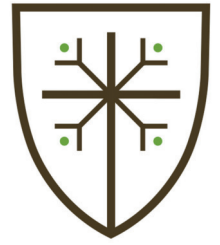


Life in Between Two Advents

SERMON NOTES



December 17, 2023

SERMON INFO

TITLE

"Exile Community"

PREACHER

Rev. Josh Keller

TEXTS

Isaiah 61:1-4

1 Peter 4:7-11

Mark 13:32-37

DISCUSSION QUESTION

1. Where do you see yourself falling asleep and becoming distracted instead of growing as "oaks of righteousness?"

NOTE - Due to the holidays, there will be no sermon discussion guide for next Sunday, December 24 or the following Sunday, December 31.

SERMON IN SUMMARY

On this third Sunday of Advent, Josh Keller continued our series on the book of 1 Peter talking about the exile community and what characterizes that community.

Oaks of Righteousness

The first characteristic Josh spoke of was that the exile community is meant to become "oaks of righteousness." This is a phrase used in Isaiah 61 about Jesus' first advent, and quoted by Jesus in the gospel of Luke. Jesus is sent to bring good news, proclaim liberty to the captives, and restore righteousness and a right relationship with God. And why? That those who receive all these good things may be called "oaks of righteousness." We are planted by the Lord in order to grow, shelter, beautify, multiply, and protect goodness and righteousness, to help resurrect the good things that are dying.

Sin is always destructive and disabling. But righteousness is always going out, creating new life for others, for many generations. Those who are oaks of righteousness are creating something that lasts for others. They are planted by the Lord. You are planted by the Lord. God put you in this community, this church, in order that you might grow into an oak of righteousness. Are you growing in that way or are you asleep and distracted?

Awake and A-Work

The church has a job to do between the two advents of Christ. Peter says that the end of all things is at hand and we must be awake, self-controlled, sober-minded, and ready for spiritual action. We've all been given a gift from God and we are meant to steward it for the sake of others. If you are united to Christ by baptism, your words and deeds participate in the work of Christ through the Holy Spirit.

This is how we become oaks of righteousness – by building, repairing, and sheltering what has been destroyed, expanding the goodness of Jesus Christ between the advents.