Welcoming Christ Who comes with hope

A Prayer Journey for Advent 2026



Cevaa
sharing in action

Dear brothers and sisters,

As we journey toward the celebration of Christ's birth, we are invited to renew our faith, deepen our prayer life, and open ourselves more fully to God's work in our lives and in our world.

In the Protestant tradition, the season of Advent is first and foremost a time **for listening** to God's Word and **for hope** grounded in His promises. It reminds us that our faith is rooted in the work God has already accomplished in Jesus Christ, and invites us to live in confident **anticipation** of his Kingdom. This liturgical season calls believers to spiritual vigilance, conversion of heart, and a renewed commitment to bearing witness to the Gospel.



Advent thus invites believers to contemplate three dimensions of Christ's coming:

Christ came
into history through his birth in Bethlehem

Christ comes today
to meet his Church through his Word, the work of the Holy Spirit, and fraternal communion.

Christ will come in glory
to fully bring about the Kingdom of God foretold by the prophets.

This 2026 prayer journey will accompany the season of Advent through December 24, the eve of the celebration of the Nativity of the Lord.

Drawing on Scripture, it invites each and every one of us to deepen our encounter with Christ, who comes to dwell in our lives and renew our hope. Designed by the Cevaa's Activities and Youth Pole, it is intended as a simple tool to help the faithful, families, youth groups, parishes, and movements experience the season of Advent week by week, through prayer, reflection, and commitment.

May this journey help us to remain vigilant in faith, to grow in love, and to joyfully welcome the One who comes among his people.

Wishing everyone a blessed and holy Advent season.

Omer Gb. DAGAN
Executive Secretary of the Activities and Youth Pole

First Week: November 29–December 5, 2026

Watching in Hope

The word which Isaiah the son of Amoz saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem. Now it will come about that in the last days the mountain of the house of the Lord will be established as the chief of the mountains, and will be raised above the hills; And all the nations will stream to it. And many peoples will come and say, "Come, let's go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; So that He may teach us about His ways, and that we may walk in His paths." For the law will go out from Zion and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem. And He will judge between the nations, and will mediate for many peoples; and they will beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning knives. Nation will not lift up a sword against nation, and never again will they learn war. Come, house of Jacob, and let's walk in the light of the Lord.

Isaiah 2:1-5

Advent begins with a vision. While Jerusalem is experiencing political instability and threats from neighboring powers, the prophet Isaiah proclaims a future that, humanly speaking, nothing seems able to guarantee. He contemplates **the mountain of the house of the Lord**, to which all nations are flocking. This image is not merely geographical; it expresses God's universal attraction. The peoples do not come up to wage war or impose their rule, but to receive the Lord's teaching and learn his ways.

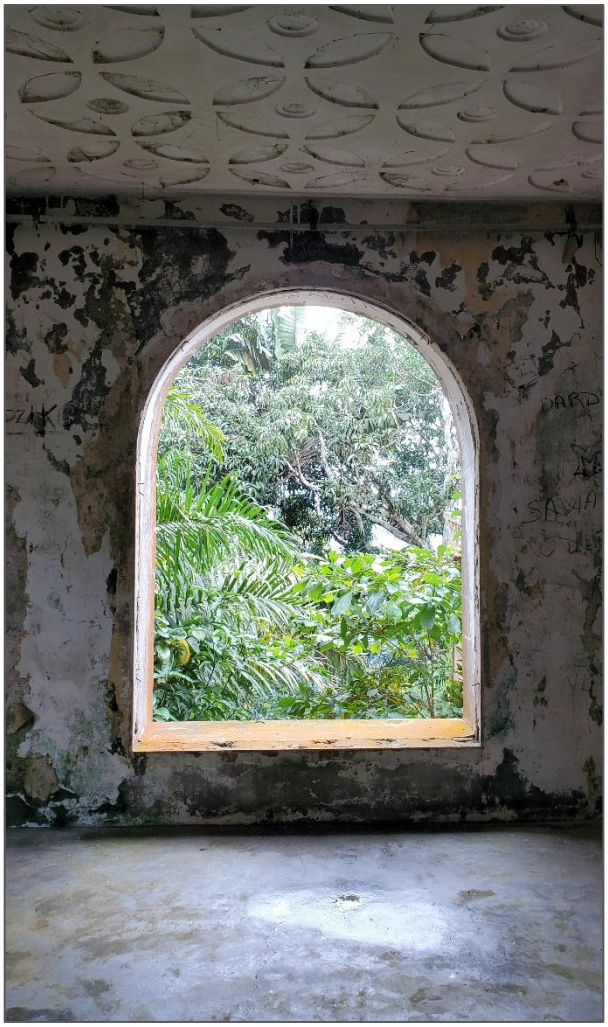
At the heart of this prophecy lies a profound transformation: **They will beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning knives**. Isaiah does not merely describe a future peace; he reveals God's very plan for humanity. Where people invest their energy in rivalry, God calls them to build, cultivate, and sustain life. The instruments of death become tools of life.

