

Cross of Hope Making Faith Connections Small Group Ministry Schedule

December 10, 2023

A Season of Light

Advent: Longing for the Light

Preparing

- 15 Minutes **Gathering, Hospitality, Check-in with Each Other...**
What are some ways you spend time preparing this time of year?
What is something you'd like to try, or something you miss, during Advent preparing?
- Opening Prayer Stir up our hearts, Lord God, to prepare the way of your only Son. By his coming strengthen us to serve you with purified lives; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen. (ELW p. 19)
- 45 Minutes **Discussion Questions:**
Read again Mark 1:1-8
What did you notice/caught your attention/raise a question in your hearing the story this time?
What is unique about John appearing in the *wilderness*?
What does starting with the story of John the baptizer inform us about the good news of Jesus from verse 1 ?
What connection might be made between repentance and forgiveness and the way of the Lord to come?
How can preparing include repentance?
How do we prepare for the thing that we long for?
Why is that intentional preparing important to our longing?
- Read again Isaiah 40:1-11
Context from Sundays and Seasons: *In grand, flowing, poetic lines, the prophet announces that the exile of God's people in Babylon is over. God will deliver Israel and will care for her as a shepherd cares for the sheep. This word can be trusted, because the only enduring reality in life is the word of God.*
Explore together the longing you hear in this passage.
What Advent themes do you hear in this poetry?
- Read again 2 Peter 3:8-15a
How does this passage help the community in preparing for Jesus' coming?
How might we be encouraged by this reading in our Advent preparing?
- 20 Minutes **Prayer Requests and Prayer**
- 10 Minutes **Wrap Up and Get Ready to Leave Session:** Conversation about details for the next session...place, day, time, and volunteer Host. Remember...bring a Bible, watch the Sunday worship and sermon in preparation for the group session.

Maximum amount of time...90 minutes. Time used for each component is flexible depending on the agreed upon needs of the group for that session.