



SERIES OVERVIEW

Through the Wilderness: Healing for a Weary World

Are you looking for a justice-centered Advent series for your church?

This Advent, we invite you into a season of sacred reflection and prophetic imagination centered on four visions of Isaiah. Each of these visions arises from the pain and longing of God's people – realities that echo our own struggles with fear, division, and injustice today. This series invites participants to courageously name the brokenness around and within us; explore what it means to embody prophetic love and courage in today's world; and dream of a world made whole – and begin to walk toward it.

Each session is based on the Old Testament reading from the Revised Common Lectionary (Year A). Though designed primarily for in-person small groups, this series can be easily adapted for individual use or larger gatherings. It includes an optional get-to-know-you session, four one-hour sessions, and a post-Christmas gathering. Optionally, participants can choose to engage in five reflections between each session.

SERIES GOALS

1. **Cultivate sacred attentiveness** to the pain and longing within ourselves and the world, guided by Isaiah's prophetic poetry.
2. **Explore the call to prophetic courage**, discerning how to speak truth, seek justice, and embody love in today's fractured world.
3. **Envision God's dream of healing and wholeness** — and discern practical, faith-filled steps to help bring that vision to life.
4. **(Re-)Awaken the spirit of justice within your church:** This series may serve as a kindling that draws individuals together into a supportive community, preparing them for deep spiritual transformation and sustained action for justice.



WHO IS THIS PROGRAM FOR?

This series was designed primarily for in-person use in churches of all denominations. It could also be adapted for the following uses:

- With a large group of 30+ participants
- **With a spouse**, roommate, friend, or partner
- With a group of friends or coworkers
- With **virtual** groups
- **Individually** (instead of answering discussion questions, participants would journal or reflect silently)
- As material for a **sermon series**

While participants would benefit from attending as many sessions as possible, this program allows for flexible attendance.

Ways this program could be used:

- As a small group or Bible study offering
- Sunday School series
- Gathering time before or after worship/mass
- Women's groups, men's groups, young adult groups
- Campus ministries
- Wednesday night programming
- As a parent activity during children or youth programming
- Intergenerational ministry with high schoolers and their parents

SESSION CONTENT

Optional Get-to-Know-You Session — Participants introduce themselves to one another, explore community guidelines for healthy and holy dialogue, and pray together as they prepare to begin their Advent journey.

Session 1: Despair, Longing, Vision (Isaiah 2:1-5) — The prophets gave voice to the people's deepest despair and longing — while also daring to imagine a new reality shaped by God's peace and justice. This session invites participants to name the pain they carry into the Advent season and begin to envision what healing might look like for themselves, their communities, and our world.



Session 2: Justice: The Only Way to Peace (Isaiah 11:1-10) – Drawing on Isaiah’s vision of a Spirit-led leader who brings justice for the oppressed and peace for all creation, this session invites participants to discern how God’s justice and peace might take root in their own lives and communities.

Session 3: Far from Home (Isaiah 35:1–10) – Isaiah 35 speaks to a people in exile who believed the only way home was a long, impassable road around the desert’s perimeter—but the prophet offers a surprising vision: a blooming highway straight through the wilderness, back to their scattered loved ones and back to God. Participants reflect on their own seasons of wilderness and loss, while also considering the real-life journeys of those who cross deserts today in search of safety and home.

Session 4: Choosing Vision Over Fear (Isaiah 7:10–16) – This session invites participants to reflect on the temptations we face when fear takes hold – especially the temptation to trust in power, comfort, or status quo solutions instead of God’s deeper call to justice and peace. Participants will explore how to root their decisions not in fear and scarcity, but in God’s larger vision of healing, wholeness, and collective flourishing.

Optional Post-Christmas Gathering – Participants discern how they can carry what they have learned and experienced during their Advent journey into the new year. Optionally, this session can be accompanied by a shared meal.

BEST VALUE! **Advent 2025 + Lent 2026 Early-Bird Registration Bundle**

(save over 25% by purchasing together!)

Advent + Lent Registration for 1-14 participants	\$315
Advent + Lent Registration 15-30 participants	\$350
Advent + Lent for Unlimited participants in your community	\$385

Register now for Advent and Lent bundle at justfaith.org/advent-series-2025.

	Advent Early Bird Price	Advent Standard Price	Advent + Lent Standard Price
Registration for 1-14 participants	\$150	\$200	\$440
Registration 15-30 participants	\$175	\$225	\$490
Registration for Unlimited participants	\$200	\$250	\$540