These words of the prophet resonate powerfully in our world marked by conflicts, divisions, and ecological crises. We could easily give in to discouragement. Yet Advent invites us to view reality differently—with hope. This biblical hope is not an illusion that distracts us from reality; it is the conviction that God is already at work in the midst of history and is leading the world toward its fulfillment.

Thus, watching in hope means recognizing the signs of the Kingdom that are already sprouting among us. Every act of reconciliation within a family, every initiative of solidarity toward the most vulnerable, every commitment to justice or to the care of creation is, lik , a sword turned into a plow. These gestures may sometimes seem modest, but they bear witness to the new world that God is preparing.

The prophet's final call then takes on its full meaning: **Come, house of Jacob, and let's walk in the light of the Lord.** Even before the promised peace is fully realized, the people are invited to live according to this light right now. Christian hope, therefore, does not consist in passively waiting for a better future; it urges us to participate in God's work today.

At the beginning of Advent, the Lord invites us to become watchmen. Not anxious observers of the darkness, but confident witnesses to the light that is already advancing. For to watch is to believe that the future belongs to God and to choose, day after day, to live according to that promise.



Question

Where can I recognize the signs of God's hope in my life and in the world today?

Action for the Week

Light the first Advent candle and take a moment of silence each day.

Prayer

Lord Jesus, You who come to illuminate the darkness of our world, awaken in us a watchful heart. When doubt overwhelms us, teach us to discern the seeds of Your Kingdom. Make us witnesses to Your hope. Amen.

Week Two: December 6–12, 2026

Preparing the Way of the Lord

"Comfort, comfort My people," says your God. "Speak kindly to Jerusalem; And call out to her, that her warfare has ended, that her guilt has been removed, that she has received of the Lord's hand double for all her sins." The voice of one calling out, "Clear the way for the Lord in the wilderness; Make straight in the desert a highway for our God. Let every valley be lifted up, And every mountain and hill be made low; And let the uneven ground become a plain, and the rugged terrain a broad valley; Then the glory of the Lord will be revealed, and all flesh will see *it* together; For the mouth of the Lord has spoken." A voice says, "Call out." Then he answered, "What shall I call out?" All flesh is grass, and all its loveliness is like the flower of the field. The grass withers, the flower fades, when the breath of the Lord blows upon it; The people are indeed grass! The grass withers, the flower fades, but the word of our God stands forever. Go up on a high mountain, Zion, messenger of good news, raise your voice forcefully, Jerusalem, messenger of good news; Raise *it* up, do not fear. Say to the cities of Judah, "Here is your God!" Behold, the Lord God will come with might, with His arm ruling for Him. Behold, His compensation is with Him, and His reward before Him. Like a shepherd He will tend His flock, in His arm He will gather the lambs and carry *them* in the fold of His robe; He will gently lead the nursing *ewes*.

Isaiah 40:1-11

The people are in exile, worn down by years of suffering, displacement, and discouragement. Just when all seems lost, the prophet speaks an unexpected word: **Comfort, comfort My people**. God has not abandoned His own. He is preparing their return and opening a path of liberation before them.

