

## PREPARING AT HOME

November 26-December 2, 2018

*Focus reading:* Jeremiah 33:14–16 (<http://bible.oremus.org/?ql=408697273>)

*Other lectionary readings:* Psalm 25:1–10; I Thessalonians 3:9–13; Luke 21:25–36

*Theme:* Sprouting Leaves

This Sunday marks the beginning of Advent, a season of waiting, longing, promise, and preparation. As we wait for God’s promises to be fulfilled, we look for signs of new life in the midst of hopelessness. Jeremiah knew something about hopelessness. He was a prophet to the small kingdom of Judah, a land that had been passed from ruler to ruler in political games of power. Jeremiah often warned the people that there would be consequences if they were unfaithful to God. Babylon was threatening and would eventually take their land, sending the people into exile. Just as Jeremiah had warned, Jerusalem would be destroyed and the nation of Judah would be no more. But here Jeremiah offers words of consolation and hope. While under arrest in Judah, Jeremiah purchased a plot of land as a symbol of hope and a testimony to God’s faithfulness. This passage speaks of the appearance of a “righteous Branch” (vs. 15), demonstrating that even when things seem hopeless, God is able to bring about new life. Righteousness will prevail. That day is not yet. At times, there is no sign of it being anywhere near; so we wait. But we do not wait idly or with despair. We wait purposefully. We wait actively. We wait with hope. We wait for justice by making the world a more just place. We wait for peace by making our relationships and our community places of peace. Righteousness – where all is right - will prevail because we will embody righteousness. We will make things right, giving thanks for what God has done even as we wait for God to finish what we cannot do.

### ADVENT BEGINS

How will you celebrate Advent in your home? Make a wreath with four candles for the four weeks of Advent? How will you prepare for Christmas? How will you wait?

### RIGHTEOUSNESS

Righteousness is a word that is often misunderstood. Children and adults may hear it as “self-righteous” and associate it with a “holier than thou” attitude. Explain to your child that righteousness means that things are right between God and people, among people themselves, and with all of creation. What can we help to make right while we wait this Advent? Can we help someone else celebrate by donating food or toys? Can we help people stay warm by giving someone a coat? Is there someone we need to forgive or ask to forgive us?

### PRAYER

Loving God,

We wait for your promise to come true when all that is wrong is made right.

Help us to be part of your promise.

As we wait this Advent, where we are able, may we with your help make things right.

Amen.

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