

God's Story

Our Story

Dec. 4, 2016



5 simple steps to help bring your household closer to God and each other



SHARE
your highs and lows

During this season of Advent you may want to use an advent wreath with four candles. If so light the two candles this week.



READ

a Bible verse or story

A verse for the week: *Yet even now, says the Lord, return to me with all your heart, with fasting, with weeping, and with mourning; rend your hearts and not your clothing. Return to the Lord, your God, for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love.* Joel 2:12-13

If your household includes younger children you may want to use a children's Bible story book. If the assigned reading is not in your storybook, just choose another.

Sun Joel 2: 12-13, 28-29 Joel's Prophecy of Hope
Mon Psalm 51: 1-12 Prayer for Cleansing
Tues Acts 2: 14:21 Peter Addresses the Crowd
Wed Joel 3: 1-2a, 17-18 God Will Restore Judah
Thur Amos 9: 11-15 Restoration of David's Kingdom
Fri Micah 5: 2-4 The Ruler of Bethlehem
Sat Isaiah 40: 1-5 God's People are Comforted
Sun Isaiah 61: 1-11 Isaiah's Prophecy of Hope



TALK

about how the Bible reading might relate to your highs and lows

Talk about how the Bible reading might relate to your highs and lows. More discussion questions are on the back side.



PRAY

for one another's highs and lows

A prayer for the week: Dear God—You alone are the source of all things wonderful. Your love fills our hearts. Your hope calms our anger, and your Son saves us all. Amen.



BLESS

one another

Place your hand over your heart and say "May your heart be filled with hope"

More resources for being the church at home this week

We think the Lord demands so much from us. But really, God is making just one simple request: come home to me, my children. 've got something amazing for you!



A meal time prayer:

Fill our bodies with your good food, O God. Fill our hearts with your love, O God. Fill our minds with your grace and mercy, O God. Let us come together hungry for it all. Amen.

More questions for conversation:

1. The prophet, Joel, reminds the people to repent, to say "sorry" for the mistakes they have made. God, in turn, promises to pour out God's spirit on the people, to react with love and mercy. Apologizing for wrongdoings takes courage. Who do you need to seek forgiveness from? When people apologize to you, how do you react?
2. How is your community of faith preparing for Christmas? What difference will your preparations make in the larger community around you? What can you do to bring hope and renewal to people in need?
3. What in your life requires repentance and renewal? Who in your life needs hope? How can you bring hope to those who need it?

Ideas for putting faith in action:

By acting on what we learn we make God's word come alive.

1. Make a list of all the things you think you need to do to prepare for Christmas. Add to your list activities or events that give you the opportunity to love God, your neighbor, or yourself. For every love activity you add, remove something less important from your list. See how your holidays are transformed as love activities dominate your season.
2. On a piece of paper, write a quick message of hope and love to each person in your family this week. Hide it in their lunch box, on their pillow before going to sleep, or in their wallet.

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