

Dec 21/25 The Invitation of Love (Isaiah 30:1-2, 15-21)

Leader's Guide

1. The sermon describes Advent as a season of waiting, longing, and feeling the ache of the world. Where have you felt that ache most strongly this season—personally or globally?

This sermon touches on shame, fear, addiction, and survival strategies. Name up front that: no one has to share more than they want to; silence is welcome; and this is a place of compassion, not fixing.

2. Isaiah names Judah's alliance with Egypt as turning back to the place of slavery for security. What are some of the "Egypt" you're most tempted to turn to when life feels painful, uncertain, or overwhelming?

Many "Egypt" began as attempts to survive pain. Affirm that reality without rushing past the cost. Help the group hold both truths: these strategies once helped, but they don't ultimately heal or free us.

3. Egypt seemed like a practical, reasonable solution at the time. Why do you think our "Egypt" often feel so sensible—or even God-approved—in the moment?

Help the group consider what it would sound like for God to respond with compassion and invitation to a different way.

4. "In returning and rest you shall be saved; in quietness and trust shall be your strength." What makes trust feel harder—or scarier—than taking control or acting quickly?

Trust is a leap – it takes the control away from us and hands it over to God, and because God's ways are bigger than ours, this can be scary.

5. Simone Weil says, "Looking is what saves us." What might it look like, practically, for you to "look at Jesus" this week—instead of looking to distraction, fear, or control?

Help the group name concrete situations and responses.

6. Where might Jesus be inviting you to stop trying to "save yourself" and instead trust Him? How could that surrender bring greater freedom?

Encourage small, honest steps – what is doable and practical in the coming days or weeks?