

Advent

“Upside Down”

Introduction

This worship companion is meant to accompany the themes and scriptures explored during the weekly worship service. We recommend that you go back and listen to or watch any service that you are not able to attend in person. You are also encouraged to create your own advent wreath at home. This can be as simple as four candles of all different shapes and sizes.

The weekly guides contain the same elements:

- Opening Prayer
- Reading Scripture Aloud (repeatedly)
- Reflection
- Discussion
- Closing Prayer from *The Book of Common Worship*

The structure and repetitive nature of the study is inspired by a method of meditative scripture reading known as *lectio divina*. By reading a passage multiple times, we have the opportunity to meditate on and digest the text in different ways. It is essential that as you read the scripture, you approach the time with an attitude of humility and receptivity to what God is saying.

If you're doing this with a group/ with your family...

- We recommend asking different people to read the given scripture aloud each time it is read. It can also be meaningful to read from different translations.
- It is helpful for each person to bring a printed copy of the study on which they can make notes/ mark on the scripture passage.

If you're using this as a study on your own...

- Keep a journal with you to write down your thoughts/reflections. The practice of journaling is a great way to really solidify and organize the material. Plus, at the end of the 4 weeks, you will be able to go back and see all that you have learned.
- While it may not be possible to meet with a group each week, we do recommend that you partner with someone who you see or talk with on a regular basis. Go through the study on your own and then be intentional to talk about what you're learning.

Finally, be open to what God is saying to you as you explore scripture. Repetitive reading can feel rudimentary or even boring; however, if you stay curious and investigate what is going on in the world behind the text and the world around you, you will surely learn new and exciting things about the character of God, the glory of Jesus, and the call of God's people.

