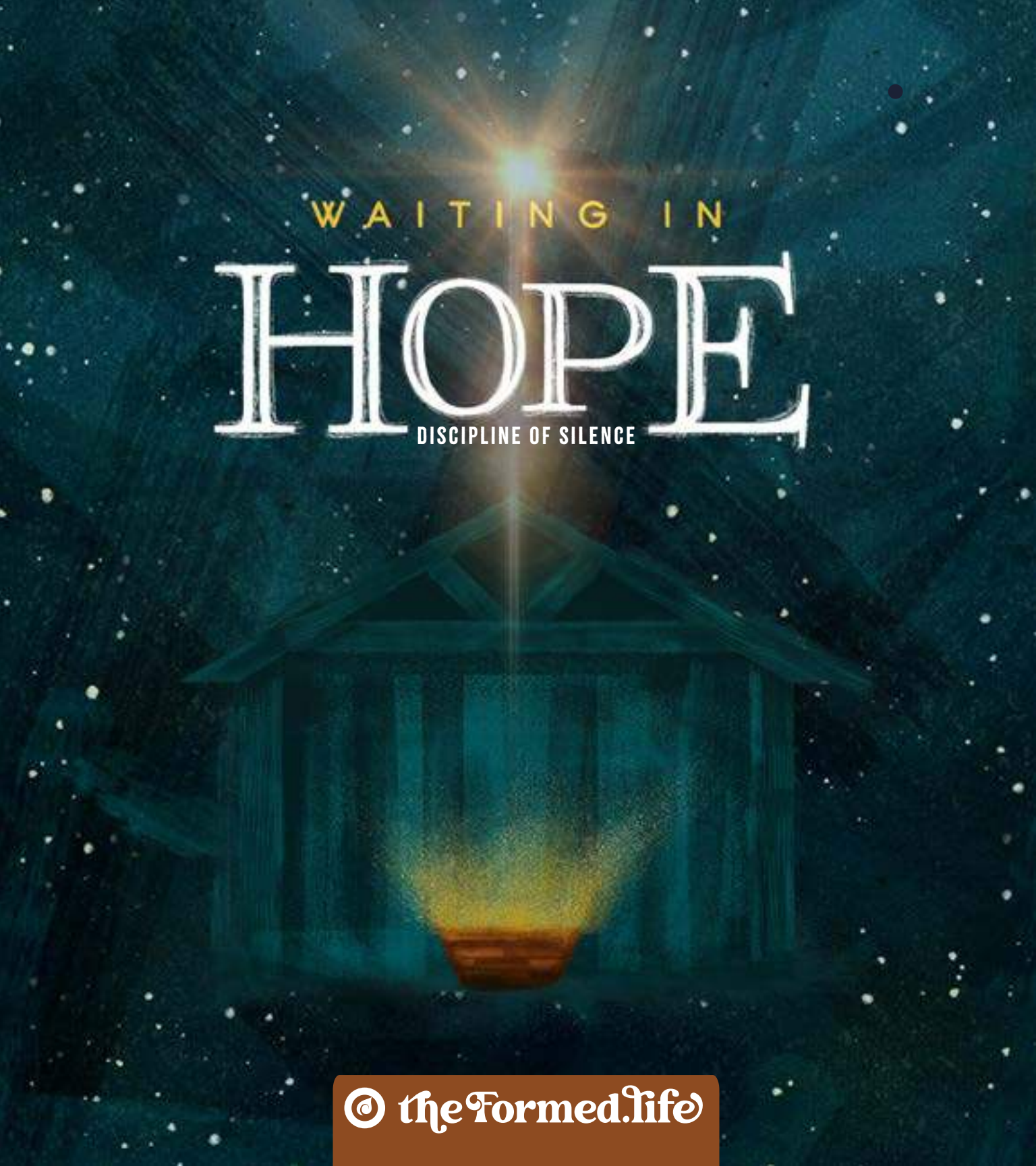
WAITING IN
HOPE
DISCIPLINE OF SILENCE
theFormed.life

Put the “formed” back in biblically “informed.”

Let’s take that next step together to be formed by God’s word, in God’s ways, with God’s people, every day.

