

Jer. 33:14–16

Ps. 25:1–10

1 Thess. 3:9–13

Luke 21:25–36

Hope

Goal for the Session

Based on Jeremiah’s message of hope, children will give thanks to God as they begin their celebration of Advent.

■ PREPARING FOR THE SESSION

Focus on Jeremiah 33:14–16

WHAT is important to know?

— From “Exegetical Perspective,” Angela Bauer-Levesque

Opening with a formula typical of salvation oracles, “the days are surely coming,” verse 14 introduces divine first-person speech. God is assuring the audience that God will fulfill “the promise,” literally “the good word” with a definite article—not “a” promise, one of many, but a particular one made to both the house of Israel and the house of Judah. Harkening back to Jeremiah 23:5–6, another eschatological interlude, verse 15 reiterates what was promised there, namely, that God will birth a “righteous” (*tsedaqah*) offspring of the Davidic monarchy, who will act in ways that will promote “justice and righteousness” (*mishpat* and *tsedaqah*).

WHERE is God in these words?

— From “Theological Perspective,” Jennifer Ryan Ayres

Here we meet the God who promises to protect and restore the people, even as they are in the midst of great suffering and at the edge of despair. It is in precisely this context that God speaks the promise, and it is in precisely this context that despair opens the door to creativity and hope. Calvin acknowledged that the promises of God seem to disappear, but that with faith and patience, we look forward to their fulfillment.

SO WHAT does this mean for our lives?

— From “Pastoral Perspective,” Deborah A. Block

This text insists that covenantal life in all its expressions is characterized by justice and righteousness, allowing no dichotomy of “prophetic” and “pastoral.” Life together is to embody the nature of God, “The LORD is our righteousness.” Jeremiah uses the name first for a promised person (23:6) and again here, intentionally, for a promised place (33:16). The vision of the time to come impugns the time at hand. What leader and what community could claim “The LORD is our righteousness”? The promise challenges our reality, and drives a reappropriation of “righteousness.” The word is uncommon, if not pejorative, in common parlance and unwelcome in the lexicon of many faithful because of its frequent companionship with “self.”

NOW WHAT is God’s word calling us to do?

— From “Homiletical Perspective,” Gary W. Charles

As I listen to the cries of Jeremiah throughout the scope of his prophecy, I long for the day that is surely coming when God’s future will be a reality beyond the violent boastings of the ruling Babylon of the day. I long for the day that is surely coming when in God’s future the poor are not sent to shelters or forced to sleep on the streets. I long for the day that is surely coming when God’s future has no space for violence, when we will stop producing body bags—because there are no dead soldiers to fill them. I long for the day that is surely coming when God’s future affords no room for rancor, a day when our world is no longer torn asunder by racism and sexism and homophobia.

FOCUS SCRIPTURE

Jeremiah 33:14–16

YOU WILL NEED

- purple or blue cloth
- Bible
- offering basket
- Advent wreath or one made from directions on Resource Sheet 2 or Color Pack 1 and votive lights
- Singing the Feast*, bit.ly/SingingTheFeast
- Bible
- Color Pack 2, 38
- Resource Sheet 1

For Responding

- option 1: copies of Resource Sheet 3 on light green paper, wall calendar, green construction paper, brown construction paper, scissors, markers, transparent tape
- option 2: white card stock, many colors of markers
- option 3: matte-finish glass ball ornaments, wide-mouthed drinking glasses, small cloths or facial tissues, metallic paint pens
- option 4: Color Pack 38; *Singing the Feast*, bit.ly/SingingTheFeast

Focus on Your Teaching

What does the word *hope* mean to children? “I hope we go to the movies tonight.” “I hope I get a new bike for Christmas.” For children, hope equals *wish*. “I wish we could go to Disneyworld.” “I wish I could stay up later.” Hope in the Bible has a deeper connotation, one that children may not grasp. However, as they mature they will discover the variety of meanings for words, including *hope*. This can begin as they hear of the difficult situation of the people of God and the hopeful message from God through Jeremiah.

God of hope, I pray that my understanding of your hope will be nurtured by Jeremiah’s words. In Jesus’ name. Amen.

LEADING THE SESSION

GATHERING

Before the session, place a bookmark at Jeremiah in the worship table Bible. Many churches prohibit lighted candles in the classrooms. If that is your situation, make the Advent wreath described on Resource Sheet 2 (Preparing for Advent) or display Color Pack 1 on the worship table and add a paper flame each week during Advent. This is Thanksgiving weekend in the United States. How might you let children and families know about the Responding option you chose for this session so they can begin their family celebration of Advent?

