

November 28, 2021

Jeremiah 29:1,4-14

First Sunday of Advent

Young people's message: Have you ever had to wait for something and it was very hard to do? I am sure that we all have had to wait for something. Either in a line or waiting for something to arrive at the front door or in the mail. Remember that good things come to those who wait. It seems like the time that we wait is so long. Like the time between birthdays and Christmas take forever to arrive when we are young. Yet those days that we are waiting for seem to come in their own sweet time. As a kid, we knew that Christmas was not too far away when the Sears Wish Book arrived in the mail. It was a catalogue that had colour pictures of toys in it. We would use it to make our list to Santa of the things we wanted for Christmas.

Does anything good come from waiting? Well actually there are many good things that do come from waiting. The first thing that comes to mind is patience. Waiting for something truly develops patience in a persons character. I remember an old saying that went like this, "Patience is found in a woman, but seldom in a man, acquire it if you can." Old sayings are great until you find the exceptions to them. This one has many. What about little girls waiting for Christmas? Don't they get anxious too? However , the challenge at the end is what is important. We all should develop patience in ourselves. Patience also creates hope within us. So that our expectation will be satisfied. If our

expectations are not met then our waiting has become a waste of time. Yet we still are working on our patience.

I remember the Simpson's Movie of 2000. I waited for it to come to town. I set an evening aside to go to the theatre and watch it. I felt that it was not as good as they had made it out to be on TV. I really felt that it was a waste of my time. Yet I was developing patience.

Waiting for Jesus's return will not be a waste of our time. All of our expectations will be blown away and greatly exceeded. That is how God has dealt with us in the past. Our waiting for Jesus's return will not be a waste of our time. That is what Advent is all about. We are waiting for Jesus's return and at the end of Advent we celebrate His birthday. WE still wait, but the waiting is more bearable when we have patience and hope. The baby Jesus is the greatest gift we receive on Christmas. It is not under our Christmas trees but in our hearts.

Adult's message: I am full of questions today. What does it mean to trust and believe in Advent? Well, to trust in Advent means that we believe in waiting. That our waiting will be filled with dreams for a better world. A world that is filled with God's justice and love that is made present and accessible to all.

Waiting shapes us and makes us who we are as Christians. However waiting is not necessarily a passive thing. We often think that it is, but it does not have to be that way. The reading this week shows us that we are a people who wait in hope. For the Christian, our hope is in the Lord who is faithful. God brought the Messiah to earth for us. Jesus was God in the flesh and the Son of God. We wait in hope that one day

very soon our Messiah will return. That is the root of Advent. As I had said earlier, waiting does not have to be a passive endeavour. As Christians we are called to join with God in His mission here on earth. We all should be working to bring about God's Kingdom here and now. Making the Spiritual kingdom a concrete reality in our time. Yet we wait with hope knowing that God is still at work down here. While we are busy waiting and working on the kingdom, Jesus 's return is the source of our hope and strength. Like the people of Judah, we too are called to be a people who wait in hope. The day is coming when Jesus the Light of the World will return. Then all things will be made new. During all of this we should also be looking for those places where the Spirit of God is at work. These are the places where we should join with the Spirit of God, work with it, wait and hope.

Advent is that meaningful time of the year when we wait for the return of the light of our world. We wait with light and in light. We mark the passing of the weeks with the lighting of a candle. We encourage one another with the words of Our Lord. John 8:12, "I am the light of the world. Those who follow me shall not walk in the darkness, but have the light of life."

Since Jesus's ascension we have always been a people who wait. We are awaiting His return with great hope and expectation. While we wait we are to be busy building a just and loving world for all. This project can only be done in the light and with the Light. It is the Light of Christ that is in all of us that makes this possible. Look for those places around you where you see the Spirit of God at work and become part of that energy. Or better yet create your own. Continue to wait with hope in your heart for the return of the Light of our world. All the

while, building the kingdom here on earth. God Bless and stay safe and warm, Pastor D