

CCMC Weekly 53
November 29, 2016

Dear Christ Community,

In a world where college shootings and police shootings and shootings at parties are everyday occurrences, we need God more than ever. Though some may look at our cataclysmic surroundings and wonder where God is, I am more convinced than ever of the importance of faith as I lean into any sacred assurances of love. The more I think about the bad things that happen, the more I must think about the wonderful things that shouldn't be taken for granted. Isaiah 35:1-2 reads "The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad, the desert shall rejoice and blossom; like the crocus it shall blossom abundantly, and rejoice with joy and singing. The glory of Lebanon shall be given to it, the majesty of Carmel and Sharon. They shall see the glory of the LORD, the majesty of our God." This is the nature of life: the timeless cycle from emptiness to hope and healing and over again. God is. Fall into the arms of your loving Savior. Stand on his shoulders. You don't need all the answers or solutions. Just know that your faith will help you through and help you move.

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LAST SUNDAY

In the scripture from last week (Matthew 24:36-44, read it here: <https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Matthew%2024:36-44>), Jesus warns the disciples that they must be vigilant so that they are prepared for the coming of the Lord. He talks about the people of Noah's time being unprepared, and that it is hard to anticipate the coming of the Lord. Even Jesus himself doesn't quite know when it will happen. He says that we have to watch like a homeowner would watch if they knew the the hour that a thief was coming. This scripture doesn't allow us to judge thievery or carelessness, but illustrates the unexpectedness of God's coming kingdom. It is meant to snap us into attention with this talk of being taken/left behind and thieves and cataclysmic events, and make us change the way we live so that faith is foremost. The central message is that God is certainly coming, and we are here to prepare for it. And also, God is not coming only at some remote time, but comes everyday, as God is an immediate presence over and over in our lives.

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NEXT SUNDAY

Isaiah 11:1-10

A shoot shall come out from the stump of Jesse, and a branch shall grow out of his roots. The spirit of the LORD shall rest on him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel

and might, the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the LORD. His delight shall be in the fear of the LORD. He shall not judge by what his eyes see, or decide by what his ears hear; but with righteousness he shall judge the poor, and decide with equity for the meek of the earth; he shall strike the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips he shall kill the wicked. Righteousness shall be the belt around his waist, and faithfulness the belt around his loins.

The wolf shall live with the lamb, the leopard shall lie down with the kid, the calf and the lion and the fatling together, and a little child shall lead them. The cow and the bear shall graze, their young shall lie down together; and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. The nursing child shall play over the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put its hand on the adder's den.

They will not hurt or destroy on all my holy mountain; for the earth will be full of the knowledge of the LORD as the waters cover the sea. On that day the root of Jesse shall stand as a signal to the peoples; the nations shall inquire of him, and his dwelling shall be glorious.

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STUDY QUESTIONS

- Meditate on the image and symbolism of a shoot coming out of a stump.
- How do you like the idea of delighting in the great of the Lord?
- How shall the one with the spirit of the Lord judge if not by eye or ear? What will they do on earth?
- Why are all these animals who were former animals coming together in this vision?

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Have a nice week. Remember scrip orders are due and potluck is next Sunday. May the anticipatory spirit of advent tingle you this week.

Love,
Amy