

Joining the Feast

Year A, Winter
First Sunday of Advent—
Transfiguration Sunday



What you will find in *Joining the Feast!*

The Church Year Calendar

Describes the important church festivals and special days for the coming season. It provides theological reflections on their importance for the church's life and our own lives.

The Shape of the Season

Presents an overview of the focus scriptures for the weeks in the coming season. It discusses the biblical and theological significance of each of the passages.

Joining Worship and Learning: Making the Connections and Time with Children

In this section of *Joining the Feast*, you will find charts that list connections between activities in the age-level materials and worship. A story to use in the children's time during worship follows the chart for each week. Notice that some songs are used by several age levels but not in the same session. If you are interested in including a prayer, poetry, or artwork from an age level, speak with the leader in advance. May your congregational worship be enlivened by these suggestions to join worship and learning.

Joining Mission and Learning

Help the participants in *Feasting on the Word Curriculum* resources connect with existing service opportunities in your congregation. Review this list, and offer suggestions to the leaders. Give this chart to the chair of the mission or outreach committee so that the work of the committee can be strengthened through the church school.

Litanies and Prayers

A selection of poetic prayers and responsive readings that helps worship leaders connect the church's educational and worship experiences to find fullness and blessing in the praise and service of God.

Children's Bulletins

A fun activity page is provided weekly to give children a sense of belonging and help them feel welcome in the worship experience. These special children's bulletins connect their worship experience to the education themes.

Joining the Feast

We invite you to “Join the Feast”!

Our exciting *Feasting on the Word Curriculum* offers great opportunities for the local church. Pastors, educators, and participants can experience the wonder of God’s nourishing word to us. For church schools, for study groups, and in preparation for teaching and preaching, the resources here will deepen and strengthen our faith. We have an amazing “feast” set before us! We desire and can find further understanding in our faith—of who God is and what God has done!

Joining the Feast helps pastors, educators, and worship leaders plan for education and worship. We want to assist in reflecting on how to incorporate scriptural and seasonal emphases across different parts of the church’s life.

Joining the Feast can be shared in education and worship committees. It enables important biblical themes to be integrated into the church’s study and worship experiences. A chart of suggestions for ways educational emphases can be used in worship is a feature of what follows here. Church school teachers can discuss these materials with each other to enhance education for all age levels in the church. Pastors who plan their lectionary preaching will find taking an overall look at this church season to be useful for their preparations. In all this we want to join teaching and preaching. We want the church’s educational and worship experiences to find fullness and blessing in the praise and service of God!

An important goal for pastors and educators in the church is to connect or join the church’s educational experience with the church’s worship experience. People of all ages who participate in church school study can find their Christian faith enhanced when the Scriptures read and proclaimed in worship reinforce and expand what they have been considering in their educational time. Education and worship can be mutually supportive in helping God’s word in Scripture come alive in the Sunday morning experience. Consideration of the same lectionary reading in preaching can deepen the insights gained in church school.

Pastors who want to build on what has been done in education welcome this *Feasting on the Word Curriculum* as a way to prepare congregational members for directions into which the sermon can lead. Those who participate in the education time will find the insights gained there enhanced by preaching which considers the same passage and brings God’s word to bear in fresh and nourishing ways. So as we “Join the Feast,” joining the church’s educational and worship dimensions can bring to life the richness of God’s word in Scripture.

Donald K. McKim



God's Light

based on Isaiah 2:1-5

God's people in Judah were worried. The Assyrian army was capturing small nations near them. Would they be next? Would God protect them? Would there be war or peace?

Isaiah was God's prophet in Judah and Jerusalem. God had a message for the people there. This is what Isaiah told the people:

It will happen that

Mount Zion, where God's house is,
will become the highest of all mountains.

All the people will go to it.

Many countries and peoples will head that way and say,
"Come on, let's go up the mountain
to the house of God, Jacob's God.
God will teach us the way
to walk in God's paths."

Teaching will come from Mount Zion;

God's word will be heard in Jerusalem.

God will be the judge when nations disagree.

God will settle their arguments.

They will make their swords and armor
into plows and farming tools.

No nation will fight another nation.

No one will ever learn how to make war again.

Come, let us walk in God's light.

Isaiah couldn't tell the people when this would happen,
but Isaiah told them it was God's promise to them.

Which one in each set is different from the others? Which row of pictures does not match God's promise?

1



a



b



c

2



a



b

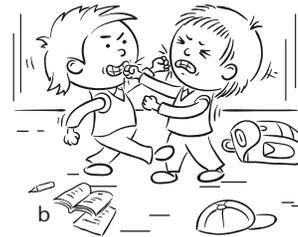


c

3



a



b

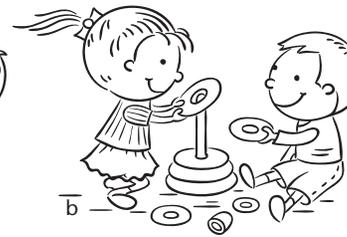


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4



a



b

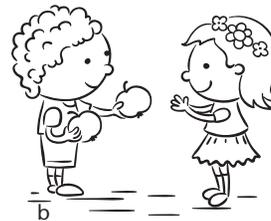


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5



a



b



c