

***Sabbath Moments***  
***A Service of Healing and Wholeness***  
Sunday, December 16, 2007, 6pm  
Southport Presbyterian Church  
The Toney Chapel

*I wait in hope for God... Micah 7:7*

**Sing, heavens! Shout for joy, earth! Let the mountain burst into song!  
The Lord will comfort his people; He will have pity on his suffering people.**

(Isaiah 49:13)

In him was life and the life was the light of men.

(John 1:4)

**A little child shall lead them.**

(Isaiah 11:6)

Joseph waited year after painful year in Egypt—twenty years, in all—before he saw his dreams come true. The time spent in Potiphar’s house, then in prison, must have seemed not only incredibly long, but also wasted. There seemed to be no connection between these experiences and the dream God gave Joseph when he was a boy.

So, too, God often gives us a vision for our future. But like Joseph’s circumstances, ours may seem far removed from what we would like to see happen.

During this time, God gives us the ministry of waiting. They are hard years. We feel nothing is being accomplished. Our prayers don’t seem to be answered. And more, waiting is just plain difficult.

Yet Joseph’s years in Egypt were raw material for his ministry. He learned the language; he learned administration and leadership. Did he understand what God was doing? Perhaps not. But God sent Joseph to Egypt to save his family from future famine. Like Joseph, we can make use of the responsibilities we have now and leave God to work out the answer in God’s time.

Thank you, Lord, for my dream. Thank you for today’s tasks because they too are part of your plan. You are preparing me for my future.

(Sandi Somers, The Upper Room)

**All of us have much to learn from those who have little to give.**

(Tom Matheny, The Upper Room)

Hold fast to love and justice, and wait continually for your God.

(Hosea 12:6)

**Advent, like Lent, reminds us that there is value in waiting. Advent is our time to wait seriously for God to lead us from our self-imposed prisons such as our failures at love, our misunderstandings with others, our rigid belief-systems. Because such are our sins, we wait in bondage. Because we still want our way even if it is destructive, we pay a high price. We continue to follow after false gods of gadgetry or accumulations of possessions, power, and prestige. Meanwhile the truly needy are truly neglected and the destitute truly ignored. . . . And so this Advent we wait. We wait for a Savior. We wait for someone who can help us cut through all our false values and false pride. We wait for someone who not only knows our weaknesses but who, through the strength of a loving God, can help us overcome them. We wait for the one who forgives our failures and inspires us to try again. Christ is coming. And his coming makes our waiting creatively and powerfully worthwhile.**  
(Stan Smith, The Upper Room)

Advent. . . is a time of waiting for the Christian. This is an awkward season because it is most difficult for us to focus on the preliminary dimensions of the Christmas story. We had much rather go directly to Bethlehem without hearing anew the words of the prophets or John the Baptist. Advent does not give us permission to rush to the manger. It says "wait."  
(Joe E. Pennel, Jr. The Whisper of Christmas)

**1Protect me, O God, for in you I take refuge...  
7I bless the LORD who gives me counsel;  
in the night also my heart instructs me.  
8I keep the LORD always before me;  
because he is at my right hand, I shall not be moved.  
9Therefore my heart is glad, and my soul rejoices;  
my body also rests secure...  
11You show me the path of life.  
In your presence there is fullness of joy;  
in your right hand are pleasures forevermore.**  
(Psalm 16)

**God be with you this Advent.**