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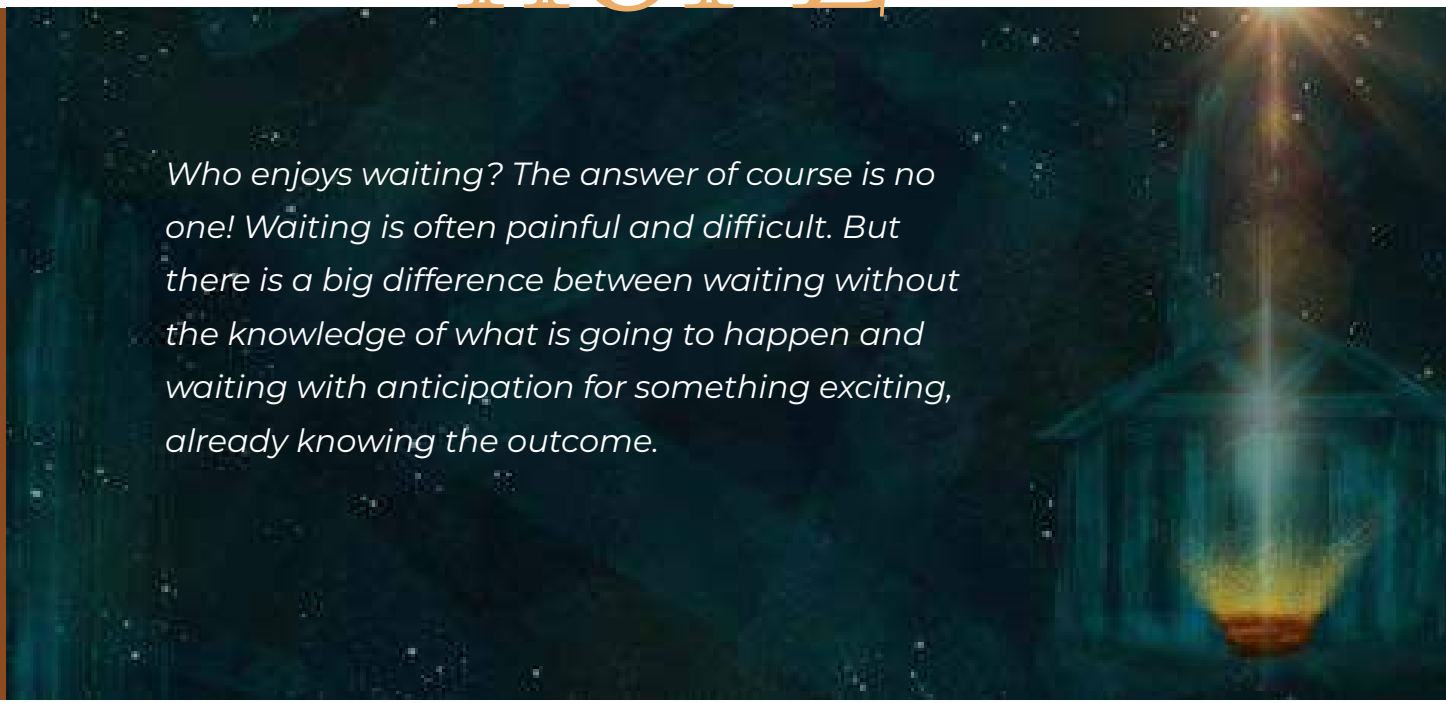
WAITING IN HOPE



Who enjoys waiting? The answer of course is no one! Waiting is often painful and difficult. But there is a big difference between waiting without the knowledge of what is going to happen and waiting with anticipation for something exciting, already knowing the outcome.

The season of Advent, the four weeks before Christmas, is a time to wait. It is not just waiting for Christmas Day with presents, good food, family, or snow. Nor is it waiting as people who do not know the outcome. Rather, we are waiting for the coming (the advent) of Christ. Because we are sure of the outcome ahead, we can wait with anticipation of the good things to come. We can wait in hope.

Join us to explore how to wait in hope by looking at Advent through the eyes of the Old Testament prophet Isaiah who also endured difficulties while waiting, yet waited in hope for the coming of his Messiah.

It is in the season of waiting when we often feel a loss of control. We cannot make time go any faster, so in an attempt to gain some semblance of control, it can be easy to fill up that season of waiting. We might do this to build anticipation (think of an Advent calendar) or seek to fill the waiting with something that will distract us from the discomfort. Much of that discomfort stems from the silence of the waiting.

What noise can fill this silent space? Is there fear of what God wants to say in the stillness and silence of the waiting? It is often the silence of waiting that cultivates a space to hear from and respond to our kind God in the midst of a loud world.

FOR THE LORD GOD,
THE HOLY ONE OF
ISRAEL, HAS SAID:
"YOU WILL BE DELIVERED
BY RETURNING AND RESTING;
YOUR STRENGTH WILL LIE
IN QUIET CONFIDENCE."

