



# WEEKLY SERMON DISCUSSION GUIDE

## **Peace**

### **Isaiah 26:1-6**

#### **EXPLORING THE SERMON**

- What did you hear?
- What did you think or feel about what you heard?
- What is one thing you can take away from the sermon this week?

#### **VERSES FOR MEDITATION AND REFLECTION**

*“Open the gates that the righteous nation may enter, the nation that keeps faith. You will keep in perfect peace him whose mind is steadfast, because he trusts in you.” **Isaiah 26:2-3***

**Peace** is the theme of this second week of Advent. The concept of peace is very prevalent in our world today, and therefore can take on many meanings. The kind of peace described by Isaiah examines the actual origins of peace, instead of likening it to the feeling we get when our external circumstances seem to be right. Thomas says that this kind of peace is not one that we can give ourselves, but comes from our relationship with God.

- *In verses two and three, Isaiah describes the **righteous** as those who keep faith, and as those who have steadfast minds because of their trust in God. Discuss what it means to be righteous. How is righteousness the origin of true peace, rather than our own circumstances?*

Charles Dickens' *A Christmas Carol* is a great story of hope and change, in which Ebenezer Scrooge is given the opportunity to redeem his selfish and greedy ways. The ghost of Jacob Marley, Scrooge's former business partner, visits Scrooge, eternally bound by chains which he claims to have "forged himself." He warns Scrooge against the same fate, encouraging him to turn around his selfish ways while still alive.

- *The idea of "undoing" our own chains link by link begs the question of, "how good is good enough for us to be righteous with God?" Why does this form of being right with God not make us feel peaceful?*
- *Discuss how righteousness can never be about what we do, but accepting the righteousness we have because of the gift of the Messiah. How can we be at peace, knowing that God accepts us as His beloved children?*
- *If righteousness is a gift from God, how can that change our intentionality toward our relationship with Him, both during Advent and beyond?*

*Dear Heavenly Father, thank you for the gift of your Son, the Messiah. Help us to accept fully the righteousness you have given us, not through our acts but by your claim of us as your beloved children. May we extend the same kind of love and hope to others this Advent season and beyond. **Amen.***