

## Sermon Discussion

November 28, 2021

First Sunday of Advent

Isaiah 35

1. Is Advent a season you remember participating in for much of your life or is it a relatively new concept for you? What has your experience of it been like in the past?
2. We've been through a lot in this last season. Politics, the pandemic, heat dome, flooding, being distant from one another. How are you holding up? How can we pray for you? Where are you experiencing light and contentment in the midst of difficulty and darkness?
3. Isaiah 35 speaks to a community of people who have experienced a lot of hardship in exile. God gives these exiles words of promise so that they might have hope despite their situation. Read over Isaiah 35 again, what parts of the passage stick out to you? What does it make you hopeful for?
4. Can we be honest about prayer? How are you feeling about pray in this stage of your life, do you find it easy, or difficult? Have you tried different ways of praying? Who have been major influences in your life when it comes to prayer?
5. Andrew introduced the prayer of Examen as one way to practice letting the light of Jesus into our lives in what is a really difficult time. What was your experience of the examen on Sunday and have you prayed in this kind of way before?
6. Let's try praying this version of the Examen together. Have one person in your group read the following prompts on the next page, leaving plenty of room for silence in between each one.

## A Version of the Examen

Ask – Ask for light. Ask God to make it more obvious that he is there with you

Reflect – Reflect back on the last couple of days, think of the emotions and experiences you have had

Pick – Whichever emotion was the strongest from an experience, pick that one as if God was saying to you, “I’d like to be with you in that reaction”

Talk – Talk to Jesus about that emotional response or that feeling you had. Ask Jesus if he ever felt like that. Is there a story from the gospel where Jesus had a similar feeling?

Thank – Thank Jesus for being willing to show you something of his own emotion and feelings through you sharing your experience with him. Thank Jesus for drawing you closer to him.