– Isaiah 30:15a

The Discipline of SILENCE

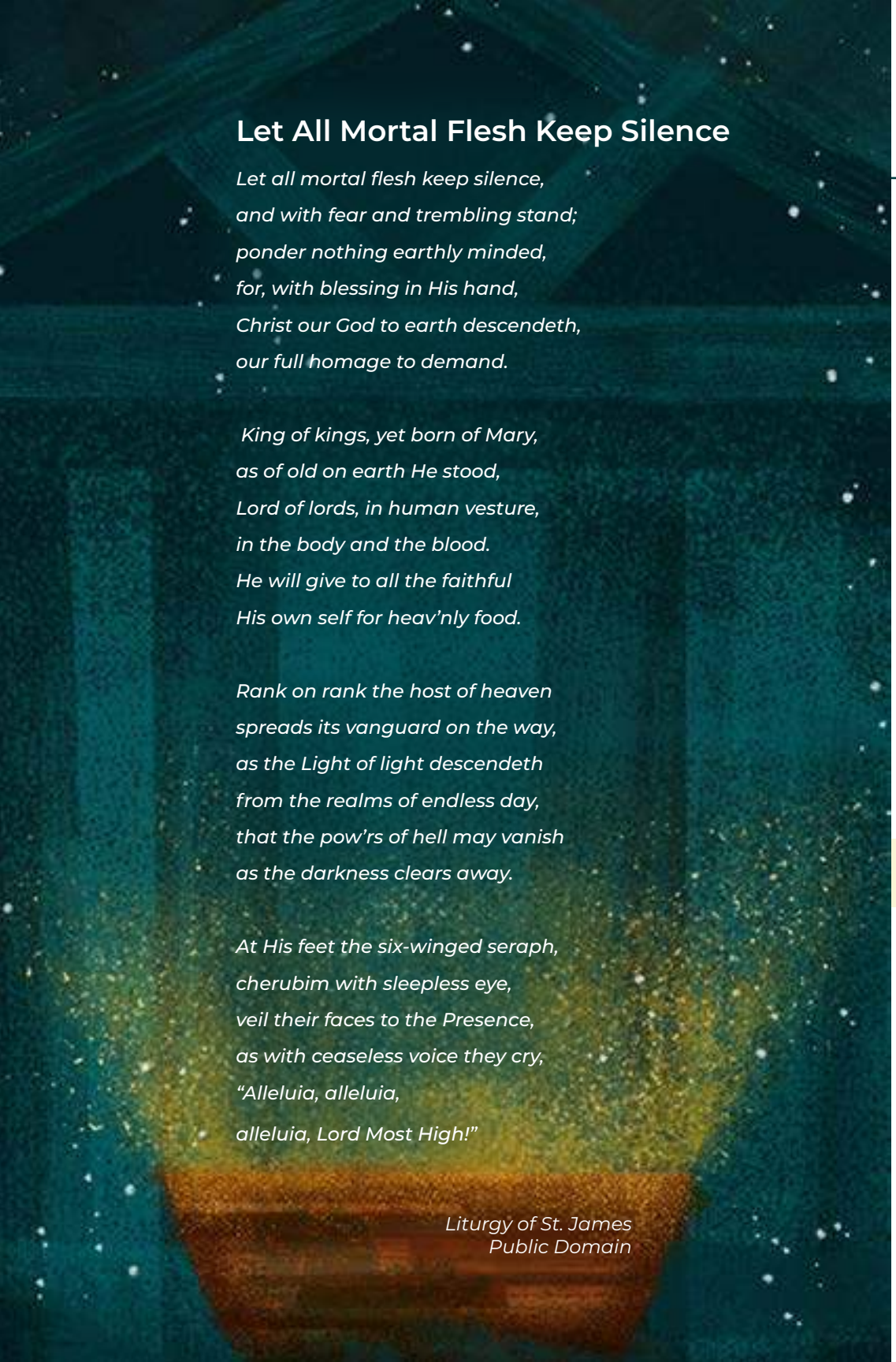
In 1 Kings 19, the prophet Elijah has a stunning encounter with the Lord God. The prophet had just experienced one of the high points of his ministry in his faceoff with the prophets of Baal, only to have Queen Jezebel decree she would do anything to take his life.

Just when the prophet thought the waiting was over and the nation would return to the One who chose them, he was informed there would be more waiting. But God meets this tired prophet once again, not in a loud boisterous fashion like the scene at the altars, but in a "soft whisper" that reminds his forgetful child who is with him in the waiting and the silence.

In the loud world in which we live, it can be a struggle to sit in periods of silence. Therefore, in this season of Advent, this season of waiting, let's choose to embrace the silence instead of running from it. As Adele Ahlbert Calhoun notes in her *Spiritual Disciplines Handbook*, the goal of the discipline of silence is "to free myself from the addiction to and distraction of noise so I can be totally present to the Lord; to open myself to God in the place beyond words."

Opening ourselves to God can bring fear of what we might hear or where God might lead us. Scripture is full of those who were fearful of the mission God called them to, but only as his servants were able to hear God's self-revealing love for them were they then able to respond, "Here I am Lord, send me!"

Over the next five weeks, take time to listen in silence for the Lord to speak in that soft whisper. Become more aware of what voices are shaping you the most and become an active listener instead of passive. May the quiet help steward the volume and content which fills the spaces of your time and transform the ways you use technology. May it transform the way we listen to one another and allow us to hear the beautiful noise that God wants us to hear as he speaks to us through his word, his people and his world. May it also transform the way we wait.



Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence

Let all mortal flesh keep silence,
and with fear and trembling stand;
ponder nothing earthly minded,
for, with blessing in His hand,
Christ our God to earth descendeth,
our full homage to demand.

King of kings, yet born of Mary,
as of old on earth He stood,
Lord of lords, in human vesture,
in the body and the blood.
He will give to all the faithful
His own self for heav'nly food.

Rank on rank the host of heaven
spreads its vanguard on the way,
as the Light of light descendeth
from the realms of endless day,
that the pow'rs of hell may vanish
as the darkness clears away.

At His feet the six-winged seraph,
cherubim with sleepless eye,
veil their faces to the Presence,
as with ceaseless voice they cry,
"Alleluia, alleluia,
alleluia, Lord Most High!"

Liturgy of St. James
Public Domain

HOW DO I MAKE THE MOST OF MY JOURNAL?

01 | **Sign up.**

This journal is NOT *theFormed.life*, but it is a companion, a place to process what you're learning through prayer, sermons, songs, and confessions. It's a place to help you capture prayer requests and questions to discuss in groups. This journal is where you record your personal story in the journey, but the guide is still the Spirit of God through *theFormed.life*.

