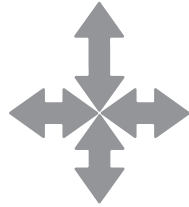




GUIDE FOR GROUP STUDY: the week of December 16th

This study is designed to help your community group grow as disciples of Jesus Christ. There are three dimensions to following Jesus.



UP: growing in relationship with God

IN: growing in relationship with other followers of Jesus

OUT: growing in relationship with the world around us as we join God in God's mission

Get Started:

What is your favorite Christmas Carol? Why is this one meaningful to you?



UP: Connect with God through Spending Time in His Word

1. In both the Old and New Testament, the "Day of the Lord" refers to a time of judgement when humanity will be held accountable for its actions and disregard for God's law. Read Zephaniah 1:14-18 aloud. What stands out to you in this passage?
2. What does this passage suggest about God's character?
3. Zephaniah warns of God's worldwide judgment and indicates that humanity's only hope for deliverance must come from the Lord himself (1:18). Read aloud Zephaniah 3:14-20. What does this passage reveal about God's character?
4. Zephaniah 3:14-15 calls for the people to rejoice in light of God's presence in their midst. Describe a time when an awareness of God's presence led to joy in your life.
5. In Matthew 1:23, Jesus is called "Immanuel" which means "God with us." Jesus is the fulfillment of Zephaniah's prophecy. He is the "mighty warrior" who delivers us and rejoices over us (v.17). This Advent, what would it look like for you to draw near to Jesus and to find joy in the truth of this promise?



IN: Connect with Each Other

Go around the circle and take prayer requests. Have everyone pray for the person seated to their left (if your group is not comfortable praying aloud have a volunteer close in prayer).



Out: : Connect with the World Around Us (Join God in His Mission)

Next week, our church will gather in nine worship services Christmas Eve to celebrate the birth of Jesus. Consider inviting a friend or neighbor who doesn't have a church home to accompany you to one of these services! Visit www.first-pres.org for more details.

10 a.m. Sanctuary – Children's Service.

12, 2, 4, 5:30, 7 p.m. Sanctuary – Traditional candlelight service with choir, organ, etc.

4, 5:30 p.m. Worship Center – Contemporary worship with live-stream video sermon.

10:45 p.m. Sanctuary – Celtic worship with Communion.

¹Greg A. King, Eerdmans Dictionary of the Bible, s.v. "Zephaniah, Book of," Accordance electronic ed., version 3.7, (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000), 1416-1417

²King, 1417.