Invite the first children to arrive to arrange the worship table with the purple or blue cloth (use the color used by your congregation), Advent wreath, Bible, and offering plate.

When everything is ready, gather around the worship table. Greet the children with: “Happy New Year!” Explain that this is the first Sunday of a new church year and the first Sunday of Advent. Point to the Advent wreath. Ask:

- ✠ What can you tell us about the Advent wreath?
- ✠ What can you tell us about the season of Advent?

After the children have told what they know, explain that the first candle to be lit is the candle of hope and that it will be lit at the end of the session. Ask:

- ✠ What does *hope* mean?

Their answers will prepare them to move to Exploring following this prayer:

*Loving God, as we begin a new church year, we give thanks for our church.
We are here to learn more about your Son and the Bible. Amen.*

EXPLORING

Invite a child to retrieve the Bible from the worship table and hold it so the group can see where the bookmark is. After the group has recognized that it is probably in the Hebrew Scriptures or Old Testament, ask a child to open the Bible to the bookmark and read the name of the book (Jeremiah). Show Color Pack 2. Invite their comments on how Jeremiah is portrayed. Explain that Jeremiah was a prophet of God and tell the story based on Jeremiah 33:14–16 on Resource Sheet 1 (Hope for the People).

Discuss the story with these questions:

- ✿ Why were the people of God so sad and unhappy?
- ✿ Who was Jeremiah?
- ✿ What words of hope did he have from God?
- ✿ What did Jeremiah say about the new king?

Justice: providing fair treatment for all people.

When the discussion includes the name of the new king, define *justice*, using the definition in the sidebar. Ask:

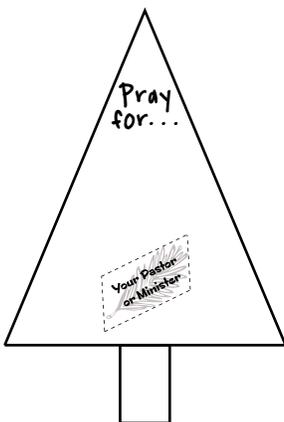
- ✿ Do you think the people had hope after they heard Jeremiah? Why?
- ✿ What do you think the people did?
- ✿ How can we remember to place our hope in God?

The Responding options are about celebrating Advent. For the first Sunday in Advent, the key word is *hope*.

RESPONDING

Offer at least two options so children have a choice. One might be more challenging to interest older children who can work on their own.

1. **Advent Prayer Tree** The group will make prayer trees to use at home during Advent as they pray for justice for others. Using a wall calendar, have the group count the number of days until Christmas. Distribute green construction paper, scissors, and markers. Have them cut two corners on the paper to form a triangle tree shape and write “Pray for...” at the top of the triangle. Give each child a 9" x 3" strip of brown construction paper for the tree trunk. Fold the trunk in half to make a pocket. Tape both sides. Give each child a copy of Resource Sheet 3 (Advent Prayer Tree). Have them cut apart the pieces and place them in the trunk pocket. Invite each child to take one paper from the trunk, tape it to the tree, and pray silently for the place or person(s) on the paper. Explain that each day they can take one paper from the tree trunk, pray for that person or group, and tape the paper to the tree.



EASY
PREP

- Sign for Advent 1** Drawing from Jeremiah's message and the symbol of the first Advent candle, children will make a small poster based on the word *hope*. Give each child a sheet of white card stock. Provide markers of many colors. Have the children print "hope" in the middle of the card stock in large letters. Invite children to use many colors to decorate this poster so they will remember that the hope from God is amazing throughout Advent. They may outline each letter or the word with concentric lines in many colors or print "hope" in many sizes and types of printing around the central word. As they finish, display their posters for everyone to see before they take them home.
- Ornament** Make ornaments for children to decorate their trees at home with this joyful message from God. Give each child a drinking glass, a piece of cloth or a facial tissue to drape over the glass, and an ornament. Explain the process: print "HOPE" on one side of the ornament with a metallic paint pen. Let it dry before turning to write "HOPE," "Advent 1," or the year on the other side.

Be certain the paint is dry before sending the ornaments home.

Alternative plan: Create the ornaments early in the session so they will be dry in time to take home.

God, We Sing

1. God, we sing with praise
to you,
Light the flame of *hope*
anew;
Light this candle, light the
way,
Bring hope into our hearts
today.
Jesus, near us as we pray,
Let *hope* be in our hearts
today.