02 | **Carry it with you.**

Bring this journal to church gatherings on Sundays for your sermon notes, community group gatherings throughout the week, and your daily quiet time. If it's not with you, you won't use it.

03 | **Use it daily.**

Write something in it EVERY DAY. Even if you can only write, "God, where are you? You feel far," do that. Each day there is space to capture what God is saying and doing. God wants to hear you, and sometimes we need to see our own feelings, thoughts, and desires written out to process what God is doing in our lives.

FOLLOWING ALONG

Here is the weekly flow for this season:

Monday - Beginning in Silence

Tuesday - Noticing in Silence

Wednesday - Listening in Silence

Thursday - Silence in the Old Testament

Friday - Silence in the New Testament

Saturday - A Day of Silence

Sunday - A Beautiful Noise

MONDAY ___/___/___

BEGINNING IN SILENCE

READ: **Isaiah 6**

What about God's presence led him to consider the "uncleanness" of his lips? How did the Lord respond to Isaiah and how did the Lord's response change Isaiah's perspective? Has there ever been a time you found yourself in utter silence because of what you saw?

PRACTICE:

See the video with a timer to aid you in this practice of silence for 1 minute.

FOCUS:

Take 1 minute of silence as you begin your week. If needed, take time to prepare for your time of silence. This could be taking some deep breaths and focusing on your breathing. What was difficult and what was helpful about the silence?

PRAY:

As we prepare our house for the coming Christmas season, we would also prepare our hearts for the returning Christ. You came once for your people, O Lord, and you will come for us again.

Though there was no room at the inn to receive you upon your first arrival, we would prepare you room here in our hearts and here in our home, Lord Christ. As we decorate and celebrate, we do so to mark the memory of your redemptive movement into our broken world, O God.

Our glittering ornaments and Christmas trees, our festive carols, our sumptuous feasts— by these small tokens we affirm that something amazing has happened in time and space— that God, on a particular night, in a particular place, so many years ago, was born to us, an infant King, our Prince of Peace.

Our wreaths and ribbons and colored lights, our giving of gifts, our parties with friends— these have never been ends in themselves. They are but small ways in which we repeat that sounding joy first proclaimed by angels in the skies near Bethlehem.

In view of such great tidings of love announced to us, and to all people, how can we not be moved to praise and celebration in this Christmas season? As we decorate our tree, and as we feast and laugh and sing together, we are rehearsing our coming joy! We are making ready to receive the one who has already, with open arms, received us!

We would prepare you room here in our hearts and here in our home, Lord Christ.

Now we celebrate your first coming, Immanuel, even as we long for your return. O Prince of Peace, our elder brother, return soon. We miss you so! Amen.

– A Liturgy to Mark the Start of the Christmas Season from *Every Moment Holy*

TUESDAY ___/___/___

NOTICING IN SILENCE

READ: Psalm 8

What does David reflect upon that leads him to worship? What similarities do you notice in this passage and the reading from Isaiah 6 yesterday? What does David observe that leads him to a silent reverence?

BLOG:

Go online to read or listen to the blog on *theFormed.life*

FOCUS:

How did this blog challenge you to implement silence into your own life? How could the blog's application aid you in noticing what God is doing around you?

PRAY:

Make Psalm 8 your prayer today.

WEDNESDAY ___/___/___

LISTENING IN SILENCE

In the year that King Uzziah died, I saw the Lord seated on a high and lofty throne, and the hem of his robe filled the temple. Seraphim were standing above him; they each had six wings: with two they covered their faces, with two they covered their feet, and with two they flew. And one called to another:

Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of Armies; his glory fills the whole earth.

Isaiah 6:1–3

FOCUS:

Spend time memorizing today's Scripture passage. What are specific words that stood out to you as you reflected on it?

PRAY:

Using today's memory verse(s) as a guide, let the words of the passage serve as a centering prayer prompt. For example, "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of Armies; his glory fills the whole earth" might first be a focus on the word holy and let that impact your prayer, then on God's title of Lord of Armies and how that leads you to approach him, then consider the word glory as you pray. Part of the goal is to slow down and grow in the practice of praying God's words back to him.

READ: Exodus 3:1–15

What similarities and differences do you notice between Moses' encounter with God and Isaiah's? Why do you think there was such hesitancy to go on Moses' part but an eagerness on the part of Isaiah in Isaiah 6:8? Has there ever been a time you felt God calling you toward something you wanted to run from?

FOCUS:

As you travel (commuting to work, returning from dropping the kids off at school, etc), try limiting all noise/distractions. It might be turning off the radio when you drive, or going for a walk without listening to a podcast.

PRAY:

Reread Exodus 3:7–10. Note how God intently listened to the crying out of his people. What burdens or sufferings do you carry with you today? Spend time presenting those to the Lord and quietly reflect on the fact that you worship the God who sees and hears.

SILENCE IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

READ: Hebrews 10:19–39

What are the sources of the believer's endurance awaiting the Savior's return? What steps are believers to take as they wait for the return of the Savior?

FOCUS:

Is there a family member, friend, spouse, sibling, or roommate, etc. you can pray in silence with? If this is not possible, ask the Lord to bring someone to mind that you could intentionally encourage today.

