

Weekly Study Guide

The week of November 29, 2015

Wish to view the message again? Go to vimeo.com/flcwb. Will you be out of town soon? Watch online at livestream.com/flcwb.

Wish to ask Pastor Angie a question about today's message? Contact her at 651.429.5349 x208 or away@flcwb.org.

Daily Readings

Monday	Psalm 121	Tuesday	Isaiah 40:1-11	Wednesday	Luke 3:2-6
Thursday	Matthew 25:1-13	Friday	Luke 1:26-38	Saturday	Luke 1:39-56

My notes on this week's readings...

Next Week in Worship

Next week's message: *Home is a Who*

Next week's readings: Luke 15, Mark 3:31-35, Isaiah 64:1-12

In this season leading up to Christmas, there is always a lot of talk about 'home', but the home we're really looking for is not an earthly place, but a person. Our Home is found in the love of God for us. What does it mean for our earthly living when our true home is found only in relationship with the Lord who is our eternal home?

first lutheran church

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Group Discussion

Connect	<p>If you are going on a journey, what kinds of preparations do you need to make? If you are preparing to receive a guest into your home, how are your preparations different?</p>
Learn	<p>In the Old Testament book of Isaiah, the people had been in exile and were waiting for help from the Lord. This passage casts hope into their situation. Read Isaiah 40:1-5.</p> <p>What 'hills and valleys' do you think had been in their way keeping them from seeing what they needed? What is the source of hope in this passage? (Why do they now have cause to hope?)</p> <p>Eventually, the people did return home– but before that could happen, they first needed to be re-connected to the power of their God, who would open the way to lead them there. Once they had returned home, however, it wasn't long before other forces: money, power, politics of the Roman/Jewish world, began to separate people from their God even while they were technically 'home'. People began to look for the Messiah to make things right again.</p> <p>Read Malachi 3:1. Who do you think this prophesy is talking about? Who is the 'messenger' sent ahead? Who is the "Lord you are seeking" who brings the covenant?</p> <p>In Luke 3:2-6, Luke brings up this passage from Isaiah 40 once again, in the context of John the Baptist. Once more, for God's people to be brought 'home' to him, they needed first to be connected to His power to help them do so. Once again, there were some mountains and valleys to acknowledge. Why do you think God chose John, the son of a priest, to be this messenger?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Why do you think this sign of repentance happened outside the temple?• Why do you think it is important to prepare one's heart to receive something from God? <p>Once more, God was the one coming to meet them– but this time, in Jesus, he would come in the flesh to BECOME the WAY to reconnect us to himself forever. What mountains and valleys tend to get in your way of seeing him? What things help you prepare to receive the love, power, and promise that Jesus came to bring you– to find your home in his love?</p>
Apply	<p>Preparing for a journey is different than preparing to receive those who are coming to see you! Knowing that our God comes to us, in Jesus, how do we prepare to receive what he has to give us this season? What practice can you begin as your tradition?</p>
Pray	<p>Pray for all those who travel this season and for those who have nowhere to travel to–no family waiting. Pray that they, too, can know their true 'home' in Jesus' love this season.</p>