- Advent Song** The song "God, We Sing" (Color Pack 38, [Singing the Feast](#)) will be sung in Closing during Advent. Focus on the first stanza for this first Sunday in Advent. Read the stanza to the children, emphasizing the word *hope*. Practice singing the song two or three times so the children will be ready to sing it in Closing.

Perhaps this song can be part of the lighting of the Advent wreath during the service of worship.

CLOSING

Gather at the worship center. Light the first candle of the Advent wreath with a paper flame or light the votive light.

Sing the first stanza of "God, We Sing" (Color Pack 38, [Singing the Feast](#)).

Invite the children to think quietly about how God's words to Jeremiah give them hope today. Pray:

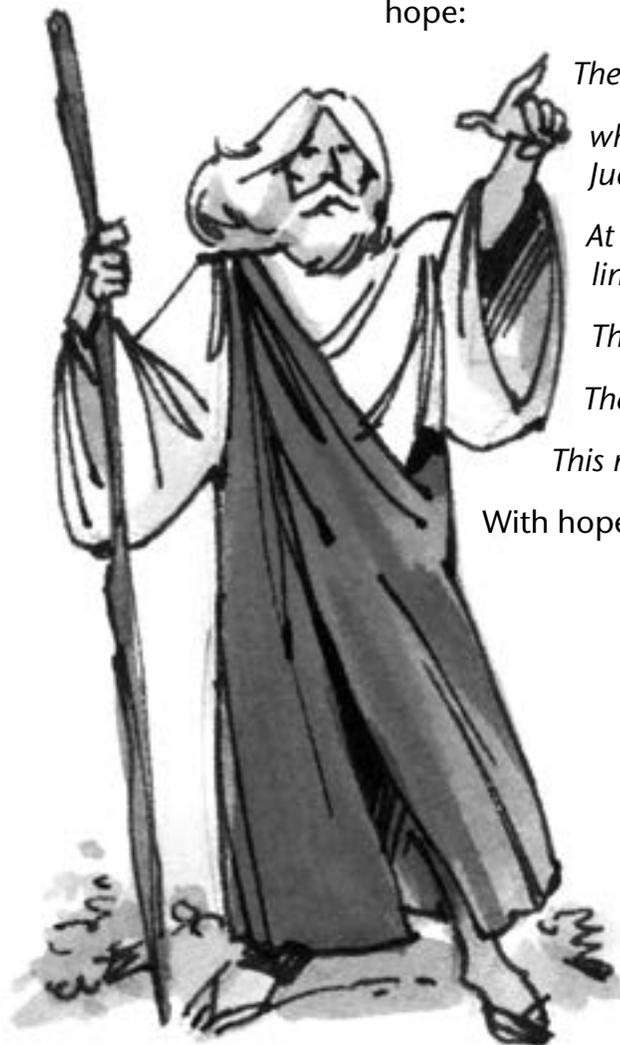
Loving God, as we go through the coming week, we will think of your words of hope to Jeremiah and the people and to us. When we are sad or discouraged, we will not forget your hope. Amen.

To each child, say, "Thank you for coming. See you next week."

Hope for the People (Based on Jeremiah 33:14-16)

The people of Israel had lived through many years of terrible war and destruction. The beautiful temple was destroyed. Many people were captured and taken to Babylon. Some asked, "Why is God letting this happen to us?" Others wondered if they would ever see their homes again.

Among the people was a man named Jeremiah. He was the son of Hilkiah, who was a priest in a small town in the land of Benjamin, one of the smallest tribes of Israel. Not an important man. Not an impressive man. But God called Benjamin to be a prophet, someone who spoke God's word to the nations. The nations? A prophet from a little town in the smallest tribe? But, as in other cases, God insisted. Some messages that God had for God's people were filled with hope. And the people desperately needed hope. This is one message of hope:



The time is coming, says God,

when the promise I made to the nations of Israel and Judah will come true.

At that time, I will give them a new king from the family line of David.

This king will rule with fairness over the people.

Then Judah will be saved and Jerusalem will be safe.

This new king will be called "The LORD is our justice."

With hope in their hearts, the people waited for a new king.

