

# ***An IN PERSON Christmas: Emmanuel***

*December 12, 2021*

**Overarching Theme:** In 2021, FUMC will be SENT with the peace of Christ!

## **Instructions:**

When using this material as teacher, feel free to pick and choose the point you want to emphasize in the lesson. *The format of the curriculum is designed to have an abundance of information in which to refer as desired.*

## **Core Point:**

On Easter evening, the Risen Christ appears to his gathered disciples for the first time since Good Friday and speaks these words: "*Peace be with you. As the Father sent me, so I send you*" (John 20:21). Just as Jesus sent his disciples into a divided, conflicted 1<sup>st</sup> Century with his peace, so he sends us into a divided, conflicted 2021 with his peace.

**Reflect on this Scripture:** John 1:1-14 NRSV *In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. <sup>2</sup> He was in the beginning with God. <sup>3</sup> All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being <sup>4</sup> in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. <sup>5</sup> The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it. <sup>6</sup> There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. <sup>7</sup> He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. <sup>8</sup> He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light. <sup>9</sup> The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world. <sup>10</sup> He was in the world, and the world came into being through him; yet the world did not know him. <sup>11</sup> He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him. <sup>12</sup> But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, <sup>13</sup> who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God. <sup>14</sup> And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth.*

## **This Week: John 1:14**

With the words "the Word became flesh and lived among us," John underscores the bond that had been established between his community and God as revealed in Jesus. God did not stay distant from them, remote and isolated; rather, in Jesus, God chose to live with humanity in the midst of human weakness, confusion, and pain.

This bond holds for the contemporary Christian community as well. To become flesh is to know joy, pain, suffering, and loss. It is to love, to grieve, and someday to die. The incarnation binds Jesus to the “everydayness” of human experience. When the believing community confesses along with the Fourth Evangelist that the Word “lived among us,” it affirms the link between the incarnation and its own humanness.

-Adapted from New Interpreters Commentary, Vol IX, p. 525-26

### **Questions to Ponder for Accountability in the Group:**

1. The Gospel writer John was part of the early Jesus movement made up of deeply devoted, monotheistic Jews. Yet he can affirm the divinity of the Word alongside God (“the Word was with God, and the Word was God”) and declares that this “Word became flesh” in Jesus. What can account for this enormous shift of belief in the early Christian community?
2. John affirms the ‘incarnation’ of Jesus when he declares “*the Word became flesh.*” Why is Jesus being fully God and fully human so important in terms of our salvation and Christian discipleship?
3. Think about this implication of the incarnation – that Jesus knew exactly what it is like to be human, and can relate fully to us. When you think about your own life, how is the shared human experience with Jesus specifically helpful for you?
4. If “Christ is in you” (Colossians 1:27), how can that incarnational experience benefit someone else? How does that help you relate to the joys and struggles of others and be truly *with them*? Brainstorm with your group about how you can be the “hands and feet of Christ” this week.

### **Activity for the Life of a Disciple:**

1. Remember to find encouragement for the day by reading the daily devotional from FUMCC and/or journal in the “*Morning by Morning*” gratitude resource.
2. Ponder and pray on this scripture this week: John 1:14  
*And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father’s only son, full of grace and truth.*