In this context, the call to prepare **the way for the Lord** does not mean that the people must build a road for God. In biblical tradition, it is God himself who comes to save his people and lead them toward a new life. The valleys to be filled, the mountains to be leveled, and the winding paths to be made straight symbolize everything that stands in the way of this encounter: discouragement, pride, injustice, fear, or a lack of trust in God.

The desert plays a central role in this prophecy. While it certainly represents places of trial, solitude, and vulnerability, it is also the space where God reveals himself and renews his covenant. Where human beings see only barren land, God brings forth a path of hope. The desert is therefore not the end of the story; it becomes the place of a new beginning.



Preparing the way for the Lord means welcoming this work of God into our lives. Advent invites us to examine what hinders our journey with Christ and our relationships with others. What mountains of pride or resentment must we allow to be leveled? What valleys of discouragement or indifference does God desire to fill with his grace?

Every word of reconciliation, every act of forgiveness, every gesture of justice or solidarity then becomes a path opened up for the Lord's coming. Preparing his way does not mean performing extraordinary feats, but allowing his love to tangibly transform the way we live.

The prophecy concludes with an image full of tenderness: God comes like a shepherd who gathers his flock and carries the lambs close to his heart. The One we await is not a distant ruler, but a God who is near, attentive to the most vulnerable, and faithful to his promises.

During this season of Advent, let us allow these words of consolation to resonate within us. Even in the midst of our personal deserts, God is preparing a path. He comes to meet us and lead us toward life, peace, and hope.

Question

What obstacles prevent the Lord from taking His rightful place in my life?

Action of the Week

Take concrete steps toward reconciliation or forgiveness by lighting the second candle

Prayer

God of tenderness, come and smooth out the winding paths within us. Take away our fears, heal our wounds, and open our hearts to your presence. May our lives prepare the way for the coming of your Son.

Week Three: December 13–19, 2026

Rejoicing in God's Presence

> Shout for joy, daughter of Zion! Shout *in triumph,* Israel! Rejoice and triumph with all *your* heart, daughter of Jerusalem! The Lord has taken away His judgments against you, He has cleared away your enemies. The King of Israel, the Lord, is in your midst; You will no longer fear disaster. On that day it will be said to Jerusalem: "Do not be afraid, Zion; Do not let your hands fall limp. The Lord your God is in your midst, a victorious warrior. He will rejoice over you with joy, He will be quiet in His love, He will rejoice over you with shouts of joy." I will gather those who are worried about the appointed feasts— they came from you, Zion; The disgrace *of exile* is a burden on them.
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> Sophonie 3,14-18

The third Sunday of Advent, traditionally called *Joy Sunday*, marks a radiant pause on the journey leading to Christmas. At the heart of this time of waiting, the Word of God invites his people to rejoice: **Shout for joy, daughter of Zion!**

This invitation takes on its full significance when we consider the context of the prophet Zephaniah. His ministry unfolded during a time of spiritual and moral crisis. After denouncing the people's unfaithfulness and announcing God's judgment, the prophet nevertheless concludes his book with a proclamation of hope. God's final word is not condemnation, but restoration. The Lord promises to dwell among his people, to free them from their fears, and to renew his covenant with them.

One of the most surprising aspects of this passage is the image of God Himself rejoicing over His people: **He will rejoice over you with joy, He will be quiet in His love, He will rejoice over you with shouts of joy.**

Throughout the Bible, there are few passages that describe God's joy with such intensity. The source of the believer's joy, therefore, must not lie in improved circumstances, but in the certainty that God is present, that He loves His people, and that He rejoices over them.

This message remains profoundly relevant today. We often wait for difficulties to disappear before we can find joy again. Yet Zephaniah teaches us another way: joy springs from God's presence at the very heart of our frailties. It does not deny suffering or trials, but it affirms that no situation can separate us from the love of the Lord.