PRAY:

Spend time praying for the endurance of those in the global church who endure great suffering because of their walk with Jesus. As many are seeking to silence them, ask God to hear them in their silence and groaning as they await the renewal that Christ's return will bring.

SATURDAY ____/____/____

A DAY OF SILENCE

READ:

Reread one of the passages from this past week. How has God been using the Scripture from this past week to form you?

VIEW:

Go online to view the artwork at *theFormed.life*

FOCUS:

Take some time to reflect on today's artwork. What do you notice? What questions does the artwork evoke?

PRAY:

Take time to write out a short prayer of examen using the following prompts:

- Reflect on what the Lord has been teaching you this week.
- Consider the events of the week and where you saw God's presence.
- Give gratitude to God for what he has done for you.
- Surrender to him any concerns you carry for the coming weekend/week.

SUNDAY ___/___/___

A BEAUTIFUL NOISE

READ: Isaiah 6:1–13

FOCUS:

As you prepare to worship with your brothers and sisters today, reflect on the voices/noises that were the most impactful for you this week. Were those voices formative (i.e. truthful, edifying) or deformative (i.e. discouraging, dishonest, harmful)? If deformative, is it possible to remove or lessen their impact?

PRAY:

Take some time to pray for your church family this morning. Pray that each of us would be still and know that he is God.

WAITING FOR A NEW STORY

READ: **Isaiah 6:1–13**

SERMON NOTES:

Gather in person or online with your faith community at one of our five campuses.

MONDAY ___/___/___

BEGINNING IN SILENCE

READ: **Isaiah 8:11–9:9**

Who were the people going to instead of the Lord in their time of distress? In distress, how do you cope? Are there certain "noises" that distract you from your discomfort?

PRACTICE:

See the video with a timer to aid you in this practice of silence for 2 minutes.

FOCUS:

Take 2 minutes of silence as you begin your week. If needed, take time to prepare for your time of silence. This could be taking some deep breaths and focusing on your breathing. What was difficult and what was helpful about the silence?

PRAY:

O Discerning Spirit who alone judges all things rightly, now be present in my mind and active in my imagination as I prepare to engage with the claims and questions of my culture, incarnated in the stories that people tell.

Let me experience mediums of art and expression, neither as a passive consumer nor as an entertainment glutton, but rather as one who through such works would more fully and compassionately enter this ongoing human conversation of mystery and meaning, wonder and beauty, good and evil, sorrow and joy, fear and love.

All truth is your truth, O Lord, and all beauty is your beauty. Therefore use human expressions of celebration and longing as catalysts to draw my mind towards ever deeper insight, my imagination into new and wondering awe, and my heartbeat into closer rhythm with your own....

May the stories I partake of, and the ways in which I engage with them make me in the end a more empathetic Christ-bearer, more compassionate, more aware of my own brokenness and need for grace, better able to understand the hopes and fears and failings of my fellow humans so that I might more authentically live and learn and love among them unto the end that all of our many stories might somehow be more beautifully woven into your own greater story.

Amen.

– A Liturgy Before Consuming Media from
Every Moment Holy

TUESDAY ____/____/____

NOTICING IN SILENCE

READ: Psalm 46

What similarities do you notice between today's psalm and the reading from yesterday (Isaiah 8:11–9:9)? Reread Psalm 46:1–3. How does God remain faithful amid the tumult of the world around us?

BLOG:

Go online to read or listen to the blog on *theFormed.life*

FOCUS:

How did this blog challenge you to implement silence into your own life? How could the blog's application aid you in noticing what God is doing around you?

PRAY:

Make Psalm 46 your prayer today.

WEDNESDAY ___/___/___

LISTENING IN SILENCE

For a child will be born for us,
a son will be given to us,
and the government will be on his shoulders.
He will be named
Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God,
Eternal Father, Prince of Peace.

Isaiah 9:6

FOCUS:

Spend time memorizing today's Scripture passage. What are specific words that stood out to you as you reflected on it?

PRAY:

Using today's memory verse(s) as a guide, let the words of the passage serve as a centering prayer prompt. For example, "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of Armies; his glory fills the whole earth" might first be a focus on the word holy and let that impact your prayer, then on God's title of Lord of Armies and how that leads you to approach him, then consider the word glory as you pray. Part of the goal is to slow down and grow in the practice of praying God's words back to him.

READ: 1 Samuel 8

Why did the people find it necessary to choose a king for themselves? Why did God see this as Israel's rejection of him and why do you think God allowed it? How did God use the improper request on the part of Israel for a king as a part of his plan to bring a Savior through this nation?

FOCUS:

Think of one tech item that you use daily (e.g. a computer, phone, TV). If you removed that item from your life permanently, how would that impact your life? What would be hindered? What might improve? What would it be like to have silence from that item today?

PRAY:

Let today's prayer be a time of confession. Ask the Lord to reveal where you have sought for things other than him to be ruler of your life. Write down what the Lord brings to mind on a piece of paper or digitally. During a few moments of silence, physically place that piece of paper or screen in front of you as a way of offering those to the Lord, asking for his forgiveness and healing. Take time to silently rest in his mercy.

READ: Philippians 3:12–21

As Paul and the Christians "eagerly wait" for the return of Jesus, how does the apostle challenge them to go about their waiting? How do verses 18–19 relate to Israel's sin of calling for a king in yesterday's passage?

