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# SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE

**December 1-2**

**“The Two Faces of Expectation”**

**By Rev. Keith Herron**

## What Is This?

This brief guide is intended for use individually, or in small groups. It's your chance to dive deeper into the issues raised in the weekend sermon and to connect a Biblical story with your daily life.

## Revisit the Text

Jeremiah 33:14-16 & Luke 21:25-36; <https://bit.ly/2EdNr0O>

## Big Ideas Raised

- The feeling of expectation can be a powerful thing. Maybe the coming of Christmas was an experience of intense expectation for you when you were a child. Now it's that with a mix of anxiety. Expectation can force new directions or create new habits. It can keep us steady when everything else is flying off into scattered orbits. Or, it can take the form of the expectation of relief or the hope of healing. Perhaps it's simply the expectation God will intervene in your life, making a way that did not exist because of your own efforts. There are two Scriptures for us to hear from this morning and so it's likely there are two faces of expectation, each scripture providing a different view of the expectation that God will do something in the world.
- When Jesus put on the mantle of prophecy, he turned to Jeremiah for inspiration and drew upon Jeremiah's prophetic imagery in his words. These two passages, separated by centuries of time and circumstance, walk hand-in-hand seeing beyond the particulars of this world, both sensing God at work birthing something extraordinary beyond the present moment. Jeremiah's message, however, was spoken under the shadow of oppression and it's a word we have to hear as though we're dispossessed slaves living under the control of others who control every aspect of our lives.

## Questions Meant to Dig Deeper

- How do you perceive the experience of expectation? Do you embrace it as a positive thing or do you see it as a negative experience?
- Jesus looked over the horizon of time and saw another day coming. For many, that day is auspicious, while for others it is filled with joy. How do you experience the promise of another day such as implied by Jesus' teachings?
- Expectation in Advent points us forward to the future, not pointing us to the past to Jesus' birth. Can Advent shift our thinking to where we're headed, not where we've been?

## Revisit the Sermon

For a recording or a manuscript of this weekend's sermon, please visit:

<https://www.stlucasucc.org/sermons-resources>