

**Anticipation
Advent 2011
Sunday Nov. 27, 2011**

"And God said, 'Let there be lights in the vault of the sky to separate the day from the night, and let them serve as signs to mark seasons and days and years,'" (Genesis 1:14 TNIV)

I. _____

- Sound can be a distraction
- Sound can be a rhythm

II. _____

- Sound is intimately related to Time
- Breaking up our time creates space where we can meet with God
- The Scriptures give us Rhythm

III. _____

- A SEASON where we Anticipate the birth of Jesus
- Advent is the moment before the moment

Advent Covenant

I _____, Hereby do solemnly swear to not lose the plot this Christmas season. I will not worry, complain, or stress over gift giving, traffic, parties, or generally annoying busyness.

In the season of Advent I'm slowing down. I will be still, awake, and aware of the divine mystery that looks so common and so ordinary, yet is so wondrously present.

Sermon Notes:

Here are the verses for next week

Psalm 85: 1-2, 8-13

Isaiah 40: 1-11

Mark 1: 1-8

2 Peter 3: 8-15

1. **Read Psalm 80:1-7, 17-19 and Isaiah 64:1-9.** As we work our way into Advent, it is tempting for us to see Jesus as we imagine him at his birth: perfect, glorious and beautiful, but also sweet, fragile, and powerless. Isaiah's prophecy is critical here because it reminds us that even the most faithful among us falls short in the face of the fullness of God's glory. As we approach Advent (and Christmas), are we really willing to let ourselves be God's clay? Take a minute and really ask yourself that question.
2. What are the awesome deeds God has done in your life this year? Are they awesome enough to encourage you to give up a little bit more of yourself to God? Why or why not?
3. Do you expect mistakes in judgment from people close to you? Do you think they expect the same from you?
4. What should our reaction be when such mistakes are made?
5. Assuming we allow ourselves to be "molded" (as in clay – Isaiah 64:8), how do we know who's voice to follow?
6. **Read 1 Corinthians 1:3-9.** Have you ever "eagerly waited" for something? What was it? Was it worth the wait? Why or why not?
7. Why do you think "waiting" is such a key component of the Advent/Christmas story? It seems delayed gratification is something God values...why?
8. **Read mark 13:24-37.** When we pray to God as Jesus taught, "your kingdom come," do we really mean it? Do we really expect it? Do we really want it?
9. What do you think Jesus means when he speaks about the "kingdom of God"? Take a look at **Luke 4:16-21** and **Luke 7:18-23.** When and where and how have you seen these types of signs of God's kingdom in the circumstances of your own life and the circumstances of our world?
10. What makes it difficult to see signs of God's kingdom in our lives and our world? Why is it often difficult to believe that "the kingdom of God has come near"?
11. How do we, individually and together, represent to others the signs of God's kingdom, the signs of it's nearness?
12. How can we pray for you this week?