

PRACTICES ADVENT 2 - PEACE

- » Light two candles. Say a prayer. Breathe in peace; breathe out peace.
- » Challenge yourself to be a peacemaker today. Identify a strained relationship, and take a concrete step toward reconciliation. Send a card, reach out, or call.
- » Conversation starters: What does what Angelou calls, "true Peace" actually look like? What are the primary obstacles we face in building a peaceful world? How can we create or lengthen a "halting of hate time" in our own lives and hearts?
- » More light: Read "A Brave and Startling Truth" by Maya Angelou, and "Making the House Ready for the Lord" by Mary Oliver.
- » Connect with someone who belongs to another religion, and wish them best wishes for the holidays they celebrate, or in any case for a happy and healthy New Year.
- » Get out into creation, and visit the most peaceful spot you know. Savor God's peace, and watch for God's glory.
- » Peace can often be found when we listen closely to our feelings. Many people use an "If Feelings Could Talk" chart to help figure out what's happening emotionally, and what next steps might make most sense. Sadness might be telling me I need to cry. Loneliness, that I need connection. Resentment, that I need to

forgive. Emptiness, that I need some creative time. Happiness, that I need to say "thank you." Anger, that I need to check in with my boundaries. Stress, that I need some Sabbath. Try an intentional "If Feelings Could Talk" conversation with family or friends, with or without a chart: *What are you feeling? What next steps make sense?*

- » Pick a day this week, or part of a day, for a silent, unplugged retreat: no screens or devices, no speaking, no problem solving. Just pure, rejuvenating peace.