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WAITING — A BLESSING

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Sometimes it seems we spend half our time waiting. Some are small waits—waiting our turn at something, waiting in the checkout line at the grocery store, waiting for a traffic light to change. Some waits are bigger, more momentous it seems to us—waiting to be “old enough,” waiting for the results of a medical test or waiting for the Lord to call us home. For what are you waiting? How does such waiting “season” you for God’s service? Does the Lord have a purpose for our waiting? What have you learned during the waiting times of your life?

The Jews were waiting for the Messiah. They waited through many generations. Soon after this Fall edition of *Tapestry* is in your hands we will begin Advent—our time of waiting for, of anticipating, the Saviour’s birth. How do you wait? What, during Advent, helps your family anticipate Christ’s birth at Christmas?

Read Psalm 27. King David begins this Psalm with his statement of faith in verse one. Then he speaks about the dangers he is facing from which he is waiting for God to deliver him. List all the dangers David sees around him; count all the attributes of God David recognizes and relies on and take note of the things David asks for while he is waiting. These are the things leading David to direct and encourage us to “Wait for the Lord; be strong and take heart and wait for the Lord” (verse 14). As we can see, waiting is framed by confidence in the goodness of God which will be seen and experienced in due time. Are you waiting for God to deliver you from some danger, frustration or difficulty? Which is more prominent in your waiting; fear or trust in the Lord? What can you count on to support and encourage you while waiting?

Read Psalm 33. In verses 1-3 we are told to “sing joyfully to the Lord” and “praise the Lord.” Verses 4-19 list reasons why we need to sing and praise the Lord. What are all those reasons? Finally in verse 20, we are told that *we wait in hope for the Lord, He is our help and shield.* How do all those reasons listed in verses 4-19 guide and encourage us to be able to *wait in hope for the Lord?* In verse 21 we are once again turned to focus on God and in verse 22 we pray that “God’s unfailing love rests upon us.” How does this Psalm help us in our times of waiting? Who do we need to focus on while we are waiting; ourselves or our Lord?

Read and explore **Psalms 37, 38 and 119:81–88** and note what surrounds our waiting.

Read Proverbs 20:22. What is the great danger we are tempted with when we are hurt by someone?

Read Romans 12:17–21 for things to do while we are waiting for relief for the hurt and pain we have suffered.

Read Acts 17:10–34. St. Paul, by his actions, emphasizes a principle to follow that is most helpful while we are waiting for something or someone. What is that principle? Make a list to keep handy of alternate things you can do when you have to wait for someone to come or finish their tasks, or while you are waiting for the Lord to act.

Read Romans 8:22–28. Waiting can be most difficult unless we rely on encouragement from the Lord. What facts are listed here that strengthen our resolve while waiting for the Lord to rescue us from the trials and tribulations of living in this fallen world? **Read 1 Corinthians 1:4–9** and list the facts recorded here that strengthen us while waiting.

Read Luke 2:21–38. Since Advent is a time of waiting for our Lord to appear, where was Simeon while he was waiting for the “consolation of Israel?” Where was Anna and what was she doing during a most difficult time in her life? Discuss and share how we in our congregations and in our societies can support and encourage each other in all our waiting.

Waiting is a regular feature in our lives and sometimes it can be a time of growing frustration and anxiety. How blessed we are that our Creator and Redeemer is well aware of this element of our lives and has already provided plans of action for us to follow while we wait. May we be blessed with patience and perseverance as we wait and may we bring blessings and hope to everyone around us as we act on the Lord’s directions while waiting for all our remaining Christmases and days of our lives here on earth.