FOCUS:

Is there someone who has a walk with Jesus that you would like to imitate (v. 17)? If possible, reach out to that person and thank them for how they allowed God to use them in your life. What are specific ways you want to follow their example?

PRAY:

Take time to look through the contacts in your phone. Choose five people to pray for today.

SATURDAY ____/____/____

A DAY OF SILENCE

READ:

Reread one of the passages from this past week. How has God been using the Scripture from this past week to form you?

VIEW:

Go online to view the artwork at *theFormed.life*

FOCUS:

Take some time to reflect on today's artwork. What do you notice? What questions does the artwork evoke?

PRAY:

Take time to write out a short prayer of examen using the following prompts:

- Reflect on what the Lord has been teaching you this week.
- Consider the events of the week and where you saw God's presence.
- Give gratitude to God for what he has done for you.
- Surrender to him any concerns you carry for the coming weekend/week.

SUNDAY ___/ ___ / ___

A BEAUTIFUL NOISE

READ: Isaiah 9:1–7

FOCUS:

As you prepare to worship with your brothers and sisters today, reflect on the voices/noises that were the most impactful for you this week. Were those voices formative (i.e. truthful, edifying) or deformative (i.e. discouraging, dishonest, harmful)? If deformative, is it possible to remove or lessen their impact?

PRAY:

Take some time to pray for your church family this morning. Pray that each of us would be still and know that he is God.

WAITING FOR A NEW LIGHT

READ: **Isaiah 9:1–7**

SERMON NOTES:

Gather in person or online with your faith community at one of our five campuses.

MONDAY ___/___/___

BEGINNING IN SILENCE

READ: **Isaiah 40**

How does this passage represent both God's vastness and his intimacy with his people? Read verses 27–28. How do you respond in the seasons when God seems to be silent?

PRACTICE:

See the video with a timer to aid you in this practice of silence for 3 minutes.

FOCUS:

Take 3 minutes of silence as you begin your week. If needed, take time to prepare for your time of silence. This could be taking some deep breaths and focusing on your breathing. What was difficult and what was helpful about the silence?

PRAY:

Where in your life does the Lord have you in a season of waiting? As you contemplate that waiting, join your brothers and sisters in this prayer of waiting. If you find yourself waiting in line or put on hold, take out this prayer and go over it again:

As my life is lived in anticipation of the redemption of all things, so let my slow movement in this line be to my own heart a living parable and a teachable moment. Do not waste even my petty irritations, O Lord. Use them to expose my sin and selfishness and to reshape my vision and my desire into better, holier things.

Decrease my unrighteous impatience, directed at circumstances and people. Increase instead my righteous longing for the moment of your return, when all creation will be liberated from every futility in which it now languishes. Be present in my waiting, O Lord, that I might also be present in it as a Christ-bearer to those before and behind me, who also wait.

As I am a vessel, let me not be like a sodden paper cup full of streaming frustration, carelessly sloshing unpleasantness on those around me. Rather let me be like a communion chalice, reflecting the silvered beauty of your light, brimming with an offered grace.

Amen.

– A Liturgy for Waiting in Line from
Every Moment Holy

TUESDAY ____/____/____

NOTICING IN SILENCE

READ: Psalm 27

What analogies does King David use to describe the Lord's protection? Which of those analogies do you need to hold on to today? How have you seen God demonstrate that kind of protection in the past?

BLOG:

Go online to r ead or listen to the blog on *theFormed.life*

FOCUS:

How did this blog challenge you to implement silence into your own life? How could the blog's application aid you in noticing what God is doing around you?

PRAY:

Make Psalm 27 your prayer today.

WEDNESDAY ___/___/___

LISTENING IN SILENCE

He protects his flock like a shepherd;
he gathers the lambs in his arms
and carries them in the fold of his garment.
He gently leads those that are nursing.

Isaiah 40:11

FOCUS:

Spend time memorizing today's Scripture passage. What are specific words that stood out to you as you reflected on it?

PRAY:

Using today's memory verse(s) as a guide, let the words of the passage serve as a centering prayer prompt. Take time to slow down and grow in the practice of praying God's words back to him.

SILENCE IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

READ: Ezekiel 3

What was the source/cause of Ezekiel's silence? How did the Israelites' refusal to listen impact God's communication with them?

FOCUS:

Consider what you may be refusing to hear because you refuse to take time to listen. When do you find it most difficult to be still and listen? Why do you think this is?.

PRAY:

In this Advent season it can be difficult to take time to relish what God is doing in our lives. Take a few minutes to consider what lessons you think the Lord is seeking to teach you and ask him to use this Advent season to form them in your heart and mind.

READ: Revelation 10

What similarities do you notice between this passage and yesterday's passage from Ezekiel? Why do you think Revelation carried over the imagery of eating the scroll?

FOCUS:

What time of day do you find it most difficult to reflect on God's word? What are some practical steps you can take to gain a few moments of stillness and quiet to reflect on God's word today? Maybe this could include reflecting on the memory verses for this week.

PRAY:

Look out the window at your neighborhood. What are ways you can pray for your neighbors/neighborhood today?

