

Zion Lutheran Church, 15 S 4th St., Harrisburg, PA 17101

Tuesday Advent 1 Bible Study: November 28, 2021

Wait Upon the Lord with Hope

Series Theme Verse: *They who wait for the LORD shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings like eagles; they shall run and not be weary; they shall walk and not faint.*

Isaiah 40:31

Week 2 Theme Verse: *I wait for the LORD, my soul waits, and in his word I hope. Psalm 130:5*

Opening Prayer

O Lord, rend the heavens and come down. Be our strength every morning and our salvation in the night of despair. Show forth your power and might, just as you did in the days of the prophet Isaiah; through Jesus Christ, your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit—God forever. Amen.

Isaiah 40:27-31

²⁷ Why do you say, O Jacob, and speak, O Israel, “My way is hidden from the LORD, and my right is disregarded by my God”? ²⁸ Have you not known? Have you not heard? The LORD is the everlasting God, the Creator of the ends of the earth. He does not faint or grow weary; his understanding is unsearchable. ²⁹ He gives power to the faint, and to him who has no might he increases strength. ³⁰ Even youths shall faint and be weary, and young men shall fall exhausted; ³¹ but they who wait for the LORD shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings like eagles; they shall run and not be weary; they shall walk and not faint.

Romans 8:22-25

²² For we know that the whole creation has been groaning together in the pains of childbirth until now. ²³ And not only the creation, but we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies. ²⁴ For in this hope we were saved. Now hope that is seen is not hope. For who hopes for what he sees? ²⁵ But if we hope for what we do not see, we wait for it with patience.

John 1:1-5

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ² He was in the beginning with God. ³ All things were made through him, and without him was not any thing made that was made. ⁴ In him was life, and the life was the light of men. ⁵ The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.

Reflection

Isaiah 40:27-31

At this point, only those with faith to “wait for the LORD” are left in the prophet’s audience. Those looking for immediate fixes, for magical cures, are off invoking the rows of idols that seek their business. But to those few who surrender their lives to the everlasting God, the

prophet has concluding words that surpass all the cheap promises of the idol market: The one who does not faint or grow weary gives power to the faint and strengthens the powerless... The fundamental lesson that prepares the human heart for the entrance of God is the lesson of God's oneness and uniqueness. It is the lesson that cultivates out of human powerlessness not helplessness and despair but openness to the power that alone can save, God's power. It is the lesson that sweeps the universe clean of all distraction... So long as the human heart harbors other loyalties besides God, it is lost in a sea of chaos. Augustine was one who spoke from personal experience: "Thou hast made us for Thyself and our hearts are restless till they rest in Thee" (Confessions 1:1).

Interpretation: A Bible Commentary for Teaching & Preaching: Isaiah 40-66; Paul D. Hanson, John Knox Press

Romans 8:22-25

The hope we have is sure, because we already have a foretaste of its fulfillment: The Holy Spirit (Romans 8:23). The reason the Spirit is a foretaste of the consummation is simply the fact that the restoration means above all the restoration of complete communication between God and His creation, and it is the Spirit who is the power of that restored communication.

Interpretation: A Bible Commentary for Teaching & Preaching: Romans; Paul Achtemeier, John Knox Press

What does waiting upon the Lord with hope mean to you?

How does being a member of Christ's Church encourage and strengthen hope and faith?

Consider the example of Monica, mother of Augustine: Bishop of Hippo, who for years faithfully waited for and actively prayed for the reformation of her son. Through grief and tears, she continually trusted in and prayed to the Lord – never losing hope.

And now thou didst "stretch forth thy hand from above" and didst draw up my soul out of that profound darkness [of Manicheism] because my mother, thy faithful one, wept to thee on my behalf more than mothers are accustomed to weep for the bodily deaths of their children. For by the light of the faith and spirit which she received from thee, she saw that I was dead. And thou didst hear her, O Lord, thou didst hear her and despised not her tears when, pouring down, they watered the earth under her eyes in every place where she prayed. Thou didst truly hear her. (Confessions 11:19)

Closing Prayer based on Hymn

Come, thou long-expected Jesus, born to set thy people free; From our fears and sins release us, let us find our rest in thee. Israel's strength and consolation, hope of all the earth thou art; Dear desire of ev'ry nation, joy of ev'ry longing heart. Amen.