Preparing for Advent

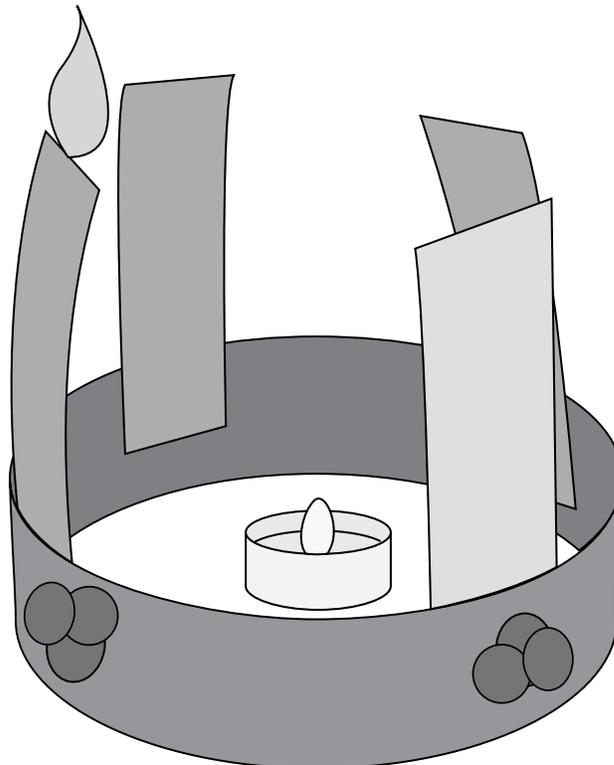
YOU WILL NEED

- purple or blue place mat, napkin, or cloth
- green construction paper
- blue or purple construction paper
- pink construction paper (optional)
- yellow construction paper
- scissors
- stapler
- markers
- tape
- battery-powered candle

Note: During Advent, some churches use the color blue as a symbol of hope. Some churches use purple, a color of royalty, to honor the coming of our king, Jesus. In your class, use the same color your church uses in worship during Advent.

Directions:

1. Cut two 3" x 12" strips from green construction paper. Staple them to form a circle (to be the wreath).
2. Cut four 2" x 9" rectangles (to be the candles) from purple or blue construction paper, using the color your church uses during Advent. Option: If your congregation uses one pink candle in its Advent wreath, replace one of the purple or blue rectangles with a pink one.
3. Space these four paper candles around the wreath and staple them in place. (See diagram below.)
4. Use markers to decorate the outside of the wreath as desired.
5. Cut four large teardrop shapes from yellow construction paper to be the "flames." You will tape a flame to one candle each week.
6. Choose a place to set the Advent wreath, perhaps in the center of the table where you meet. Put a blue or purple place mat, napkin, or cloth under it.
7. Put a battery-powered candle in the center of the wreath.





Advent Prayer Tree

Peace in the World	A Friend	A Family Member	Your Church
Someone Who Is Sick	Someone Who Is Sad	Someone Who Is Lonely	People Who Are Hungry
Someone Who Needs Help	A Friend	A Family Member	Your Sunday School Class
Someone Who Is Sick	Someone Who Is Sad	Someone Who Is Lonely	People Who Are Hungry
Our Nation's Leaders	Firefighters	Police Officers	Veterans
A Neighbor	Doctors and Nurses	People Who Have No Home	Refugees
Your Pastor or Minister	Your Teacher		

Jer. 33:14–16

Ps. 25:1–10

1 Thess. 3:9–13

Luke 21:25–36

Fulfilling Promises

**Goal for
the Session**

Adults will review God’s promises, reaffirmed in Jeremiah 33, and proclaim these promises today.

■ PREPARING FOR THE SESSION

Focus on Jeremiah 33:14–16

WHAT is important to know?

— From “Exegetical Perspective,” Angela Bauer-Levesque

Opening with a formula typical of salvation oracles, “the days are surely coming,” verse 14 introduces divine first-person speech. God is assuring the audience that God will fulfill “the promise,” literally “the good word” with a definite article—not “a” promise, one of many, but a particular one made to both the house of Israel and the house of Judah. Harkening back to Jeremiah 23:5–6, another eschatological interlude, verse 15 reiterates what was promised there, namely, that God will birth a “righteous” (*tsedaqah*) offspring of the Davidic monarchy, who will act in ways that will promote “justice and righteousness” (*mishpat* and *tsedaqah*).

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Here we meet the God who promises to protect and restore the people, even as they are in the midst of great suffering and at the edge of despair. It is in precisely this context that God speaks the promise, and it is in precisely this context that despair opens the door to creativity and hope. Calvin acknowledged that the promises of God seem to disappear, but that with faith and patience, we look forward to their fulfillment.

