Testament led His people to victory over sin and their spiritual enemies... In every way, Jesus lives up to His name. The name Jesus reminds us of the power, presence, and purpose of the risen Christ. It assures us that God's gracious intention is to save us. Our Lord Jesus brought God to humanity and now brings humans to God through the salvation He purchased."] (Gotquestions.org)]

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APPLICATION (25 MINUTES)

1. Read Genesis 3:1-15, 21. The ways in which God always keeps His promises to us include rescuing us, redeeming us, and crushing the enemy, among many others. What does it mean to stand on the promises of God each day?

H.O.S.T. GUIDANCE

[Christmas is the celebration of a promise fulfilled by God. When we trust in God's faithfulness to His Word and His power in defeating the enemy, He draws us closer to Jesus. Every Christmas, He gives us the privilege to experience His steadfast, unconditional, and redemptive love (Isaiah 43:1-4). Ask group members to share a specific promise of God that means the most to them. How can we keep our focus on Jesus and that He always keeps His promises, especially as we walk through this Advent season?]

2. Re-Read Matthew, chapter 1. Can you share what it looks like in your own life to experience God keeping His promise to love us with a perfect love that lasts forever (Jeremiah 31:3)? How has He removed what's heavy in your daily life? What desires or longings do you feel the Lord has placed on your heart and has then fulfilled for you?

H.O.S.T. GUIDANCE

[The Lord loves you, even though he fully knows you. This is a promise fulfilled by God, just as the Christmas story is a promise fulfilled by God to send a redeemer to earth, to restore and redeem lost sinners. Our own love can be faulty, and yet Jesus' love is perfect at all times, forever. We cannot earn his love, and we cannot lose his love (Ephesians 2:8-9). It is by grace alone, through faith that we are saved when we accept Jesus as your personal savior (Romans 3:24; Romans 9:16). The Lord Jesus Christ has fulfilled every promise made by God to us. As we celebrate Christmas, we can rest in the promise of God to fulfill our deepest longings through Jesus' birth, His sacrificial death for us on the cross and His resurrection (John 10:9; John 14:6). Let's praise and thank the Lord for the greatest gift and story ever told: Jesus, Jehovah is salvation!]

PRAYER (10 MINUTES)

Dear Heavenly Father, thank you so much for being a promise keeper. As we celebrate your birth, may we be reminded of how you continue to keep your promises in our lives. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.