

12-07-25 FOR THE JOURNEY THIS WEEK

“God's Kingdom brings peace, but it also brings disruption. It requires repentance, reorientation, and transformation. Preparing for the coming Kingdom of God might mean getting outside ordinary patterns.”

Naomi Yoder



Isaiah 11:1-10 + Matthew 3:1-12

Questions for Reflection —

- What does it mean for you to prepare a way for the Lord in this season? How can you prepare your own heart and life for the coming of God's kingdom? How can you be open to signs of God's coming kingdom? What ordinary patterns or habits in your life might need to be disrupted in order for you to turn your focus towards God's in-breaking presence and activity? What new commitment are you willing to make to contribute to building God's kingdom in the here and now?
- What does it mean for our fractured society that Jesus is the Prince of Peace? Given the present unrest and conflict in our nation and in the world are you able to imagine what the peaceable kingdom might look like in our time? What specific actions could you take that would bring that vision closer to reality beginning with your close relationships in your family or circle of friends? In your neighborhood, school, or workplace? What steps can we take as a congregation to build a more peaceful world?
- What does internal peace feel like for you? What are the challenges for you in trying to maintain inner peace as you go about daily life? What would it look like for you to invite God into those aspects of your life that do not feel peaceful? What spiritual practices will help you live each day carrying God's peace in your heart and soul? What are some ways we as a congregation can encourage and support one another to be at peace within, no matter the external circumstances?

Daily Household Prayer

God of hope and encouragement, we come in the midst of this season of busyness and preparations: to find a time and space to slow down, to reflect on what our true preparations should be. We need to prepare our hearts to receive the gifts of love and hope. We need to prepare our minds to focus on your promise that a messiah will come and nothing will be the same. We need to prepare our spirits: to praise God for prophecy, promises, and preparation; to find hope and encouragement; to find peace and joy. In Jesus name we pray. Amen.