Advent thus invites us to recognize the signs of this divine presence in our daily lives. God dwells in our families when they choose dialogue over division. He is present in our communities when they welcome the most vulnerable. He walks with those who are committed to peace, justice, and the care of creation. Every act of love, solidarity, or reconciliation becomes a witness to the God who dwells among his people.



In light of the Cevaa's theme, *"Inhabit Creation Differently*," this joy is also a way of inhabiting the world, *Inhabit life differently*. Those who know that God is near no longer view creation with fear or indifference, but with gratitude and a sense of responsibility. Christian joy then becomes a force that inspires commitment, nourishes hope, and opens up paths of life.

On this third Sunday of Advent, let us welcome this good news: God is in our midst. Even before we seek God, he comes to meet us. Even before we rejoice, he rejoices in us. That is why we can move forward with confidence toward Christmas, our hearts filled with a hope that does not disappoint.

Question

What reasons for gratitude can I offer to God today?

Gesture of the Week

Light the third candle and write prayers of thanksgiving to share with friends.

Prayer

Lord, You are the source of our joy. When trials darken our horizon, remind us that You remain with us. Open our lips to praise and our hearts to thanksgiving. Amen.

Week Four: December 20–24, 2026

Saying "Yes" to God

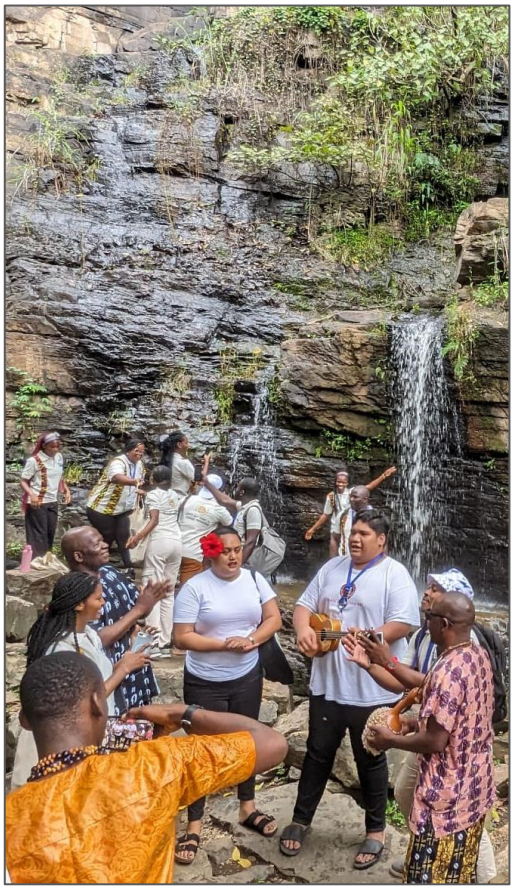
> Now in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a city in Galilee named Nazareth, to a virgin betrothed to a man whose name was Joseph, of the descendants of David; and the virgin's name was Mary. And coming in, he said to her, "Greetings, favored one! The Lord *is* with you." But she was very perplexed at *this* statement, and was pondering what kind of greeting this was. And the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. And behold, you will conceive in your womb and give birth to a son, and you shall name Him Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High; and the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David; and He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and His kingdom will have no end." But Mary said to the angel, "How will this be, since I am a virgin?" The angel answered and said to her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; for that reason also the holy Child will be called the Son of God. And behold, even your relative Elizabeth herself has conceived a son in her old age, and she who was called infertile is now in her sixth month. For nothing will be impossible with God." And Mary said, "Behold, the Lord's bond-servant; may it be done to me according to your word." And the angel departed from her.
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> Luke 1:26–38

The story of the Annunciation leads us to the heart of the mystery of Advent. God chose to enter human history not through power or coercion, but by seeking the free response of a young woman from Nazareth. Mary receives a message that upends her plans and transforms her life. She hides neither her astonishment nor her questions: **How will this be?** Her faith does not consist of blind submission, but of a trust that seeks to understand and ultimately surrenders to God.

