

On the Journey

An Advent Journey Through the Vision of The Prophet Isaiah

Most people today don't know very much about the Old Testament Prophets. We generally find their writings difficult to understand. There are other parts of the Bible we find much easier to read, and more to our liking, and more relevant to our lives. The prophets were eccentric people for sure, and they frequently declared messages of judgment, which we are not very comfortable with. And yet, the prophets are tremendously important because they brought messages from God, messages that people needed to hear, even if those messages were not always very popular, and they generally were not.

Isaiah was one of those Prophets. He is considered the greatest of the "writing prophets," and perhaps the most important of the prophets, because of the vision God gave to him. This vision is quite long and at times difficult to read, but it is hugely important as it reveals the work of God in redeeming the world from sin.

Some have seen in Isaiah's prophecy a miniature Bible in the Old Testament. The Bible has 66 books, Isaiah's prophecy has 66 chapters. The Bible is divided into two parts, the Old Testament with 39 books, and the New Testament with 27 Books. Isaiah's prophecy is divided into two very distinct sections, the first 39 chapters focuses on God's judgement of sin, and the last 27 chapters proclaims salvation and the redemption of the world. The New Testament reveals Jesus, *The Messiah*, who came into the world as the savior of the world. The second section of Isaiah introduces The Servant, *The Messiah*, who will come into the world and will be the savior of the world. Isaiah 53 gives us a picture of the Messiah sacrificing himself for sinners, dying as their substitute, bearing their sins, then rising to life again, a

picture we find fulfilled in the Gospels six hundred years later. This chapter (53) is the very center of the second section of Isaiah (chapters 40-66), and is the central theme of Isaiah's prophecy, just as Jesus' sacrifice, death, and resurrection is the central theme of the New Testament.

In the first half of Isaiah's prophecy, God leaves no stone unturned in



DECEMBER 1, 2020

BIRTHDAYS

Jerry Beasley	12/2
Shena Yoder	12/5
Sara Weaver	12/8
Theo Outman	12/8
Levi Mast	12/13
Bob Pletcher	12/13
Betty Birky	12/17
Curt Troyer	12/19
Bobbie J. Werker	12/21
Loretta Troyer	12/24

First Mennonite Church
PO Box 508
Middlebury IN 46540
574-825-5135

*Our mission is to extend
grace, build peace, and
share love within & beyond
our faith community*

Worship Service
Sunday 9:00 am

Office Hours

Pastor Phil
Tuesday 9:30a—1:30p
Thursday 1:00p—6:00p

Business Office
Monday and Tuesday
8:00a—5:00p
and Fridays by chance

The church office is closed on
Wednesdays

calling out sin and judging it. This part of the vision is the part that is not so easy to read. We have come to see God as a God of Love who forgives sin, not as a God who holds the world accountable for its participation in sin and its promotion of sin. But judgement, too, is a part of the work of God, and an important element of salvation. God will hold the nations and the peoples of the earth accountable for their sin. Sin has to be rooted out of creation for the New Creation to come, or it will be the same old story all over again, and nothing will have changed. There is no redemption apart from dealing with sin.

God has declared that He will redeem the world time when the earth will be cleansed of sin, and the earth will again return to a state of paradise. And that work of redemption will be brought about through the work of God's Messiah, the Redeemer, the savior of the world.

This year, during Advent, we are going to take a look at Isaiah's vision to see what God showed Isaiah about the Messiah who is coming to save the world. We want to notice the work the Messiah will do to take creation back from Satan's captivity, and restore creation to what God created it to be. What did Isaiah see in his vision about Jesus, the Messiah, the Savior of the world? Come, join with us on this journey as we explore Isaiah's vision of God taking the earth back and cleansing the earth of sin and corruption, and doing this through the work of Jesus the Messiah.

Written by Philip Yoder

12/2020

Worship

Focus Statement: Much of what we call hope today is simply wishful thinking. There is little or no certainty associated with it, we simply wish for something and hope that it will materialize. When the Bible speaks of hope, it means something quite different. It is a certainty of

something that has not yet materialized. It is certain because God promised it, and it is based on the power and authority and word of God, not on probability. It is certain, even if it seems humanly impossible. Isaiah uses two examples to illustrate the hopelessness that exists in the world. One is death, and the other is the lack of harmony in nature. Both of these have been a part of human experience for nearly as long as humans have inhabited the earth. To us, these are hopeless conditions, and can't be fixed apart from an intervention from God. And in

Isaiah's vision, they are fixed when the Messiah appears and begins His reign.

