

TAKING IT HOME

10. What might you do to improve your ability to wait upon the Lord?

11. Who do you know that is waiting for answers and could use your support? How might you support them?

13. How could Advent be a more important season of “waiting” for you this year? Are you expecting God to show up?

PRAYER GUIDE

Praise & Thanksgiving:

For all the blessings God has given our church this year
Carol Kendall’s grandson Devin-no surgery needed on broken arm

Pray for healing:

Sandy Wolf-recovery from knee surgery
Jim Vander Pas
Fort Hood families as they bury their loved ones this week

Pray for:

Robert Pagán leaving to begin Senior Executive Training in Baltimore
Night in Bethlehem
People suffering from hunger and poverty in our nation and the world

Sugar River United Methodist Church

SERMON OUTLINE for Sunday, November 29, 2009

First Sunday in Advent: The Stars of Bethlehem Waiting on God

Text: Luke 1:8-14

Pastor Gary Holmes

1. Waiting as a Child

The season of Advent

2. Waiting as an Adult

The seasons of struggle to seasons of hope
Psalm 27:14, Isaiah 64:4, Isaiah 40:31

3. The Story of Bethlehem’s Stars: Zechariah and Elizabeth

Waiting and resignation

Unexpected Joy

Can God be trusted?

4. How do I wait?

“Do not be afraid, thy prayer is heard”

GROWTH GUIDE – Sugar River UMC

For the week of November 29, 2009

This is our last week for our scheduled Growth Groups until next year. Please take time to celebrate the new relationships and discuss your plans for the Winter Session (Week of January 10 – week of March 14, 2010).

GETTING TO KNOW YOU

1. What memory as a child do you have of waiting for Christmas to arrive?
2. What are the most common things and situations in life that we are often waiting for?
3. What event do you remember having a difficult time waiting for? Why was it hard to wait?

DIGGING DEEPER

Luke 1:8-14 (New International Version)

8Once when Zechariah's division was on duty and he was serving as priest before God, **9**he was chosen by lot, according to the custom of the priesthood, to go into the temple of the Lord and burn incense. **10**And when the time for the burning of incense came, all the assembled worshipers were praying outside. **11**Then an angel of the Lord appeared to him, standing at the right side of the altar of incense. **12**When Zechariah saw him, he was startled and was gripped with fear. **13**But the angel said to him: "Do not be afraid, Zechariah; your prayer has been heard. Your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you are to give him the name John. **14**He will be a joy and delight to you, and many will rejoice

because of his birth,

4. From what you learned about Zechariah and his wife Elizabeth (read 1:5-7) what stands out?
5. Why was Zechariah so surprised that God showed up through the angel Gabriel? Do we expect God to show up in worship?
6. If an angel of the Lord showed up in your life, would you be afraid? What would you like to hear the angel say to you?

Isaiah 40:31 (New American Standard Bible)

31Yet those who wait for the LORD Will gain new strength; They will mount up with wings like eagles, They will run and not get tired, They will walk and not become weary.

7. Do you get strength when you wait upon the Lord? Does this text in Isaiah offer you strength and encouragement?
8. Why is waiting important to our spiritual lives?
9. Other scriptures to read: Psalm 27:14, Isaiah 64:4. If we don't wait upon the Lord, and the Lord's timing, what are our options? How do we actively wait? (Hint: Connect, Grow, and Serve)