SATURDAY ____/____/____

A DAY OF SILENCE

READ:

Reread one of the passages from this past week. How has God been using the Scripture from this past week to form you?

VIEW:

Go online to view the artwork at *theFormed.life*

FOCUS:

Take some time to reflect on today's artwork. What do you notice? What questions does the artwork evoke?

PRAY:

Take time to write out a short prayer of examen using the following prompts:

- Reflect on what the Lord has been teaching you this week.
- Consider the events of the week and where you saw God's presence.
- Give gratitude to God for what he has done for you.
- Surrender to him any concerns you carry for the coming weekend/week.

SUNDAY ___/ ___ / ___

A BEAUTIFUL NOISE

READ: Isaiah 40:1–11

FOCUS:

As you prepare to worship with your brothers and sisters today, reflect on the voices/noises that were the most impactful for you this week. Were those voices formative (i.e. truthful, edifying) or deformative (i.e. discouraging, dishonest, harmful)? If deformative, is it possible to remove or lessen their impact?

PRAY:

Take some time to pray for your church family this morning. Pray that each of us would be still and know that he is God.

WAITING FOR A NEW SHEPHERD

READ: **Isaiah 40:1–11**

SERMON NOTES:

Gather in person or online with your faith community at one of our five campuses.

MONDAY ___/___/___

BEGINNING IN SILENCE

READ: **Isaiah 61; Luke 4:14–28**

How does Jesus take up the language of Isaiah 61 in his message from the book of Luke? If you were in that synagogue, what do you imagine the response was when Jesus said those words?

PRACTICE:

See the video with a timer to aid you in this practice of silence for 4 minutes.

FOCUS:

Take 4 minutes of silence as you begin your week. If needed, take time to prepare for your time of silence. This could be taking some deep breaths and focusing on your breathing. What was difficult and what was helpful about the silence?

PRAY:

Father, as we continue through this season of Advent, help me to focus on the humility of your Son who did not consider equality with God as something to be exploited nor did he come to be served but to serve and give his life as a ransom for many.

Lord, in this season of waiting, help me not rush through the waiting; use it to mold me and shape me into who you are creating me to be. Help me to be still, to be silent in order that I might hear from you the ways you would reflect your Son's humility through my service. It is in this servant's name, the name of Jesus, that we pray.

Amen.

TUESDAY ____/____/____

NOTICING IN SILENCE

READ: Psalm 121

In this Advent season, what are your greatest sources of fear and stress? How does this psalm's depiction of God speak to those fears?

BLOG:

Go online to read or listen to the blog on *theFormed.life*

FOCUS:

How did this blog challenge you to implement silence into your own life? How could the blog's application aid you in noticing what God is doing around you?

PRAY:

Make Psalm 121 your prayer today.

WEDNESDAY ___/___/___

LISTENING IN SILENCE

The Spirit of the Lord God is on me, because the Lord has anointed me to bring good news to the poor. He has sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives and freedom to the prisoners; to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor, and the day of our God's vengeance; to comfort all who mourn,...

Isaiah 61:1–2

FOCUS:

Spend time memorizing today's Scripture passage. What are specific words that stood out to you as you reflected on it?

PRAY:

Using today's memory verse(s) as a guide, let the words of the passage serve as a centering prayer prompt. Take time to slow down and grow in the practice of praying God's words back to him.

READ: Micah 5:1–6

Why do you think Micah highlights Bethlehem's "smallness" in this passage? In spite of the dire situation this passage describes for Israel, what glimmer of hope does Micah point to?

FOCUS:

Do you feel overlooked? Have you ever found yourself in a season of obscurity? How does Jesus' seasons of obscurity speak to yours? Take time to identify how you might be seeking to draw attention to yourself; on social media, by interactions with friends and family, etc. Are you experiencing a healthy desire to be seen and known or are you trying to elevate yourself in prideful ways?

PRAY:

Let today's prayer be a time of gratitude for this Advent season. Gratitude is one of the greatest antidotes to pride. Reflect with gratitude the ways our Savior humbled himself, leading us to live lives of humble service.

SILENCE IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

READ: 1 Corinthians 1:4–9

What is Paul's prayer for the church in Corinth as they await the return of the Lord? According to Paul, how should we ask the Lord to help us in our waiting?

FOCUS:

When you were younger, what were you most excited about during the Advent season? What do you find yourself looking forward to the most now? When those things come to mind the rest of this Advent season, take time to reflect on the fact that our Savior is returning. What emotions does such contemplation bring?

PRAY:

Take Paul's prayer from 1 Corinthians and make it your prayer for Christ Community today.

SATURDAY ____/____/____

A DAY OF SILENCE

READ:

Reread one of the passages from this past week. How has God been using the Scripture from this past week to form you?

VIEW:

Go online to view the artwork at *theFormed.life*

FOCUS:

Take some time to reflect on today's artwork. What do you notice? What questions does the artwork evoke?

PRAY:

Take time to write out a short prayer of examen using the following prompts:

- Reflect on what the Lord has been teaching you this week.
- Consider the events of the week and where you saw God's presence.
- Give gratitude to God for what he has done for you.
- Surrender to him any concerns you carry for the coming weekend/week.