Consequently, for those who have pushed God out of their world, there is no hope, only despair. But for people of faith, there is hope! The world will never find real and lasting hope because the world is looking for hope in all the wrong places.

Did you notice last week—God gave us a natural spotlight on the big manger on stage at the end of the sermon! Even HE is watching with anticipation!

Sermon Title: "MESSIAH – Will Bring Hope to the World "

Text: Isaiah 11:1-10

New Testament Fulfillment:

Matthew 1:1,6, John 1:32-33, Revelation 19:15

Discipling

Sign up is closed for **"C" Groups!** If you signed up, someone will be contacting you after Thanksgiving with details about a meeting!

Are you missing the content of the Sunday School Quarterlies while we are not having regular Sunday School meetings? We do still have the **Salt & Light books** available in both regular and large print! We have laid out the Fall and Winter edition in the library on the bookshelf straight in from the door. Grab a copy. If you are interested in the Summer 2020 edition, just ask Betty Lou to get you one out of storage!

If you would be willing to take a meal to Jim & Arlene Schrock, please call Jim at 574-370-5795 to arrange a time.

Calendar

12/2	9:00 am	Mom's in Prayer
12/3	6:30 pm	Board Meeting
12/4	6:30 pm	Ladies Night In
12/6	9:00 am	Phil Preaching
12/7		Health Department
12/7	5:00 pm	Preschool Advisory
12/7	6:30 pm	Worship Comm (Zoom)
12/8	6:00	Community Life Comm
12/9	9:00 am	Mom's in Prayer
12/13		Fellowship Hall Reserved
12/14		Betty Lou out of office
12/15	12 –6 pm	Red Cross Blood Drive
12/16	9:00 am	Mom's in Prayer
12/16	6:30 pm	Administration Commission

All Calendar Events are subject to change

SUNDAY WORSHIP - 9:00 AM

(There will be no printed bulletins & Please DO NOT sign the attendance sheets)

Call to Worship
Worship Songs
Sermon
Congregational Sharing and Prayer
Song
Sending Prayer
Dismissal

You can now join in the live stream of Sunday sermons by clicking onto You Tube, then typing in FMC INDIANA in the search box. We begin at 9:00 AM on Sunday mornings

All newsletter submissions need to be in to the church office by noon on Monday.

Administration

Stewardship Report for November 29, 2020:

Money Given to Budget
\$ 4,075.00
Amount Needed Weekly for Budget
\$ 5,417.78

Year-to-date Money Given to Budget
\$ 56,463.00
Amount Needed Year-to-Date for Budget
\$ 70,431.14

Community Life

Ladies' Night In is this Friday night. We are planning to have a gift exchange in addition to the usual good food and fellowship. If you wish to participate in the gift exchange, please bring a wrapped gift valued around \$10 that would be appropriate for any of the ladies, and we'll have a random exchange. If you don't wish to participate, come and laugh with us anyway!

Viv Schlabach has a new address and phone number! She anticipates moving Friday. Please change her info in your directory to: 6580 S. St. Rd. 5, Topeka, IN 46571 and phone (260)593-2886

Outreach

Give of yourself this year— much more information on blood drive on the back page!

December FMW Sewing Project benefits RETA

RETA is a faith-based, pregnancy clinic and family resource center located in downtown Elkhart, Indiana, whose mission is to provide life-affirming services and build Christ-centered families.

Let's bless them with **Laundry Detergent** and **Baby Wipes**.

Please drop your item(s) off by December 10!

Just a quick update from your CLC team!

We continue to touch base with our shut in and sick members. A **Christmas Celebration** is planned during our worship service on **December 13th**. We hope that you can join us!

Worship (Continued)

Thanks to a lot of hard work and research by our sound team, an exciting thing is happening at the church even as I am typing this up! Imagination Pro Media is parked outside the church today installing a **new camera and microphone** as part of our sound booth upgrade. If all goes as planned, this should improve our livestreaming quality for the future! Just remember, you don't have to sit at home Sunday to catch this, you can still come to church on Sunday then watch the YouTube later on during the week!!

Cancelled!
For those that may have planned to go to the Gospel Express Christmas Concert at Maple City Chapel on December 6th (flyer was in your mailbox). We have been notified that this concert has now been cancelled.



The link from Sunday's announcement about **Giving Tuesday** for **Fatima Children's Home** for their Christmas Garden is:
https://hipgive.org/en/campaign/guatemalagives2020/huerto_para_el_burrito_sabanero