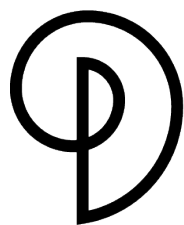
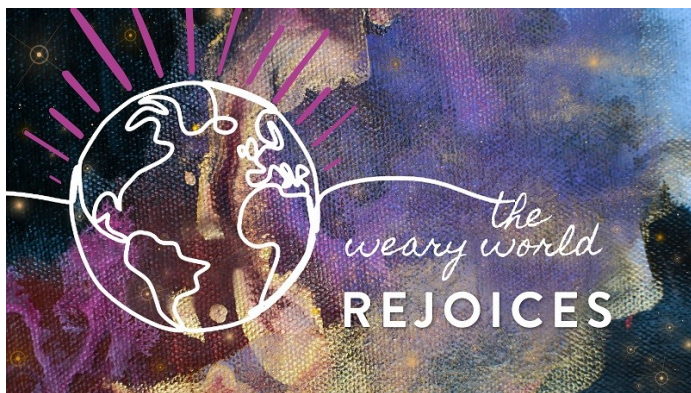


SMALL GROUP STUDY GUIDE



**PRINCE
OF PEACE**
Called to Connect



We Make Room

December 24, 2023

This Christmas, let us make room—for strangers and neighbors alike. For Christ's birth is good news of great joy for all people.

SCRIPTURE TEXT: LUKE 2:1-20

Read the scripture text together as a group.

BACKGROUND INFO

Luke's Gospel tells us that when Mary gives birth to Jesus, she lays him in a manger, for there was no place for them in the guest room. Scholars argue about where, exactly, the birth occurs—and why. Was it in an inn or the living room of a simple peasant home? Was Bethlehem teeming with visitors who were also there to be counted in the census? Was Joseph's family inhospitable because they disapproved of his marital situation?

Regardless of where the birth occurs, we know that Christ is born in a crowded, unlikely place. And yet, God makes a place. God draws the circle wider as shepherds and unexpected guests arrive. This Christmas, let us also make room—for strangers and neighbors alike. For this is good news of great joy for all people.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- Are you more of a cleaner or somebody who needs to be cleaned up after? Share a story that illustrates your answer.
- What is your definition of a mess? In your own messiness, is there room for relationship? In your messiness, is there room for Jesus? In the messiness of this season of travel, gift opening, and overclocked schedules, is there room for the holy? How do you make room for the holy at Christmas?
- Read Romans 5:6 and Romans 5:8. How has God shown up in your messiness?

CHALLENGE: *In this season of Advent, this time of preparing, this Christmas Eve, take time to turn and to see the mess of your life and how much your mess is crowding out - not making room for God's love. But don't let yourself be swallowed up in shame and guilt. Instead, notice that God is already there ... and celebrate the Good News!*

- How, practically speaking, can you live into this Good News in your life? How can you accept, make room for, and share the gift of God's love with others?