



Wonderland Week 1 Discussion & Reflection Guide

Questions and Prompts

- **What stood out to you from Sunday's service?** How did you sense God at work in you through the songs, the story video, the message, and being together with others as part of the church? (The message's main points and scripture are listed below if it helps you think back.)
- **Jesus is still our good news.** Can you put words to the peace that settles over a specific concern of yours when you hear this?
- *"Do not be grieved, for the joy of the Lord is your strength"* (Nehemiah 8:10). Print or **write out this verse** and put it somewhere you'll see it often this month.
- How has God shown his oversight in your life through challenging circumstances? **What friend this week could use an encouraging word**, that their tough circumstance can become an opportunity for God to strengthen them **as He has strengthened you?**
- **Is there anything else from the message you want to explore more deeply this week?**

Advent

Sometimes, the weeks leading up to Christmas are so full that we miss what is most important. Find a simple Advent calendar we created, as well as several other Advent suggestions at wschurch.org/advent and slow down during a busy season to be with God. (If you'd like a hard copy of the calendar, they are available at the Next Steps Area.)

Christmas at West Side

For all of the info about Christmas services and opportunities, go to wschurch.org/Christmas. You'll also find digital invites that make it easy to send a personal invitation to friends and family!

We hope you'll use this guide to take the teaching from Sunday's service and reflect on it with a few friends or with a group. If you have questions or want to talk more about how to take your next spiritual step, contact us at info@wschurch.org.

Message Main Points & Scripture

- Luke 2:1-7 – *At that time the Roman emperor, Augustus, decreed that a census should be taken throughout the Roman Empire. (This was the first census taken when Quirinius was governor of Syria.) All returned to their own ancestral towns to register for this census. And because Joseph was a descendant of King David, he had to go to Bethlehem in Judea, David's ancient home. He traveled there from the village of Nazareth in Galilee. He took with him Mary, to whom he was engaged, who was now expecting a child. And while they were there, the time came for her baby to be born. She gave birth to her firstborn son. She wrapped him snugly in strips of cloth and laid him in a manger, because there was no lodging available for them.*
- **Sometimes an inconvenience is an opportunity in disguise.**
- **PROVIDENCE can be defined as the unique ability of God to use unsuspecting people and unlikely circumstances to accomplish his will.**
- Providence is an aspect of God's sovereignty...his powerful authority over his creation.
- **The original Christmas story is a case study in God's providence.**
- Micah 5:2-3 – *But you, O Bethlehem Ephrathah, are only a small village among all the people of Judah. Yet a ruler of Israel whose origins are in the distant past, will come from you on my behalf. The people of Israel will be abandoned to their enemies until the woman in labor gives birth.*
- **The most bewildering part of God's providence is his timing...**especially in the first Christmas.
- Galatians 4:4 – *When the right time came, God sent his Son, born of a woman...*
- **God often allows the timing to be less convenient.**
- **God has a different definition of perfect timing. When Jesus came into the world, it was the right time, politically, culturally and spiritually.**
- Just because God's timing isn't convenient for you does not mean it is not right.
- Romans 8:28 explains, *We know that God causes everything to work together for the good of those who love God and are called according to his purpose for them. For God knew his people in advance, and he chose them to become like his Son...*
- **Do you trust God's providence more than you trust your desires for yourself?**
- **But the most impressive thing about Joseph (of the Old Testament) was his faith in God's providence. Joseph believed God's providence makes suffering bearable.**
- Genesis 50:20 – ***“You intended to harm me, but God intended it all for good. He brought me to this position so I could save the lives of many people.”***
- John 1:14 – *So the Word became human and made his home among us. He was full of unfailing love and faithfulness. And we have seen his glory, the glory of the Father's one and only Son.*
- **We are still waiting for the ultimate expression of God's kingdom.**
- Romans 8:23 – *We believers also groan, even though we have the Holy Spirit within us as a foretaste of future glory, for we long for our bodies to be released from sin and suffering. We, too, wait with eager hope for the day when God will give us OUR FULL RIGHTS as his adopted children, including the new bodies he has promised us.*
- Luke 12:37-38 – *“The servants who are ready and waiting for his return will be rewarded. I tell you the truth, he himself will seat them, put on an apron, and serve them as they sit and eat! He may come in the middle of the night or just before dawn. But whenever he comes, he will reward the servants who are ready.”*
- **Helen Lemmel** (author of *Turn Your Eyes Upon Jesus*) says: **“I am fine in the things that count.”** That's a good question to ponder in prayer right now.