

The background of the entire slide is a photograph of several lit candles. The candles are of various heights and are arranged in a way that creates a warm, glowing atmosphere. The light from the candles is soft and yellow, contrasting with the dark background. The candles are slightly out of focus, giving a sense of depth.

Advent - Christmas 2014

Oh, that you would
reveal your mystery

A CMF Worship Series

Advent One: Hope Renewed

Pastor David Flowers

“Faith is the confidence that what we hope for will actually happen; it gives us assurance about things we cannot see.”

Hebrews 11:1 NLT

“Faith, for Hebrews, is always closely linked to hope. Faith is looking at God and trusting him for everything, while hope is looking at the future and trusting God for it.”

N.T. Wright, *Hebrews for Everyone*, pg.128

Micah 7:1-3 NLT

¹ How miserable I am!

I feel like the fruit picker after the harvest
who can find nothing to eat.

Not a cluster of grapes or a single early fig
can be found to satisfy my hunger.

² The godly people have all disappeared;
not one honest person is left on the earth.

They are all murderers,
setting traps even for their own brothers.

³ Both their hands are equally skilled at doing evil!
Officials and judges alike demand bribes.

The people with influence get what they want,
and together they scheme to twist justice.

Micah 7:4-6 NLT

- ⁴ Even the best of them is like a brier;
the most honest is as dangerous as a hedge of thorns.
But your judgment day is coming swiftly now.
Your time of punishment is here, a time of confusion.
- ⁵ Don't trust anyone—
not your best friend or even your wife!
- ⁶ For the son despises his father.
The daughter defies her mother.
The daughter-in-law defies her mother-in-law.
Your enemies are right in your own household!

“But as for me, I watch in hope for the LORD,
I wait for God my Savior;
my God will hear me.”

Micah 7:7 NIV

Luke 1:46-55 NIV – “Mary’s Song”

“My soul glorifies the Lord and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior, for he has been mindful of the humble state of his servant. From now on all generations will call me blessed, for the Mighty One has done great things for me—holy is his name.

His mercy extends to those who fear him, from generation to generation. He has performed mighty deeds with his arm; he has scattered those who are proud in their inmost thoughts. He has brought down rulers from their thrones but has lifted up the humble.

He has filled the hungry with good things but has sent the rich away empty. He has helped his servant Israel, remembering to be merciful to Abraham and his descendants forever, just as he promised our ancestors.”

Isaiah 42:1-4 NLT

¹“Look at my servant [Jesus], whom I strengthen.

He is my chosen one, who pleases me.

I have put my Spirit upon him.

He will bring justice to the nations.

² He will not shout

or raise his voice in public.

³ He will not crush the weakest reed

or put out a flickering candle.

He will bring justice to all who have been wronged.

⁴ He will not falter or lose heart

until justice prevails throughout the earth.

Even distant lands beyond the sea will wait for his instruction.”

1 Peter 1:3-5 NIV

³ Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In his great mercy he has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, ⁴ and into an inheritance that can never perish, spoil or fade. This inheritance is kept in heaven for you, ⁵ who through faith are shielded by God's power until the coming of the salvation that is ready to be revealed in the last time.

1 Peter 1:6-9 NIV

⁶ In all this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while you may have had to suffer grief in all kinds of trials. ⁷ These have come so that the proven genuineness of your faith—of greater worth than gold, which perishes even though refined by fire—may result in praise, glory and honor when Jesus Christ is revealed. ⁸ Though you have not seen him, you love him; and even though you do not see him now, you believe in him and are filled with an inexpressible and glorious joy, ⁹ for you are receiving the end result of your faith, the salvation of your souls.

Paul, Romans 5:1-2 NLT

¹ Therefore, since we have been made right in God's sight by faith, we have peace with God because of what Jesus Christ our Lord has done for us. ² Because of our faith, Christ has brought us into this place of undeserved privilege where we now stand, and we confidently and joyfully look forward to sharing God's glory.

Romans 5:3-5 NLT

³ We can rejoice, too, when we run into problems and trials, for we know that they help us develop endurance.

⁴ And endurance develops strength of character, and character strengthens our confident hope of salvation.

⁵ And this hope will not lead to disappointment. For we know how dearly God loves us, because he has given us the Holy Spirit to fill our hearts with his love.

Paul, Romans 8:15-17 NLT

¹⁵ So you have not received a spirit that makes you fearful slaves. Instead, you received God's Spirit when he adopted you as his own children. Now we call him, "Abba, Father." ¹⁶ For his Spirit joins with our spirit to affirm that we are God's children. ¹⁷ And since we are his children, we are his heirs. In fact, together with Christ we are heirs of God's glory. But if we are to share his glory, we must also share his suffering.

Romans 8:18-22 NLT

¹⁸ Yet what we suffer now is nothing compared to the glory he will reveal to us later. ¹⁹ For all creation is waiting eagerly for that future day when God will reveal who his children really are. ²⁰ Against its will, all creation was subjected to God's curse. But with eager hope, ²¹ the creation looks forward to the day when it will join God's children in glorious freedom from death and decay. ²² For we know that all creation has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time.

Romans 8:23-25 NLT

²³ And we believers also groan, even though we have the Holy Spirit within us as a foretaste of future glory, for we long for our bodies to be released from sin and suffering. We, too, wait with eager hope for the day when God will give us our full rights as his adopted children, including the new bodies he has promised us.

²⁴ We were given this hope when we were saved. (If we already have something, we don't need to hope for it.

²⁵ But if we look forward to something we don't yet have, we must wait patiently and confidently.)

Romans 8:26-28 NLT

²⁶ And the Holy Spirit helps us in our weakness. For example, we don't know what God wants us to pray for. But the Holy Spirit prays for us with groanings that cannot be expressed in words. ²⁷ And the Father who knows all hearts knows what the Spirit is saying, for the Spirit pleads for us believers in harmony with God's own will. ²⁸ And we know that God causes everything to work together for the good of those who love God and are called according to his purpose for them.

Paul, 1 Timothy 4:8-10 NLT

⁸ “Physical training is good, but training for godliness is much better, promising benefits in this life and in the life to come.” ⁹ This is a trustworthy saying, and everyone should accept it. ¹⁰ This is why we work hard and continue to struggle, for our hope is in the living God, who is the Savior of all people and particularly of all believers.

“Such things [for building others up] were written in the Scriptures long ago to teach us. And the Scriptures give us hope and encouragement as we wait patiently for God’s promises to be fulfilled.”

Paul, Romans 15:4 NLT

Hope Renewed in Christ & the Scriptures

The Ultimate Aim of Advent

- We are invited into God's story revealed in Scripture; from creation, chaos, covenant, cross, to Kingdom community
- The authority of Scripture comes from recognizing the Spirit's involvement in the community, past & present
- Our trust is in the living God revealed in Jesus, our hope is rooted in the promise of new birth—future resurrection
- The coming (advent) of Christ is the in-breaking, and eventually the consummation, of God's Kingdom on earth
- The season of Advent is an invitation into the redemptive story of creation—hope renewed in Christ & Scripture

“Three things will last forever—faith, hope, and love—
and the greatest of these is love.”

Paul, 1 Corinthians 13:13 NLT

Hebrews 10:23-25 NIV

²³ Let us hold unswervingly to the hope we profess, for he who promised is faithful. ²⁴ And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, ²⁵ not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching.

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Sermon audio & slides in PDF can be downloaded at:
www.christiansburgmennonite.org