

“TAKE 10”- Worship While Away! (Sunday, December 10, 2017)

Share: On this Advent journey, we are mindful of the brokenness of the world that surrounds us.
We long for the peace that surpasses all understanding.
As we look around us, we see the hostility that exists between neighbor and nation.
As we look beside us, we see fractured relationships and unforgiving hearts.
As we look within ourselves, we confess the reconciling words we have yet to speak and restoring deeds we have yet to do.
We long for the peace that surpasses all understanding.

Read these words from a hymn today: *Comfort, Comfort Now My People
Comfort, comfort now my people; tell of peace! So says our God.
Comfort those who sit in darkness, mourning under sorrow's load.
To my people now proclaim, that my pardon waits for them!
Tell them that their sins I cover, and their warfare now is over.
For the herald's voice is crying, in the desert far and near,
Calling us to true repentance, since the reign of God is here.
O, that warning cry obey! Now prepare for God a way.
Let the valleys rise in meeting and the hills bow down in greeting.*

Read this scripture from worship: Mark 1:1-8 (*The Message*)

¹⁻³ The good news of Jesus Christ—the Message! —begins here, following to the letter the scroll of the prophet Isaiah: “Watch closely: I’m sending my preacher ahead of you; He’ll make the road smooth for you.

Thunder in the desert!

Prepare for God’s arrival!

Make the road smooth and straight!”

⁴⁻⁶ John the Baptizer appeared in the wild, preaching a baptism of life-change that leads to forgiveness of sins. People thronged to him from Judea and Jerusalem and, as they confessed their sins, were baptized by him in the Jordan River into a changed life. John wore a camel-hair habit, tied at the waist with a leather belt. He ate locusts and wild field honey.

⁷⁻⁸ As he preached he said, “The real action comes next: The star in this drama, to whom I’m a mere stagehand, will change your life. I’m baptizing you here in the river, turning your old life in for a kingdom life. His baptism—a holy baptism by the Holy Spirit—will change you from the inside out.”

Talk together, responding to these questions:

- How am I preparing the way of the Lord?
- What are the broken places of my life and world where hope is needed?
- How will I remain steadfast in hope?
- What is the beginning of God's Good News in my life?
- How will it change the way I approach this season of expectation and hope?

Pray together:

Lord, how I love this season of new beginnings, the opportunity to turn toward you and start again. Empower me to be a messenger of good news, and a leveling influence along the way, as I seek to be one with you in smoothing out the rough places I encounter in the world. Through Jesus Christ, our coming Savior, I pray. Amen.

Bless one another:

Take each person's hand and say. "God's grace is for you, God's love is upon you, God's call is within you. Be kind to yourself and others this week as a child of God."

Resources Used: *Glory to God*, The Presbyterian Hymnal
Feasting on the Word, Year A, A Worship Companion