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This text insists that covenantal life in all its expressions is characterized by justice and righteousness, allowing no dichotomy of “prophetic” and “pastoral.” Life together is to embody the nature of God, “The LORD is our righteousness.” Jeremiah uses the name first for a promised person (23:6) and again here, intentionally, for a promised place (33:16). The vision of the time to come impugns the time at hand. What leader and what community could claim “The LORD is our righteousness”? The promise challenges our reality, and drives a reappropriation of “righteousness.” The word is uncommon, if not pejorative, in common parlance and unwelcome in the lexicon of many faithful because of its frequent companionship with “self.”

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FOCUS SCRIPTURE

Jeremiah 33:14–16

Focus on Your Teaching

Are your participants already in the consumer Christmas rush? Or are they preparing and ready to participate in the season of Advent? The four weeks of Advent allow time to anticipate the promise of Jesus' coming. Today's focus scripture from the prophet Jeremiah offers ideas about what this promise is about.

Advent wreaths provide focus and meaning for many during this season. Older adults will surely know what this is about. Younger adults may welcome an explanation.

Slow my pace, O God, so I may hear the voices of those who long to know your Good News. May I point to your fulfilled and unfailing promises. Amen.

YOU WILL NEED

- Advent wreath
- Advent candles; 3 purple, one pink (*suggested*)
- matches or lighter
- newsprint or board
- marker
- copies of Resource Sheet 2
- Bibles
- copies of Resource Sheet 1
- copies of Resource Sheet 1 for the next session

For Responding

- option 1: newsprint, marker, paper, pens
- option 2: card stock in variety of colors, colored pencils, pens
- option 3: newsprint, marker

LEADING THE SESSION

GATHERING

Before the session, set the Advent wreath on a table to light during Gathering. For option 1 in Responding, prepare newsprint or a board by writing the common format for biblical prayers of lament listed in option 1.

Greet participants and invite them to think about promises they have kept and have not kept. Form pairs and have participants tell each other one example of a kept and a non-kept promise as they feel comfortable. Encourage pairs to discuss what they have learned about making and keeping promises. Gather the entire group and invite brief comments on what people have learned about promises. Explain that in this session they will explore Jeremiah's message of God's promise to a despairing people.

Explain that on this first Sunday in Advent, they will begin a weekly candle-lighting ritual that extends through the four Sundays of the season.

Before lighting the candle, say: "On this first Sunday in Advent, we light the first candle of hope. A lone candle shines the light of God's promise to God's people."

Light one purple Advent candle and say this prayer or one of your choosing:

We light one lone candle to shine in the world. Help us pause to ponder the promises you fulfill in Christ, whose coming we await. Amen.

EXPLORING

Before reading the focus scripture, distribute copies of Resource Sheet 2 (Jeremiah's Context) and have participants read the information silently. Briefly discuss any questions for clarification that participants raise.

Righteousness: right actions, conduct that aligns with or displays God's purposes, doing the good thing and doing the God thing, the ethic of living toward others in ways that show justice and love.

Prophecy: revelatory statements of what God is doing, uncovering what is hidden. In Israel, prophets of the Lord revealed God's will and purpose, calling people to live by the instructions received from God.

Have participants imagine they are in exile with Jeremiah. Use a *lectio divina* method to read Jeremiah 33:14–16. Explain that you will read the text aloud three times, giving instructions before each reading. Read the focus scripture one time, slowly and deliberately. Before the second reading have participants listen closely to the text, noting particular words or phrases that stand out for them. Pause briefly before the third reading for people to think about the text. For the third reading, have participants listen to Jeremiah's words for a message of hope to a struggling people. Ask:

- ✧ How were Jeremiah's words in 33:14–16 good news for God's people?
- ✧ How do you imagine Jeremiah's prophecy unfolding?
- ✧ When you return from exile to find a new government characterized by justice and righteousness, what might this look like?

Distribute copies of Resource Sheet 1 (Focus on Jeremiah 33:14–16), and read the "Where?" excerpt. Discuss where God found in Jeremiah's words.

Read the "What?" excerpt from the resource sheet. Ask:

- ✧ What does the promise of a "righteous branch to spring up from David" mean?
- ✧ What does the promise of God executing "justice and righteousness on the land" mean?
- ✧ What is hopeful in the promise that "Judah will be saved and Jerusalem will live in safety"?

Read the "So What?" excerpt from the resource sheet. Christians believe that Jesus was the eventual savior and righteous one. Discuss:

- ✧ How did Jesus' leadership exemplify righteousness and justice?
- ✧ What does a righteous community look like?