An exegesis of this text highlights an essential point: the angel does not first ask Mary what she can do for God; rather, he reveals to her what God wishes to accomplish in her. It all begins with divine initiative. Mary is called to receive a grace before fulfilling a mission. Her "yes" is a response to God's work already at work in her life.

Behold, the Lord's bond-servant; may it be done to me according to your word. Mary expresses a profound willingness. She agrees to trust God without knowing all the details of the path that lies ahead. Her consent opens a space where God's promise can take flesh in the world. Through her "yes," the Word becomes flesh and comes to dwell among humanity.

Like Mary, we would sometimes like to know in advance all the steps of God's plan before committing ourselves. Yet faith often consists of moving forward with confidence, guided by a word rather than by certainties. God continues to call women and men today to participate in his work through new responsibilities, unexpected encounters, commitments to solidarity, or missions in the service of the Church and the world.



Saying "yes" to God means accepting a difficult reconciliation, responding to the call to service, devoting time to someone who is isolated, and committing to justice. These small "yeses" may seem modest. Yet they reflect the presence of Christ within us, just as Mary's "yes" made his coming into history possible.

Inhabit creation differently! *Inhabit life differently*!
A Model of Welcome and Readiness Mary allows herself to be filled with the Word of God before bringing that Word to the world. Likewise, we are invited to welcome Christ into our hearts so that we, in turn, may become bearers of his presence to others.

In this final week of Advent, let us ask the Lord for the grace of a receptive heart. We do not always know where his ways will lead us, but we can trust him. For every time a believer responds to his call with faith, Christ finds a new place to be born and to grow in the world.

Question

To what "yes" is the Lord calling me as Advent draws to a close?

Action of the Week

Light the fourth candle and perform a concrete act of service or solidarity toward someone in need.

Prayer

Faithful God, like Mary, we want to welcome your Word. Give us a receptive heart, capable of trust and surrender. May our lives become a place where your Son can be born and recognized by the world. Amen.

Community Prayer for Advent

Lord Jesus Christ,
During this season of Advent, we have journeyed together toward You as a community of diverse peoples, churches, and cultures, united by the same baptism and sustained by the same hope.
We give You thanks for the communion You bring about among us, transcending borders, languages, and traditions. You teach us to inhabit creation differently, to inhabit our relationships differently, and to inhabit the life You entrust to us. As the feast of Your Nativity approaches, come and dwell at the heart of our member churches, our families, our local communities, and our places of mission and service.
Support the women, men, and young people who commit themselves daily to justice, peace, and reconciliation. Comfort those who are experiencing hardship, war, poverty, exile, illness, or discouragement. Let the certainty that You walk alongside them grow within them. Teach us to recognize Your presence in the face of the stranger, in the cry of the wounded earth, in the call of the most vulnerable, and in the hope of new generations.
May Your Spirit renew our communion and make the Cevaa a family of bold witnesses, attentive to the signs of Your Kingdom, servants of Your creation, and builders of a more fraternal humanity.
You, Emmanuel, God with us, come and enlighten our paths, strengthen our faith, rekindle our hope, and expand our love.
To You be the glory, with the Father and the Holy Spirit, forever and ever.
Amen!

Prayer for the Youth of the Cevaa

During this season of Advent, we set out on our journey toward You, Lord. We come from different countries, different cultures, and different Churches, but we are united by the same hope: that of encountering You and following in Your footsteps. You know our joys and our concerns, our dreams for the future, and our questions about today's world. Sometimes we are discouraged by wars, injustices, inequalities, and the wounds of creation. Sometimes we doubt our ability to make a difference.
But You remind us that light shines in the darkness and that nothing can prevent Your love from reaching us. Teach us to be watchful, to recognize the signs of Your presence in acts of solidarity, sharing, and reconciliation.
Teach us to hope, even when paths seem closed, for You always bring forth new life. Teach us to inhabit creation differently—by respecting the earth You have entrusted to us, by caring for the most vulnerable, and by building relationships founded on justice and peace. Make us young people who are bold in faith, creative in service, generous in love, and faithful in bearing witness to the Gospel.
Amen!



Cevaa Activities and Youth Pole
Advent 2026