



**Mennonite  
Church  
Manitoba**

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Dear Mennonite Church Manitoba pastors and worship leaders:

Attached, in several formats, is a series of six brief meditations that bring the stories of Advent and Epiphany together with the realities of Bethlehem and the Holy Land today.

We encourage you to make these meditations available in a format that works for your congregation. You are welcome to any or all of these options, cutting and pasting as necessary:

1. Include a complete meditation (photo, Scripture, mediation, prayer) as a bulletin insert each Sunday.
2. Present the mediations orally, projecting the photo on a screen, during the sharing or prayer time.
3. Run off all meditations together in a folder for families and individuals to use at home

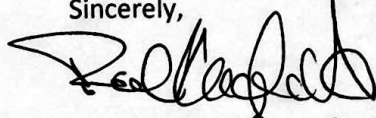
Note that these meditations are not specifically tied to the lectionary readings or to the worship resources included in Leader magazine. They follow the Christmas narratives, from the angel's announcement to Mary, to Herod's massacre of the baby boys of Bethlehem. However, there are some points of contact you may wish to make:

1. These meditations are ultimately connected to the purpose statement of the Leader resources: "Advent is a time for us to remember where Jesus enters God's story and our own stories, to remember what it means to live righteously, and to look to the future as we seek God's plan for us as faithful individuals and faithful communities."
2. Epiphany Sunday highlights the visit of the magi to Bethlehem. Consider using mediation #5 on that day, highlighting its call for the global reach of God's justice for all.

The meditations come from the Mennonite Church Manitoba Working Group on Palestine and Israel, which is promoting the implementation on the 2016 Palestine-Israel resolution of Mennonite Church Canada. In response to the call of the Palestinian churches, the resolution is our commitment to ongoing prayer, education, and advocacy toward a just peace in Palestine and Israel.

Blessings on your preparations for Advent!

Sincerely,

  
on behalf of Working Group on Palestine and Israel  
