

## **What to Expect When You're Not Expecting**

November 27 - December 24, 2022

*“But about that day and hour no one knows” – Matthew 24:36*

During Advent we await the coming of new life. But how do we prepare for this new, unexpected change in our lives? We nurture ourselves and our relationships. We ask questions, open to whatever answers come. We examine who we and the world around us are and what needs to change for life to flourish. We try to be ready for the surprises to come.

### **November 27 – Should I be expecting?**

*“But about that day and hour no one knows” – Matthew 24:36*

Isaiah 2:1-5; Matthew 24:36-44

How can we be ready for something that we're going to be surprised by? What planning can we do to be ready for whatever God is bringing? We can learn and share God's ways. We can dream with God of what might be. We can be in community, looking out for one another, creating relationships, growing the beginnings of the kingdom right here and now.

### **December 4 – Your expectant lifestyle**

*“for the earth will be full of the knowledge of the LORD” – Isaiah 11:9*

Isaiah 11:1-10; Matthew 3:1-12

When we come before God, confessing and asking for redemption, what are we hoping for? Are we asking for the world to be changed or to be changed ourselves? John the Baptist challenges his hearers to bear fruit worthy of repentance, to seek new life. To live as one striving to repair relationships, even the most fraught, a life embodying the unexpected nature of God's kingdom.

## **December 11 – Is it Time?**

*“Are you the one who is to come, or are we to wait for another?” – Matthew 11:4*

Isaiah 35:1-10; Matthew 11:2-11

We are doing our best to be ready for this new life, but still not sure what we're expecting. How do we hope for and rejoice in that which we can't see and know? John the Baptist asks if Jesus is the one and the answer is, look around. See how lives and communities are healed and restored. Let us celebrate. Rejoice and be ready, for whatever is coming.

## **December 18 – In This Together**

*“Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid” – Matthew 1:20*

Isaiah 7:10-16; Matthew 1:18-25

When everything we anticipated changes, when life suddenly looks different than we ever imagined, how would God have us react? In love. When we aren't sure we can face what is coming, when we think we know the way but wish we didn't, we remember that 'God with us' is coming. That is the promise. If we respond in love of God and love of one another how can we fail to be ready for the coming new life?

## **December 24 – Ready or Not**

*“to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah.” – Luke 2:11*

Can anyone truly be ready for a new birth, for new life? We plan and prepare. We get everything ready and, still, we are surprised. This new life that God gives is more than we imagined. More complicated and more beautiful. More confusing and more miraculous. Welcome, God with us.