



**WONDERFUL
COUNSELLOR**
Mighty God
Everlasting Father
**PRINCE OF
PEACE**

REFLECTIONS FOR ADVENT

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Published by World Vision Canada,
National Church Engagement
1 World Drive, Mississauga, ON L5T 2Y4

churches.worldvision.ca

With special thanks to Patricia Paddey for providing thoughtful daily reflection questions and prayers.

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Printed in Canada

Introduction

Advent.

It means a fresh beginning. A new day. A deeply cherished hope has finally arrived: a wedding day, the birth of a child, a graduation, a family reunion. Something – or someone – has come, and everything is different now, and better.

Advent is the word the Church has used for centuries to describe the coming of Jesus, the one who changes everything. Many churches welcome Christ's arrival by lighting five candles, one on each of the four Sundays before Christmas, and the fifth on Christmas day. The first four candles traditionally celebrate hope, love, joy, and peace – some of the lasting gifts Jesus brings with him, and leaves with us. The fifth candle, simply called "the Christ candle," celebrates the greatest gift, Jesus, the giver of all good gifts: the one who comes to us and never leaves us, never forsakes us.

In this Advent devotional, though, we will go back to a foundational Old Testament passage that predicts Christ's coming, Isaiah 9. And instead of the four traditional Advent themes, we will explore the four titles Isaiah uses to describe the child born to us. In this way, our focus will not be simply on the gifts Jesus brings and leaves: it will be on the gift of Jesus himself.

How to use these devotional reflections

This devotional allows for meaningful reflection each Sunday on the advent of Christ, followed by brief daily questions and prayers that consider the implications of his coming for individuals, groups and your entire church. Consider these possible uses:

- Print the complete booklet to distribute to your congregation as a way of remaining focused on Christ as a church family.
- Use for your personal reflection time in order to commune with God during this deeply significant time of year.
- Encourage your small groups to follow the daily readings as a way of growing together in community during Advent.
- Suggest that families use these daily reflections for learning and engaging with one another while preparing for Christmas.

However you decide to use this devotional guide, we pray that you and your church family are richly blessed as you encounter Jesus in new ways as our Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father and Prince of Peace.

Nevertheless, there will be no more gloom for those who were in distress. In the past he humbled the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, but in the future he will honor Galilee of the nations, by the Way of the Sea, beyond the Jordan—

The people walking in darkness
have seen a great light;
on those living in the land of deep darkness
a light has dawned.

You have enlarged the nation
and increased their joy;
they rejoice before you
as people rejoice at the harvest,
as warriors rejoice
when dividing the plunder.

For as in the day of Midian's defeat,
you have shattered
the yoke that burdens them,
the bar across their shoulders,
the rod of their oppressor.

Every warrior's boot used in battle
and every garment rolled in blood
will be destined for burning,
will be fuel for the fire.

For to us a child is born,
to us a son is given,
and the government will be on his shoulders.

And he will be called
Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God,
Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

Of the greatness of his government and peace
there will be no end.

He will reign on David's throne
and over his kingdom,
establishing and upholding it
with justice and righteousness
from that time on and forever.

The zeal of the LORD Almighty
will accomplish this.

Isaiah 9:1-7