

Devotion, Week of November 23, 2025

Rev. Jeanne Simpson

During this week I hope you will not get overwhelmed with Thanksgiving. It's packed full of guests, airline travel, cooking and cooking and cooking, and then right after Thursday, beginning to get ready for Advent/Christmas. It's the official start of "hurry up" time. Get the turkey and dressing done. Feed the crowd. Welcome the guests and then have a drink once they've gone! Try to be thankful for your blessings, even when you're worried about getting the rolls out of the oven in time. Or when you have to go back to the grocery store for the cranberry sauce you forgot. You know how it goes – controlled chaos, if you're the host. Some lucky folks just get to show up with one dish and let someone else set the table, deal with getting the food out, and cleaning up. And Lord help you if you have to go to the airport. You have my deepest sympathy.

The sermon this coming week, on the first Sunday of Advent, is based on the theme of Hope, but also on Jesus' preaching about God's kingdom to come in Matthew 24. His followers want to know WHEN this is going to happen. But Jesus wants to focus on expectant, but faithful and patient waiting. Don't worry about WHEN – worry about what you will have to say to God about how you've lived when it happens. In the meantime, live in readiness in your everyday lives.

I would add – celebrate what you have around you now, and slow down while you do that. When you all finally sit down at the Thanksgiving table, look at your family and friends – really look at them – and be thankful they are there. Because some of us, including me, will have one less person at the table this year to smile at.

In advent we are waiting expectantly, with hope, for a baby to come – a holy baby. But it's also about noticing what's already holy right now. So in all the busyness, take a deep breath, slow down, and look around you at where you are, who you are with or without, and be thankful.

Jeanne