



Experiencing the Genuine Jesus

ADVENT THEME:

PEACE



Pre-Activity:

What you will need: 1 copy of the weekly puzzle for each student.

Provide each student with a copy of the puzzle to unravel what today's Advent theme is about. Each shape correlates with a letter in the diagram at the top of the page.

The answer to the puzzle is: Jesus is my Peace

Music/Worship:

The music options below are ones that can be used for your worship time. Select whichever ones meet the needs of your particular group. We have provided several options, but the intent is for you to use whichever ones work for the time you have with your children.

Peace Like a River (Kids Praise & Worship) – <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7it5W1FVtTs>

Joy, Joy, Joy (Kids Praise & Worship) – <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=imK7pAMf61E>

Christmas Medley (City Kids) – <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EEGsSEgXPUA&list=PLzSwkR28Y854bYuVh8IJ7po0Y33VtwVMA>

(Joy to the World, First Noel, Away in a Manger, We Wish you a Merry Christmas)

Too Wonderful (KidsSpring) Christmas song – <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pkc2m0CmYL8&list=PLkDSKt6kTKASYO0rksr44zhV9DQ9PhZp5&index=16>

Advent Candle:

Does anyone remember the three Advent candles we've talked about this month? (Hope – Jesus is our Hope; Love-Jesus is our Love; and Joy-Jesus is our Joy). Have a child help light each of the first three candles as you talk about each.

Today, we light the candle of Peace – Jesus is our PEACE. His peace is deep within us. His peace reaches out to friends and strangers and brings justice to our world.

Advent Song: "A Candle is Burning" by Sandra Dean, Ottawa (words adapted by Rev. Cate Burton and Penny Merton, St Peter's Tauranga, PCANZ)

Tune: Away in a Manger

A candle is burning, a flame warm and bright;
A candle of **HOPE** in the darkest of night.
Though troubled and worried yet we will not fear.
Our hearts are now hopeful, for Jesus is near.

A candle now burning, a flame strong and sure
Reminds us that GOd's **LOVE** will always endure.
Deep love like the ocean, steady as the tide.
Great love which comes to use with arms open wide.

A candle is burning, a candle of **JOY**;
A warm glow to welcome brave Mary's new boy.
New life like a gift now is being unfurled.
God's promise of joy to an expectant world.

A candle is burning, a candle of **PEACE**;
A beacon to signal that conflict must cease.
For Jesus is coming to show us the way;
The gift of a Savior is laid in the hay.





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Advent Prayer for Peace:

Dear God, thank you that even though there is no special star in the sky or angels singing, there is a real sense of your peace in us at Christmas time. Thank you that You are always with us, sharing in our good and bad times and giving us your peace. Amen.



Lesson:

Props: Flashlight

How many of you have ever used a flashlight?

If you are going someplace where you know it will be dark, you're going to want to bring a flashlight along.

If you go camping, where there aren't any electric lights, chances are you will probably use a flashlight to help you get around at night. Having a flashlight at night brings a sense of order, knowing that you can see where you are going.

Has the power ever gone out in your house because of a storm? Did your parents use a flashlight?

A detective uses a flashlight to bring something into the light. Something that was in the dark and flashing a light to see what it is can bring clues to what the detective is looking for. In many cases, shining the light on the item you have been looking for brings a sense of peace, a satisfying assurance knowing that you have solved the clue. You have found the answer you have been looking for.

After Jesus was born in Bethlehem, wisemen from the east saw the star in the sky and went to investigate! They arrived in Jerusalem and heard about the news of a baby being born. They went to King Herod and started asking questions about this baby.

"Where is the one who has been born King of the Jews?"

King Herod was a very troubled man. He was a wicked and cruel king. When the king heard about a baby being born, he became very suspicious. He did not want to give up his crown.

So, King Herod sent these men to do a little detective work and find out more about this King Jesus.

The wisemen made their long journey to find this baby that was born in Bethlehem. They didn't have a map, GPS, or Google maps to help guide them. They only had a star to follow. A huge light to guide them, like a flashlight. This star led the wisemen to Bethlehem. God allowed the star to shine brightly over the place where the baby Jesus was staying.

The wisemen knew that this child was the King of Kings and Lord of Lords. They bowed down and worshiped the King of Peace.

When you shine the light in darkness, what happens to the darkness?

It disappears. The light takes over. Some people live in the darkness. They don't know how to have joy or goodness because they've been in the dark so long without Jesus Christ.

The Good News is that God sent His Son, Jesus, who was born into the world that first Christmas, to die for us and take the punishment for all the wrong things we have done or said or thought. Now anyone who asks can have their sins forgiven and enjoy living at peace with God and in close relationship with Him.

God wants families to live at peace with each other. This can only happen if we ask God's love and peace to live with us.





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Optional Flashlight Activities:

1. Leader can shine their flashlight for children to chase the light or get into the light. The focus is that we want to live our lives in God's light.
2. Each child has a flashlight and looks for hidden Christmas/advent words throughout the room.

Prayer:

Lord God thank you for your gift of peace. Thank you for being the light of the world for us to see all the goodness you have given us. As we trust you, may we feel your peace that passes all understanding. Amen

Advent Activity:

Supplies Needed: Advent Candle Worksheet copied on white cardstock – 1 per child, white crayons, water color paints.

Have children use a white crayon to write one advent description - HOPE, LOVE, JOY, PEACE on each candle. When they use the water color paint, whatever they have written in white will show up. As they are doing this talk about what they have learned throughout the month about each of these. Have children share some of the ways they demonstrated hope, love, joy and peace throughout the month.

Secret Agents:

What you will need: 1 booklet for each child "My Advent Promises"; decoder for each child, Cryptogram page for students to work out the message they're delivering this week (each sheet is for 2 kids); Secret agent cards (4 per child) copied front and back.

Throughout this month, we are taking the time to be secret agents for Jesus to our friends and families. This week you are going to be an "Agent of Peace." Brainstorm some ways you can show peace to others during this week and write it down in your Advent Promises booklet. If there is time, allow them to make their own secret message of peace in the booklet.

Pass out Secret Agent cards for them to leave behind secretly during the week when they complete an act of peace. Have each child complete the half sheet message so they know what message is on the back of their cards they're leaving for someone else.

The cryptogram message on the Agent of Peace Card: "You have been visited by the Agent of Peace – May God give you peace today."

Small Group Prayer Time: Playing Card Prayers

Take a pack of playing cards and lay them face down. Take turns taking a card off the top of the pile and pray using the following guidelines.

Red Number Card – say a "thank you" prayer

Black Number Card – Say a "sorry" or "please" prayer

King Card – think of a word to describe God and how great He is

Queen Card – pray for someone who is female

Jack Card – pray for someone who is male

***If regular playing cards is an issue for your church, get some number or color cards and substitute the descriptions above for each.*

