



# WEEK 1

## JESUS, GOD WITH US

### 1. Catch Up On Life:

*As a church family, we care about each other's lives: what we're celebrating, what we're mourning, what decisions we are praying through, and everything in between (1 Thessalonians 2:8, Romans 12:10, 15).*

Suggested time: 10-20 minutes

- How are you doing?
- What can you thank God for this week?
- When were you most aware of Jesus' presence this week? When were you least aware of Jesus' presence this week?
- Do you have any practical needs? (If so, please visit our [Needs](#) page)

For LifeGroup training resources check out [MidtownLifeGroups.com](https://www.midtownlifegroups.com)

### 2. Review the Mission:

*Just like God the Father sent Jesus on a mission of reconciliation for us, Jesus sends us out as ambassadors of His reconciliation. We are called to make disciples wherever we go. (John 20:21 and 2 Corinthians 5:18-20)*

Suggested time: 10-20 minutes

- **People:** Who in your life can you be building with right now? What does that look like during this season?
- **Plan:** Are there any rhythms planned (virtual or in-person) that we can invite these friends into? What spiritual conversations do you want to initiate with them soon?
- **Pray:** Let's pray for our people by name; pray for their needs, opportunities to connect, and opportunities to have spiritual conversations that help them take next steps toward Jesus.

### 3. Scripture & Sermon Discussion:

*God uses His Word to reveal Himself to us, equip us to live the good life He's designed for us, show us our sin, and strengthen us as we follow Him (2 Timothy 3:16-17, Colossians 1:9-12, and James 1:22-25).*

Suggested Time: 20-40 minutes

#### i. Scripture Discussion

Primary Passages: **Isaiah 6:1-5 and 7:14**

Read **Isaiah 6:1-5 and 7:14** out loud. Spend some time silently reflecting and journaling the following questions as a LifeGroup.

- What stands out from the passage?
- What does this passage reveal to us about God?
- What does this passage reveal to us about people?
- Share with one another what you thought, reflected, and wrote about.

For tools and resources to grow in your walk with Jesus, go to [FollowingJesusTogether.com](https://www.followingjesustogether.com)

## ii. Sermon Discussion

What stood out to you from the sermon?

Our aim for our Advent Guide is to help us grow in an abiding love for Jesus - that in our sin and brokenness we might experience Jesus' grace for us over and over again. The theme for this week is Hope. What has stood out to you from the daily devotionals so far this week?

Our spiritual practice for this week is waiting. Have any of the practices so far been particularly challenging and/or encouraging? Why is that?

During this time every year, we take 3-4 weeks to intentionally focus on growing in generosity. We reflect on how much God has given us and how we can bless others. Below are the initiatives we are rallying towards as a church family. Take some time to look over these and initiatives and sign up on our series page.



1. **Sign up to tithe** - We consider tithing a spiritual practice that helps develop a lifestyle of sacrificial generosity. We are encouraging members of our church to set up a recurring tithe because the gospel transforms us not just to be generous around the holidays, but throughout the entire year. It's also specifically how we fund and fuel all that we do as a church in our city.
2. **LifeGroups partner with an STC organization** - Due to the pandemic we're postponing our annual Serve the City Weekend to a later date; however, we want every LifeGroup to select a Serve the City organization to partner with over the next year to serve. Through LifeGroups regularly serving alongside our STC organizations year-round, we're able to sustainably love and serve the most vulnerable and marginalized in our city.

3. **Attend the Personal Finance Class** - We want to equip our church family to be spiritually healthy by stewarding the financial resources that God has entrusted to us. On Sunday, January 24, January 31, and February 7, we're hosting a class that consists of practical training to manage your finances, pay off debt, invest well, and practice biblical generosity.

4. **Give to Agape Children's Ministry** - Agape Children's Ministry is an orphan reunification ministry that seeks to reunite street children in Kenya with their biological families when possible through family rehabilitation. Their ministry serves approximately 1500 families and they are seeking to establish a new arm of their ministry in the city of Nakuru. We are seeking to raise **\$20,000** for Agape, and those funds will serve approximately 56 additional children from rescue to reintegration.

## 4. Engage the Heart:

*Jesus calls us to walk in the light, confessing our sins to God and each other. God's Spirit works through confession and community to lead us to repentance. (Romans 3:23-24, James 5:16 and 1 John 1:5-10)*

Suggested Time: 10-20 minutes

In the passage we saw Isaiah's sin exposed when he encountered God's presence. Of recent, what sin has been exposed in your heart? What were the circumstances surrounding that? (As people confess sin, make sure to remind one another of the good news Jesus offers. If need be, use the worksheet "Go-to Verses for Gospel Fluency" at [FollowingJesusTogether.com/confession](https://FollowingJesusTogether.com/confession))

**Pray:** Close your time together by praying for one another

- Pray for the Spirit to work in you as you take steps of repentance
- Pray for God to meet the needs of those in your group
- Pray for the sick and vulnerable at this time of crisis