

## WEEKDAY WORSHIP

December 4-10, 2017

*Worship as encounter with the living God cannot be limited to one hour per week. "Weekday Worship" invites you to extend your worship beyond the sanctuary, to hear the story of the Bible as your story, lived out each day of each week. Feedback is appreciated and should be directed to Rita Boyer.*

### BIBLE READING

This week's reading is: Isaiah 40:1–11 (<http://bible.oremus.org/?qI=377157758>).

Other readings are: Psalm 85:1–2, 8–13; 2 Peter 3:8–15a; Mark 1:1–8

The theme is: God's Way of Love Lasts Forever

Numerically the fortieth chapter of Isaiah comes after the thirty-ninth chapter; yet, they are actually 160 years apart and written in tones that are worlds apart! Most scholars agree that they were written by different people in completely different situations. Prior to chapter forty we read words of warning and judgment. If God's people do not change their ways, they will suffer judgment. Those words became reality when the Hebrew people were defeated by the Assyrian army and taken as exiles to Babylon. In chapter forty, however, the exile is over and the people are being allowed to go home; but their beloved homeland is in ruins. Rather than speak words of judgment or a well-deserved "I told you so," this chapter bears the voice of a compassionate God who offers consolation to a devastated people. Now is not the time to chastise but to console those who have been brought to their lowest point. It is also time to encourage the people to look toward the salvation that is at hand. This is a time for reconciliation, redemption, and hope, as demonstrated by the image of a massive construction project. Out of the rocky rubble God's people will build roads that lead home. All is not lost. God's love is unfailing! In the midst of visible destruction, God is doing a new thing. A new social order is at hand! As undeserving as they may be, God will protect them and care for them. They have suffered more than enough! It is time to move on in a restored relationship with a God who is both a tender and compassionate parent and an all-powerful ruler. God calls the people to prepare for this new order that God is bringing about!

### QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

*"Questions to Consider" enable you to connect your story to the biblical story. Rather than easy questions to be answered at first glance, these questions or reflections can be returned to and meditated upon throughout the week.*

**In quiet meditation, allow God to comfort you. What words does God offer?**

**What hope do those words provide?**

Continue to reflect upon the worship theme of December 3:

**How will you live in anticipation rather than nostalgia this Advent?**

Prospect Presbyterian Church, Maplewood, NJ, [www.prospectchurch.org](http://www.prospectchurch.org)

Rita Boyer, [rita@prospectchurch.org](mailto:rita@prospectchurch.org)