

12-21-25 FOR THE JOURNEY THIS WEEK

"It doesn't matter that our lives, or our families, or our world are not perfect. What matters is that we make a space, no matter how small, for God in our hearts. When we do that, God will do the rest, and Christ will once more be born in the Bethlehem of our lives and the manglers of our hearts, and the angels will sing, and the shepherds will once again rejoice."

James Koester



Matthew 1:18-25

Questions for Reflection —

- As Christmas approaches, how have you made space for Christ to once more be born in your heart? What else do you need to prepare yourself spiritually to celebrate Jesus' birth this year? How will you wait, watch, and listen for signs of God's presence and activity in your life and in the world? In the midst of the busyness can you find time to simply "be" and experience the wonder of the season?
- What does it mean to walk in the way of God's love, the Love that comes down at Christmas? What would it mean to put God's gift of love at the center of your life and your celebration of Christmas this year? What will spiritual practice(s) will keep you grounded in God's love? How will you share God's love with others? How might we as a congregation embody hope, joy, peace, and love in every encounter—in worship, in meetings, in our programs and ministries?
- In what aspects of your life do you presently most need to claim God as "Immanuel" (God with you)? How can you live out the reality of "God with us" in the midst of daily interactions and challenges? For what are you seeking divine guidance? What visions and dreams—for your life, for our congregation, for our world—has God placed in your heart? What would it mean for you to trust those dreams and take steps to live into them? What helps you maintain faith and take first steps when the path forward is not yet fully revealed?

Daily Household Prayer

O Shining One, from the rising of the midwinter sun to its setting, scatter the darkness with the Light of Your Love. Make me short on mean thoughts, long on offering words of comfort; short on being driven, long on paying attention; short on focusing only on my own, long on looking beyond; short on obsessive lists, long on spontaneous acts of kindness; short on mindless activity, long on time to reflect; short on tradition as habit, long on re-discovery and re-owning; short on rushing and tiring, long on walking and wondering; short on false festive jollity, long on stilling and rooted joy; short on guilt, long on being merciful to myself; short on being overwhelmed, long on peaceableness as I set forth this day. In Jesus' name. Amen.