To transition to Responding, read the "Now What?" excerpt from the resource sheet. Ask:

- ✧ How do Christians suffering today take solace in promises made in Jeremiah?
- ✧ How does the church work to fulfill the promises?
- ✧ How will people know when God's promise is fulfilled?

RESPONDING

Choose one or more of these activities depending on the length of your session:

1. Lament and Promise In this activity, participants name examples of suffering and injustice present in the world and craft prayers of lament, giving voice to longings for God's promised hope. Refer to the prepared newsprint. Explain that biblical prayers of lament often follow a format:

- ✧ Appeal to God,
- ✧ Description of the suffering or injustice being lamented,
- ✧ Request for God's help or relief,
- ✧ Statement of an expected response from God,
- ✧ Words of thanksgiving.

Distribute paper and pens. Have participants write personal prayers of lament, offering to God their concern for suffering and injustice. Claim God's promises found in

EASY
PREP

Jeremiah 33:14–16: justice, safety, and righteousness. Then invite the participants to offer the prayers to God, either privately or corporately.

- 2. Create Advent Cards** Participants will create Advent cards with messages of hope and promise proclaimed by Jeremiah. Explain that the message of hope and promise proclaimed by Jeremiah to his exiled community is vastly different from the traditional holiday messages we send to neighbors and friends. Yet his message is a valuable one for our time, especially in places where oppression, displacement, injustice, and fear exist.

Distribute card stock, colored pencils, and pens. Have participants create Advent cards that express a hopeful word to a present longing in our world. Messages may include: God fulfills God's promises; waiting, trusting, and hoping are ways of living with God's promise; God promises justice.

Discuss who the cards might be sent to — in your community or in the world. Designate a volunteer to address or deliver completed cards, or have participants take their cards home as a reminder of God's Advent message.

- 3. Listen and Act** In this activity, participants identify local examples of need or suffering and plan to offer a concrete service of hope to those in need. Explain that the holidays are often a season of service, when many are stirred to offer gifts and services to people in need. For example, many churches and groups help refugee centers, food and clothing banks, and other social services. Many also go caroling at nursing homes and hospitals. Ask:

- ✪ What cries of longing go unnoticed in our community? List these.
- ✪ How might you reach out to support or serve these people?
- ✪ What message of hope or promise might you give?

As a group, make a plan to offer a message of hope and engage in a concrete service with one or more persons identified on the group list. Follow through with your plans before the close of Advent.

CLOSING

Gather participants and discuss God's promises that they can hold on to during Advent.

Offer a group prayer, inviting each person to name a promise from God. Use the following words to open and close your prayer:

Righteous and merciful God, we rejoice in the good news you hold out to your people. Thank you, God for your words of promise:

(Invite participants to name God's promises.)

Let us cling to the fulfillment of your promises. May these give us hope as we go into the world. Amen.

Distribute copies of Resource Sheet 1 for the next session, or e-mail it to the participants early in the week to allow time for reading and reflection.

Focus on Jeremiah 33:14–16

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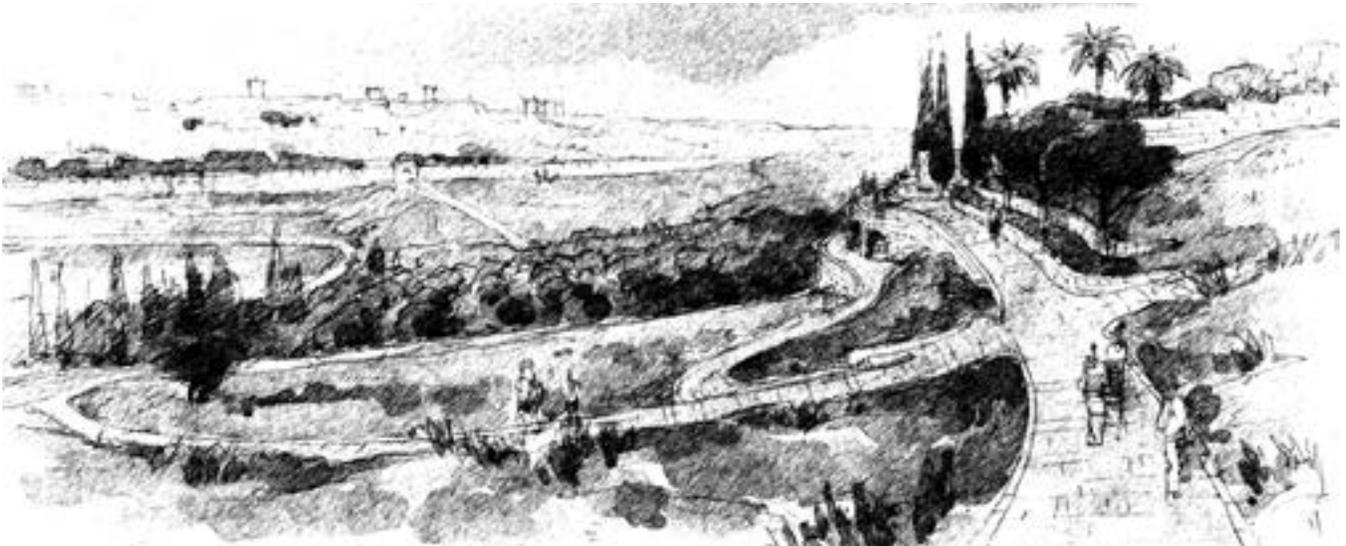
Jeremiah's Context

