

Suggested Resources on Website for Advent/Christmas and Lent/Easter/Pentecost

A Friendly Exploration of Resources for Advent and the Coming of Christmas

The inquiry from a Friend:

Our hope was to present a short lesson/story for All Ages Religious Education this Sunday on the Prophecies around Jesus birth, the coming of the Kingdom of God, the coming of the Messiah. A Friend shared tickets to Handel's Messiah on Sunday and the beautiful words and the soul-stirring music echo in my heart--Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, the Prince of Peace . . . I'm loathe to shift away to another Christmasy topic because there is so much power in our prophetic tradition. (And, as modern folk we dwell somewhat uncomfortably with that much mystery and that much bold hope.) We are still the people who walk in darkness and we are still receiving the Light of the World.

Any ideas or insights?

There is a book simply called, "Jesus" by Demi that is beautifully illustrated and has passages from the King James Bible -- the first two pages are verses from John and Isaiah. It might be worth a look to see what might unfold for you. Another book I often use at this time of year is Katherine Paterson's "The Light of the World," which jumps pretty quickly into the nativity story but does begin by talking about darkness and light and Isaiah's prophecy.

In Godly Play®, the Advent series has wonderful language about the prophets -- the first week of Advent is when we remember the prophets, who pointed the way to Bethlehem -- in GP Volume 3, pages 27-33. You could certainly add to the language of that first week with the prophets the words from Isaiah 9:6, as you've led. And to see a beautiful telling of the GP Advent story (all parts in one sitting) told by trainer Caryl Merikhus Cresswell, go here: [Godly Play Advent Story](#)

I am leading Children's Meeting on Sunday -- The idea that I came up with -- with help from my friend, Laura -- is very similar to what you have been talking about. We are going to use (prophet) Isaiah 9:6, "For unto us a child is born," as our Bible verse. Then I will tell the Godly Play Advent story with Melinda's adaptations. For the wondering I want to bring together the Bible verse and the GP story and wonder what they might say to each other. Then for our work time, we will be decorating candles while listening to Handel's Messiah part 1 (the Isaiah 9:6 part). I watched the YouTube video of Caryl Cresswell telling the Advent story last night. I always find it very inspiring. I also found this blog entry from last Sunday on *Explore and Express* which is worth reading and right along all the same lines of prophets, Advent and Godly Play. The title of the entry is *Unto us a Child is Born*. Check it out: [Explore and Express Blog](#)

This is great, friends! Wonderful ideas! You might talk about what birth means. Is a new friendship a start? What about a new idea or a hope?

