

# SMALL GROUP STUDY GUIDE



**PRINCE  
OF PEACE**  
Called to Connect



## Living with Hope

*November 30 & December 1, 2019*

As we open the door to Advent, we do so with expectation of a life filled with hope. Our hope comes alive through the transforming life-giving light of Christ. So much of life can lead us to feel deadened by apathy and the difficulty of our circumstances, but into that we are reminded by Isaiah that the promised Messiah brings hope. The scripture text points to an image of hope and unexpected joy.

### SCRIPTURE TEXT: ISAIAH 11:1-9

Read the scripture text together as a group.

### BACKGROUND INFO

Isaiah convicts the Israelites of their sin. Their failure to love God and neighbor. Their failure to reflect God's justice by protecting the poor and the marginalized. Their failure to be faithful to Yahweh alone. Isaiah also proclaims that in response God will discipline his people through foreign nations. These nations will conquer the Israelites, destroy the temple, and the people will be taken as exiles in a foreign land. It's hard to overstate the hopelessness that the Israelites would have felt in their captivity. The destruction of the temple would have meant that Babylon's gods had defeated the God of Israel. God was dead. No longer were the Israelites God's beloved, covenant people. They were back to being slaves in a foreign land.

Into that hopelessness Isaiah proclaims a remarkable word of hope. God has not abandoned his people, nor has he forsaken his promises. God will redeem his people from bondage once again. And not only that, but God will raise up a new King from the line of David whose reign will bring perfect peace, true justice and complete safety. Nothing in their external circumstance had changed, but for those who put their trust in the promise, everything changed. A door had been opened. And the name of that door is hope.

### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- When have you felt like the Israelites, tempted to give up hope due to circumstances?
- When has hope sustained you?
- What practices keep hope alive in you?
- How is Jesus your hope? What does that mean?
- How is Advent a season of hope for you?

**APPLICATION:** This week, put into practice one way to keep hope alive in your daily life. That may be a daily verse about hope, a consistent prayer, something that works for you. This week, let's live with hope.