Before Jeremiah's prophetic ministry, the nation of Israel was split into northern Israel and southern Judah. Jerusalem remained the capital in Judah. Shortly after the split, Israel fell to Assyria. Jeremiah was a prophet in Judah, which was eventually conquered by Babylon and many of its leaders exiled.

The book of Jeremiah contains a mix of historical material regarding the changes and challenges God's people faced before and during Judah's fall to Babylon. Jeremiah was a frustrated prophet who often complained that his message fell on deaf ears and his work was for naught. He warned that the sinfulness and injustice of God's people would result in punishment by God. He interpreted the Babylonian invasion, the destruction of the Jerusalem temple, and the exportation of the people to Babylon as consequences of turning away from God.

Questions plagued the people while in exile in Babylon. Had God abandoned them? Would God remain faithful to the promise to be their God? How could they show their faithfulness to God after having been removed from the land God gave to them? Was there hope of ever returning home to Jerusalem? Of rebuilding the temple?

In the middle of the book are four chapters, called the "Little Book of Comfort/Consolation." The tone of these chapters turns from struggle and lament to prophetic messages of promise and hope. In chapters 30–33, Jeremiah's readers find comfort to sustain them during a desolate period in their history.



Joining the Feast

Year C, Winter
First Sunday of Advent—
Transfiguration Sunday



What you will find in *Joining the Feast!*

The Church Year Calendar

Describes the important church festivals and special days for the coming season. It provides theological reflections on their importance for the church's life and our own lives.

The Shape of the Season

Presents an overview of the focus scriptures for the weeks in the coming season. It discusses the biblical and theological significance of each passage.

Joining Worship and Learning: Making the Connections and Time with Children

A helpful feature in this section of *Joining the Feast* is the inclusion of the stories on the focus scriptures from the multi-age course. These stories can be used in the children's time during worship. Notice that some songs are used by several age levels but not in the same session. If you are interested in including a prayer, poetry, or artwork from an age level, speak with the leader in advance. May your congregational worship be enlivened by these suggestions to join worship and learning.

Joining Mission and Learning

Help the participants in the *Feasting on the Word Curriculum* connect with existing service opportunities in your congregation. Review this list, and offer suggestions to the leaders. Give this chart to the chair of the mission or outreach committee so that the work of the committee can be strengthened through the church school.

Litanies and Prayers

A selection of poetic prayers and responsive readings that helps worship leaders connect the church's educational and worship experiences to find fullness and blessing in the praise and service of God.

Children's Bulletins

A fun activity page is provided weekly to give children a sense of belonging and help them feel welcome in the worship experience. These special children's bulletins connect their worship experience to the education themes.

Joining the Feast

We invite you to “Join the Feast”!

Our exciting *Feasting on the Word Curriculum* offers great opportunities for the local church. Pastors, educators, and participants can experience the wonder of God’s nourishing word to us. For church schools, for study groups, and in preparation for teaching and preaching, the resources here will deepen and strengthen our faith. We have an amazing “feast” set before us! We desire and can find further understanding in our faith—of who God is and what God has done!

Joining the Feast helps pastors, educators, and worship leaders plan for education and worship. We want to assist in reflecting on how to incorporate scriptural and seasonal emphases across different parts of the church’s life.

