

12-04-22 FOR THE JOURNEY THIS WEEK

“Hope is the undaunted force that comes from the Holy Spirit, getting into our human spirits and drawing us beyond the darkness of today and toward the light of the new tomorrow. Encouraged by the marvelous things God has already done, we abide in hope for what is not yet but will surely come to be.”

- Joanna M. Adams



Isaiah 11:1-10 ✠ Romans 15:4-9a, 12-13 ✠ Matthew 3:1-12

Questions for Reflection —

- What does it mean for you to prepare a way for the Lord in this season? How do you respond to the Advent call to self-examination? In what ways does your life need to be reoriented and transformed? How do you need to realign your life so that your words and action better reflect the image of Christ? What does it look like for you to bear fruit worthy of repentance?
- What are the apparently lifeless stumps in your life? How might God be nurturing new growth from what seems dead in your life? What roots and grounds you during hard times? What helps you see signs of new life emerging in unexpected places? In what areas in the life of our congregation do you think we are most in need of something new? What old assumptions and ways of doing might need to be reexamined? How can we avoid becoming stuck in the past and instead be open to God’s new direction for us?
- What would you identify as the marvelous things God has already done in your life and in the life of our congregation? How does that give you hope for the future? In what facets of your life are you presently most in need of hope? What challenges your ability to maintain hope? What spiritual practices will help you cultivate more hope? How can you live in a way that offers hope to others? What would it look like for us as a congregation to abound in hope?

Daily Household Prayer

Merciful God, you sent your messengers to preach repentance and prepare the way for our salvation. Give us grace to heed their warnings and forsake our sins, that we may greet with joy the coming of Jesus Christ our Redeemer, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.