

December 3, 2017

Isaiah 64:1-9
Mark 13:24-37

We begin a new liturgical year

We begin in the dark – in so many ways

In the dark, we can relate to today's readings

Jesus, in Mark, talks of “hard times” followed by the coming of Child of Humanity

Isaiah wrote: “O that you would tear open the heavens and come down”

We want peace, we want justice, we want comfort (as in “comfortable”)

What is just?

Are we willing to accept Isaiah's assessment?

“We have all become like one who is unclean, and all our righteous deeds are like a filthy cloth.”

Or, does that describe those we disagree with – politically and theologically?

We all agree – these are troubling times

What are we to do – in this darkness?

Advent begins the church year; it starts our faith journey anew, fresh

Where we always need to start a faith journey is building the foundation and Advent's foundation espouses:

- Wait
- Watch
- Keep awake

Waiting is an active verb

After Isaiah tells us, God “works for those who wait for [God].” Isaiah writes: God meets “those who gladly do right, those who remember” God in God's ways.

Waiting – active or passive – in the dark is very difficult; scary, prone to anxiety

Advent asks us, challenges us –

- Who are you waiting for?

Remember Isaiah: God “works for those who wait for [God].”

In passive waiting, in prayer and meditation, waiting for God is easy, it is our focus

But active waiting? When we “gladly do right” waiting?

- Are we waiting for God?

The small light in darkness begins with us
waiting for God, looking for God in others

This can be easy: Looking for God in ...

- Those we bring mittens and hats to
- Those we bring food to
- Those we visit

Are we looking for God in those we disagree
with politically and theologically?

Not so easy

But, I am finding as I open myself to looking
for God in those I disagree with, I come to
the conversation with more respect and
expectation

And, even though the darkness is still there,
there is also a glimmer of light, a glimmer of
hope.

I am not asking you to give up your political or
theological position

I am only asking you to hold as possible that
those you vehemently disagree with might
also be working out of love of neighbor as
well

In our prayer life and in our interactions with
the world around us, let us strive to wait
with hope; strive to wait for God, by looking
for God in the world all around us

I promise, such waiting will prepare us for the
next light of Advent, a chance to double the
light in darkness, the light of peace.

May God give us the desire and courage to
actively wait with hope, each and every day.

Amen.