Joining the Feast can be shared in education and worship committees. It enables important biblical themes to be integrated into the church’s study and worship experiences. A chart of suggestions for ways educational emphases can be used in worship is a feature of what follows here. Church school teachers can discuss these materials with each other to enhance education for all age levels in the church. Pastors who plan their lectionary preaching will find taking an overall look at this church season to be useful for their preparations. In all this, we want to join teaching and preaching. We want the church’s educational and worship experiences to find fullness and blessing in the praise and service of God!

An important goal for pastors and educators in the church is to connect or join the church’s educational experience with the church’s worship experience. People of all ages who participate in church school study can find their Christian faith enhanced when the Scriptures read and proclaimed in worship reinforce and expand what they have been considering in their educational time. Education and worship can be mutually supportive in helping God’s word in Scripture come alive in the Sunday morning experience. Consideration of the same lectionary reading in preaching can deepen the insights gained in church school.

Pastors who want to build on what has been done in education welcome this *Feasting on the Word Curriculum* as a way to prepare congregational members for directions into which the sermon can lead. Those who participate in the education time will find the insights gained there enhanced by preaching that considers the same passage and brings God’s word to bear in fresh and nourishing ways. So as we “Join the Feast,” joining the church’s educational and worship dimensions can bring to life the richness of God’s word in Scripture.

Donald K. McKim





Jeremiah spoke to the people about a king who would offer great things.
Trace the letters to read the words.

Hope
Fairness
Justice

Hope for the People

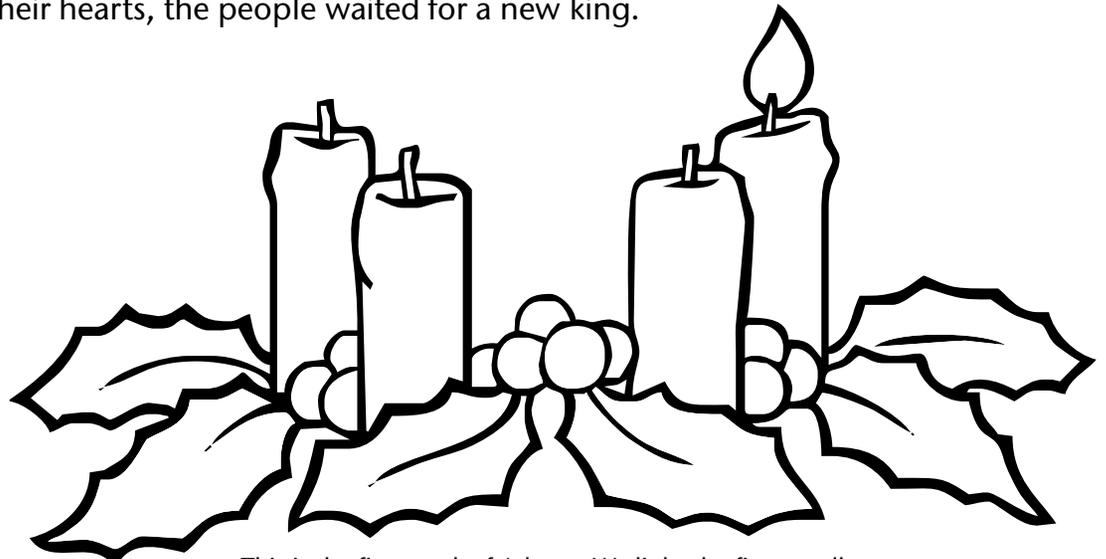
based on Jeremiah 33:14-16

The people of Israel had lived through many years of terrible war and destruction. The beautiful temple was destroyed. Many people were captured and taken to Babylon. Some asked, “Why is God letting this happen to us?” Others wondered if they would ever see their homes again.

Among the people was a man named Jeremiah. He was the son of Hilkiah, who was a priest in a small town in the land of Benjamin, one of the smallest tribes of Israel. Not an important man. Not an impressive man. But God called Jeremiah to be a prophet, someone who spoke God’s word to the nations. The nations? A prophet from a little town in the smallest tribe? But, as in other cases, God insisted. Some messages that God had for God’s people were filled with hope. And the people *desperately needed hope*. This is one message of hope:

*The time is coming, says God,
when the promise I made to the nations of Israel and Judah will come true.
At that time, I will give them a new king from the family line of David.
This king will rule with fairness over the people.
Then Judah will be saved and Jerusalem will be safe.
This new king will be called “The LORD is our justice.”*

With hope in their hearts, the people waited for a new king.



This is the first week of Advent. We light the first candle.