



# ISAIAH THE PROPHET OF ADVENT

WEDNESDAY EVENING FORUM FOR ADVENT

*The Rev. Dr. Hillary Raining*

This forum series is a collaboration of Saint Mark's Cathedral, Seattle, with Rev. Dr. Hillary Raining's The Hive community. We hope this three-part series will enrich your Advent season and serve as a preparation for the new year.

## I. WEDNESDAY FORUM: NOVEMBER 29, 6:45-8:15 P.M.

- ▶ Introduction by Rev. Hillary Raining
- ▶ **VIDEO #2:** *The Peaceable Kingdom & Trees*  
Isaiah Chapter 11
- ▶ Small Group Discussion
- ▶ Sharing
- ▶ Closing

## II. WEDNESDAY FORUM: DECEMBER 6, 6:45-8:15 P.M.

- ▶ Introduction by Canon Jennifer K. Daugherty
- ▶ **VIDEO #3:** *Coming together of Heaven & Earth*  
Isaiah Chapter 25
- ▶ Small Group Discussion
- ▶ Sharing
- ▶ Closing

## III. WEDNESDAY FORUM: DECEMBER 13, 6:45-8:15 P.M.

- ▶ Introduction by Rev. Hillary Raining
- ▶ **VIDEO #4:** *Waiting in the Wilderness*  
Isaiah Chapter 40
- ▶ Small Group Discussion
- ▶ Sharing
- ▶ Closing

**SUGGESTED PREPARATION:**

*Read Isaiah Chapter 6*

## **The Call of Isaiah, Exile & Vocation**

*The theme of waiting for the coming of the Messiah rings loud and true.*

**WATCH VIDEO #1**

available at The Hive Apiary [[thehiveapiary.com/all-courses/isaiah](http://thehiveapiary.com/all-courses/isaiah)]

*Isaiah 6:3* “Holy, holy, holy is the LORD of hosts; the whole earth is full of his glory.”

*Isaiah 6:8* Then I heard the voice of the Lord saying, “Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?” And I said, “Here I am; send me!”

**REFLECTION QUESTIONS:**

1. Do you feel a particular spiritual calling this Advent season? If so, how might you deepen your faith in contemplation and/or action in the coming months—how might you answer, “Here I am?”
2. Or as we enter the holidays, are you in the wilderness, experiencing feelings of exile, abandonment, loneliness, or loss?

**CLOSING PRAYER**

Lord, my loving Father and Mother, you have made me to know You, to love You, to serve You, and thereby to find and to fulfill myself. I know that You are in all things, and that many paths can lead me to You.



**WEDNESDAY FORUM: NOVEMBER 29**

*Isaiah Chapter 11:1–9*

## The Peaceable Kingdom & Trees

### **WATCH VIDEO #2**

available at The Hive Apiary [[thehiveapiary.com/all-courses/isaiah](http://thehiveapiary.com/all-courses/isaiah)]

*Isaiah 11:1–2* A shoot shall come out of the stump of Jesse, and a branch shall grow out of his roots. The spirit of the LORD shall be upon him.

*Isaiah 11:6, 9* The wolf shall live with the lamb, the leopard shall lie down with the kid... They will not hurt or destroy on all my holy mountain; for the earth will be full of the knowledge of the LORD.

### **DISCUSSION QUESTION:**

1. The theme of trees abounds throughout the entire Bible, both as a metaphor for connectedness and as a gift of nature's abundance—the tree of life, the family tree, the cross, olive, almond and willow trees. What comes to mind for you when you think of trees, either as a metaphor for spiritual and familial connectedness or as a gift of nature?

### **CLOSING PRAYER**

Dear Lord, we ask you to give us peace in our mind, body, soul and spirit. We want you to heal and remove everything that is causing stress, grief, and sorrow in our lives. We pray for peace for all people of the earth. Please guide our path through life.





**WEDNESDAY FORUM: DECEMBER 6**

*Isaiah Chapter 25:6–9*

## The Coming Together of Heaven & Earth

*This week we look at one of the ways Isaiah is used in the Christian tradition, and to speak to those of us who experience the grief of not having a loved one anymore during this holiday season.*

**WATCH VIDEO #3**

available at The Hive Apiary [[thehiveapiary.com/all-courses/isaiah](http://thehiveapiary.com/all-courses/isaiah)]

*Isaiah 25:6–8* On this mountain the LORD of hosts will make for all peoples a feast of rich food, a feast of well-aged wines...he will swallow up death forever. Then the Lord GOD will wipe away the tears from all faces.

*1 Cor. 15:55* Where, O death, is your victory? Where, O death, is your sting?

*Rev. 21:4–6* He will wipe every tear from their eyes, Death will be no more.... See, I am making all things new.... I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end.

**SILENT REFLECTION**

**DISCUSSION QUESTION:**

1. The Christmas season often brings both celebration and sadness to adults—heaven and earth. Thich Nhat Hanh wrote, “The wave does not need to die to become water. She is already water.” How can contemplating death help you find joy in the present and a spiritual connection?



**CLOSING PRAYER**

Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted.  
—*Matthew 5:4*

Come unto me, all you that are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light.  
—*Matthew 11:28*

**WEDNESDAY FORUM: DECEMBER 13**

*Isaiah Chapter 40:1–11*

## Waiting in the Wilderness

*Themes: The “voice in the wilderness,” as we wait for the second coming of Christ. We also look at the idea of 500-year cycles, wisdom schools, and John the Baptist’s story.*

**WATCH VIDEO #1**

available at The Hive Apiary [[thehiveapiary.com/all-courses/isaiah](http://thehiveapiary.com/all-courses/isaiah)]

*Isaiah 40:3–5* A voice cries out in the wilderness, prepare the way of the LORD.... Every valley shall be lifted up, and every mountain and hill be made low. Then the glory of the LORD shall be revealed.

**DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:**

1. While most of us may have difficulty thinking of ourselves as prophets, or putting on the mantle of Christ as baptized people, how can we as individuals help bring the kingdom of God into the present? How can we sow the seeds of a peaceable kingdom?
2. The theme of wilderness and exile run through both Isaiah and the story of John the Baptist. In our present day, increasing numbers of people are exiles—fleeing violence, war, poverty, or the increasing climate change disasters. Besides prayer, have you felt called to help others in some way?



**CLOSING PRAYER**

I wait for the LORD, my soul doth wait,  
and in his word do I hope;  
My soul waiteth for the Lord  
more than those who watch for the morning, I say,  
more than those who watch for the morning.  
Let Israel hope in the LORD;  
for with the Lord there is mercy,  
and with him is plenteous redemption.  
And he shall redeem Israel from all iniquities.

—*Psalm 130:5–8 (KJV)*