



Monday, December 1, 2014

READ- The Old Testament: Isaiah 40:1-11

The people of Judah were exiles from their homeland living in Babylonian captivity when the prophet Isaiah wrote these words. The hope of God's comfort and redemption of those suffering exiles reminded them that their God is all powerful and will prevail for those who are faithful.

REFLECT-

- We all experience times of suffering when we may feel that God has abandoned us. Words such as these from Isaiah can give us comfort and assurance that God is never far away and can overcome any adversity we may experience.

PRAY-

Lord, I ask for your comfort for those who are going through a time of suffering. Help them to feel your presence in a powerful way. Amen.

Tuesday, December 2, 2014

READ- The Psalter: Psalm 85:1-2, 8-13

So often in the Psalms, the writer remembers a time when God restored the people after times of trial and calls upon God to do that for them once again. Because of God's love and faithfulness to prior generations, the psalmist draws comfort and assurance that God has not abandoned us and will bring about peace and righteousness.

REFLECT-

- Whenever you are going through a time of trial and your prayers seem unanswered, the psalms can provide great comfort and assurance that God IS working and IS with us. Can you think of a time of your life when you look back that this was true?

PRAY-

Lord, help me trust you even when things are tough and I can't see the work of your hands. Thank you that you are always there for me. Amen.

Wednesday, December 3, 2014

READ- The Epistle: II Peter 3:8-15a

At the time this epistle was written, the first generation of Christians had died and believers were beginning to be skeptical about Christ's promised return. The writer reminds them that God's time is different than our concept of time and that God is patient, wanting no one to be condemned.

REFLECT-

- John Wesley encouraged those known as Methodists to live holy lives, striving to follow Christ's commandments. We sometimes associate holy living with self-righteousness. Yet humility and serving one another is the true essence of holy living. In all situations, our guide can be, "What would Jesus do?"

PRAY-

Father, help me to be intentional today about my words and actions, keeping in mind the example of Christ. Amen.

Thursday, December 4, 2014

READ- The Gospel: Mark 1:1-8

The season of Advent is about preparation and repentance. John the Baptist was a prophet who came before Jesus to prepare the people to receive him. His message was simple – to turn from their sinful ways and open their hearts for Jesus' message of God's love.

REFLECT-

- The days during Advent are time in which we should slow down in our rush to Christmas celebration and really prepare ourselves to receive the Christ child. In what aspects of your life do you need to turn around (repent) in order to be obedient to Christ?

PRAY-

O God, help me to make your priorities my priorities. Help me to live into Jesus' commands to love one another with my time and resources. Amen.

Friday, December 5, 2014

READ- Sermon Text: Luke 3:1-16

Luke connects the modern day prophet John to that great prophet of old – Isaiah – citing Isaiah's words as a predictor of John's coming. Isaiah's words of comfort to the people of Judah now ring true for people living under the tyranny of Tiberius Caesar.

REFLECT-

- In our world that is filled with evil, corruption, and sin, we too long for the "crooked roads to be made straight and the rough ways smooth". We are called as Christians to be agents of the change we long for – to do good in all the ways we can, to comfort those who are suffering, to care for those in need. As we do, the Kingdom of God draws near.

PRAY-

O God, thank you the words of your scriptures which help us remember your promises and encourage us to do your will. Amen.