



Grain

"Stay Calm. Be courageous. Wait for signs."

Henry Standing Bear in *Longmire* series by Craig Johnson

Field

²⁵“There will be signs in the sun, the moon, and the stars, and on the earth distress among nations confused by the roaring of the sea and the waves. ²⁶People will faint from fear and foreboding of what is coming upon the world, for the powers of the heavens will be shaken. ²⁷Then they will see ‘the Son of Man coming in a cloud’ with power and great glory. ²⁸Now when these things begin to take place, stand up and raise your heads, because your redemption is drawing near.” ²⁹Then he told them a parable: “Look at the fig tree and all the trees; ³⁰as soon as they sprout leaves you can see for yourselves and know that summer is already near. ³¹So also, when you see these things taking place, you know that the kingdom of God is near. Luke 21:25-29

Thoughts by Reverend Peter Heide, Interim Pastor in Morrisonville

There’s nothing like a little apocalyptic fervor to get your spiritual blood flowing. Each year, as Advent begins, we do not read words from the beginning any of the Gospels, but words from Jesus’ entry into Jerusalem on his way to the cross. In Luke 21, we enter a larger discourse on the problems of the world. As God’s people have seen devastation and oppression in the past, now we see a forbidding image of the world—signs in the sun and the moon and the stars. People will be fainting from fear and making false charges against one another. There will be pandemics and challenges to the foundational order of the nation. In those days, when climate change threatens to overwhelm us, when people claim that this is the end of all that we hold sacred, then we will see the Son of Man coming in glory.

This is not the time to duck and cover. Instead, it is the time to hold your head up and be counted. This is the time to speak out and act. This is the time to remember God’s promise of hope. This is the time to claim our theology of the cross, to see Christ in the midst of our suffering world, to bear witness to the difference Christ makes in our lives, and to name those things that separate us from God’s love and our neighbor. More than that, we are called to act in ways that lift up our neighbors—to speak truth to power, to bring justice claiming equitable treatment for all people. Instead of seeing these signs of catastrophic ends, we are invited to see a time of new beginnings, to see the image of trees putting out leaves with the promise of summer at hand. We are invited to see the kingdom of God engaged in the world—to not be overburdened by the problems of the world living in dissipation, drunkenness, and doubt—but to act with boldness, confidently leaning on the promise that, although heaven and earth will pass away, God’s word of sustaining, creative, and love-fulfilling activity in our lives will not fail.

It is in times like these, when we recognize the limited power that we hold on the earth, that we need to be reminded to be alert and to see the wonders of God’s handiwork in our lives. This is a great way to enter this Advent season—to begin this time of waiting for Christ’s coming again—in this apocalypse revealing God’s love for the world and Christ’s hope for our future. Happy Monday!

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Many Blessings upon you,

Pastor Peter Heide