

Lessons for The Second Sunday in Advent

December 10, 2017

Psalm 85 ~ *Trusting in God's mercy shown in the past, his people await his restoration and renewal.*

Isaiah 40:1–11 ~ *God raised the hopes of His people with words of comfort and renewal.*

2 Peter 3:8–14 ~ *Since time is relative with God, we must wait patiently, as we trust God's promise.*

Mark 1:1–8 ~ *As John was baptizing, he was preparing the way for One more powerful than he.*

GATHERING THE TEXTS: Preparing Hopefully for God's Promise

To his people in exile, longing for Jerusalem, Isaiah spoke God's encouraging words of comfort and kindled hope in their hearts for a return to Zion. We know that same hope placed in God's sure promise of a new heaven and new earth prepared for us through Jesus' suffering death and victorious resurrection. He is the more powerful One for whom John was the messenger preparing the way for people to welcome Jesus in their hearts as their Savior from sin.

PRAYER BEFORE THE SERVICE: O Lord, the hopes and fears of all the years were gathered in Bethlehem the night of Jesus' birth. Comfort my daily fears with the abiding hope of the Messiah, who has come to free me from the power of sin and death. Amen.

STEWARDSHIP THOUGHT: While we wait hopefully for Christ's return, we recognize that many who don't know our Savior are filled with dread at the thought of His coming. God has given us opportunity and means to fill their hearts with the hope of redemption on the last day.

OFFERING PRAYER: For Your gifts from heaven above

We thank and praise You, Lord, today.

May these gifts we bring in love,

Fill hearts with hope for Jesus' way. Amen.

CONVICTION AND COMFORT: The dangers of our waiting are that we either become complacent and ignore the signs or anxious and lose all hope. With the Word of His constant promise, God raises our hopes in the One who is still yet to come, because we have been sought and found by the One who is more powerful even than the despair that would destroy us. This One is the Son of God and is strong to rescue us.