

## SERMON IDEAS

# OUTREACH ENCOURAGEMENTS

Upcoming opportunities based on Year B of the CW Lectionary

### The Season of Advent | The Third Sunday in Advent

#### Isaiah 61:1-3,10,11

Jesus applied this Old Testament prophecy to himself (Luke 4:16-21). The preacher might ask his people whom they might know who are “brokenhearted,” who might be “mourning,” or “grieving.” Ultimately, all of us experience these things as we live sinful lives in a sinful world. Listeners could be encouraged to look for people in their lives who do not know Jesus and, therefore, have no solution for their broken hearts, mourning and grieving. After identifying such souls, invite them to join you for Christmas Eve worship where they will hear all about the solution they need.

### The Season of Christmas | Christmas Eve

#### Luke 2:1-20

While the preacher will want his main message on Christmas Eve to focus on the incarnation and its remarkable and comforting implications for his hearers, the announcement of the angels to the shepherds and the shepherds’ spontaneous response to seeing the Christ-child (“...they spread the word concerning what had been told them about this child, and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds said to them.”) affords him the opportunity to encourage his people to be just as spontaneous and eager to tell others what has been told them about this child.

### The Season of Christmas | First Sunday After Christmas

#### Isaiah 45:20-25

The Lord calls out to the nations who worship idols of wood and declares that, “...there is no God apart from me, a righteous God and a Savior; there is none but me. Turn to me and be saved, all you ends of the earth; for I am God, and there is no other.” While probably not worshiping idols of wood, the unchurched people our members know have no shortage of idols before whom they bend the knee: money, success, beauty, sports, self. None are worthy of worship. And none can save. The preacher might help his people appreciate how hopeless and lost those unchurched souls are and what a wonderful privilege it is to invite them to meet the LORD—the only true God and their only Savior.



## The Season of Christmas | Second Sunday After Christmas

### John 7:40-43

John tells us that “the people were divided because of Jesus.” The preacher might encourage his people by reminding them that people will react in a variety of ways when they hear about Jesus. It has always been this way. It is no reason to be discouraged. One specific reason some reject him is because they are misinformed about him. John tells us that, “Others asked, ‘How can the Christ come from Galilee? Does not the Scripture say that the Christ will come from David’s family and from Bethlehem, the town where David lived?’” They knew their Bible but did not have all the information about Jesus—in this case, that he had in fact been born in Bethlehem, the town where David lived. Today, too, people are often misinformed or have a lack of information that keeps them from following Jesus. This is why it is so important for Christians to engage the unchurched, listen carefully to their questions, and provide information that may be missing.

