

IN EXCELSIS DEO

ADVENT 2024

Friday, December 6

Read: Isaiah 40:6-11

Advent is traditionally used by Christians as a time to prepare for the Nativity of Christ. The name comes from the Latin word “adventus” meaning coming or arrival. One of the first mentions of the coming of our Savior is found in the book of Isaiah 40: 6-11. It was written in the 8th century BCE, making the Advent period for the first coming of Christ about 800 years long. I can just imagine how large an Advent wreath with 800 candles on it would be.

The book of Isaiah is so significant that it is referenced in the book of Acts and all of the Gospels. Some religious scholars even call it the 5th Gospel. This particular book of the Bible has always given me comfort.

I love arts and crafts and Christmas crafts are my absolute favorite. It is one of my ways to help prepare for Jesus 'birthday. This year I plan on making comfort bags and giving them to people who can use a little comfort. Maybe you would like to do the same. You can use a small bag of any type, paper, fabric or burlap. Decorate it by using green felt or construction paper and cutting it to look like grass. You can also draw it on. Add it to the lower edge of your bag's front. Draw or glue on an artificial poinsettia to the front and put the word comfort near the top edge of the bag. Inside include a printout of Isaiah 40: 6-11 as well as a copy of a playlist of songs based on Isaiah. Include three or four items your recipient might find comforting. These can be tailored for the age and likes of the recipient. They can include a snack or treat, stickers, a small toy, ornament, fluffy socks, a home baked treat or anything else, just use your imagination. The items can all be handmade or purchased. This is intended to be small gift from the heart. As you construct the bags reflect on what brings you comfort as you prepare for Christmas. You can end with the following prayer:

“Lord, show me the desert, the wasteland, within me, and let me trust that you will bring new life and build a path to you, within me.”

You can pick up an instruction sheet with everything already printed out for you.

Wendy Gilley