SUNDAY ___/ ___ / ___

A BEAUTIFUL NOISE

READ: Isaiah 61:1–11; Luke 4:14–28

FOCUS:

As you prepare to worship with your brothers and sisters today, reflect on the voices/noises that were the most impactful for you this week. Were those voices formative (i.e. truthful, edifying) or deformative (i.e. discouraging, dishonest, harmful)? If deformative, is it possible to remove or lessen their impact?

PRAY:

Take some time to pray for your church family this morning. Pray that each of us would be still and know that he is God.

WAITING FOR A NEW SERVANT

READ: **Isaiah 61:1–11; Luke 4:14–28**

SERMON NOTES:

Gather in person or online with your faith community at one of our five campuses.

MONDAY ___/___/___

BEGINNING IN SILENCE

READ: **Isaiah 65:17–25; Revelation 21**

What similarities do you notice between these two passages? Reread Isaiah 65:19. What do you think it will feel like to live in a world with no fear of bad news?

PRACTICE:

See the video with a timer to aid you in this practice of silence for 5 minutes.

FOCUS:

Take 5 minutes of silence as you begin your week. If needed, take time to prepare for your time of silence. This could be taking some deep breaths and focusing on your breathing. What was difficult and what was helpful about the silence?

PRAY:

Jesus, on this week that we celebrate your first coming, may we rest in the knowledge that you are coming again and you will bring life to a world that has been under the darkness of death for generations. A darkness that you entered over two thousands years ago in that manger. We thank you, Jesus, that you know what it is to suffer as a human, to be tempted as a human, yet without sin.

We thank you for overcoming the world so we, too, can have peace in a world filled with so much hurt and grief. Thank you for sharing our sorrow over the pains of sin and death in our world, and thank you for doing something about it by coming to this earth and giving your life for ours. Thank you for the hope that you are coming again, this time to vanquish death and its sting for good. Come, Lord Jesus.

TUESDAY ____/____/____

NOTICING IN SILENCE

READ: Psalm 132

How is this season of Advent a celebration of the fulfillment of this psalm?

BLOG:

Go online to read or listen to the blog on *theFormed.life*

FOCUS:

How did this blog challenge you to implement silence into your own life? How could the blog's application aid you in noticing what God is doing around you?

PRAY:

Find your favorite version of the hymn "Silent Night." Has your practice of silence prepared you for the celebration of that first silent night? Use some of the lyrics as a prayer.

WEDNESDAY ___/___/___

LISTENING IN SILENCE

For I will create new heavens and a new earth;
the past events will not be remembered or come to mind.
Then be glad and rejoice forever
in what I am creating;
for I will create Jerusalem to be a joy
and its people to be a delight.

Isaiah 65:17

FOCUS:

Spend time memorizing today's Scripture passage. What are specific words that stood out to you as you reflected on it?

PRAY:

Using today's memory verse(s) as a guide, let the words of the passage serve as a centering prayer prompt. Take time to slow down and grow in the practice of praying God's words back to him.

SILENCE IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

READ: 1 Samuel 1:1–2:10

How did the Lord respond to Hannah's "silent prayer" (verse 13)? How is Jesus the ultimate answer to her triumphant prayer in 2:1–10?

FOCUS:

Has it felt like God is silent in this Advent season? Take time to grieve any hurts or disappointments in this season. Rest in the fact that God hears you. Considering the various forms of silence you have practiced in the last few weeks, could you implement some of these disciplines as a regular rhythm in your life?

PRAY:

Let today's prayer be a time of lament. This could be a time of lamenting unfulfilled hopes for the Advent season or even the disappointment that the Christmas season is coming to a close. This could also serve as a time to lament some of the pain of this past year as we prepare to enter 2025.

SILENCE IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

READ: Luke 1:39–55

What similarities do you notice between Mary's prayer and that of Hannah's from 1 Samuel 1:1–2:10? How does Mary see herself as a part of this amazing story of redemption that began with God's promise to Abraham all the way back in Genesis (v. 55)?

FOCUS:

As you reflect on 2024, what were some of the most impactful voices in your life this year? This could be podcasts you listened to, music, sermons, friends, etc. As you think ahead to 2025, which of these voices do you want to press into more? What might need to be put on silent for good?

PRAY:

Following some of the themes of Mary and Hannah's prayers, write a prayer as you reflect on this Advent season and the past year.

SATURDAY ____/____/____

A DAY OF SILENCE

READ:

Reread one of the passages from this past week. How has God been using the Scripture from this past week to form you?

VIEW:

Go online to view the artwork at *theFormed.life*

FOCUS:

Take some time to reflect on today's artwork. What do you notice? What questions does the artwork evoke?

PRAY:

Take time to write out a short prayer of examen using the following prompts:

- Reflect on what the Lord has been teaching you this week.
- Consider the events of the week and where you saw God's presence.
- Give gratitude to God for what he has done for you.
- Surrender to him any concerns you carry for the coming weekend/week.

SUNDAY ___/___/___

A BEAUTIFUL NOISE

READ: Isaiah 65:17–25

FOCUS:

As you prepare to worship with your brothers and sisters today, reflect on the voices/noises that were the most impactful for you this week. Were those voices formative (i.e. truthful, edifying) or deformative (i.e. discouraging, dishonest, harmful)? If deformative, is it possible to remove or lessen their impact?

PRAY:

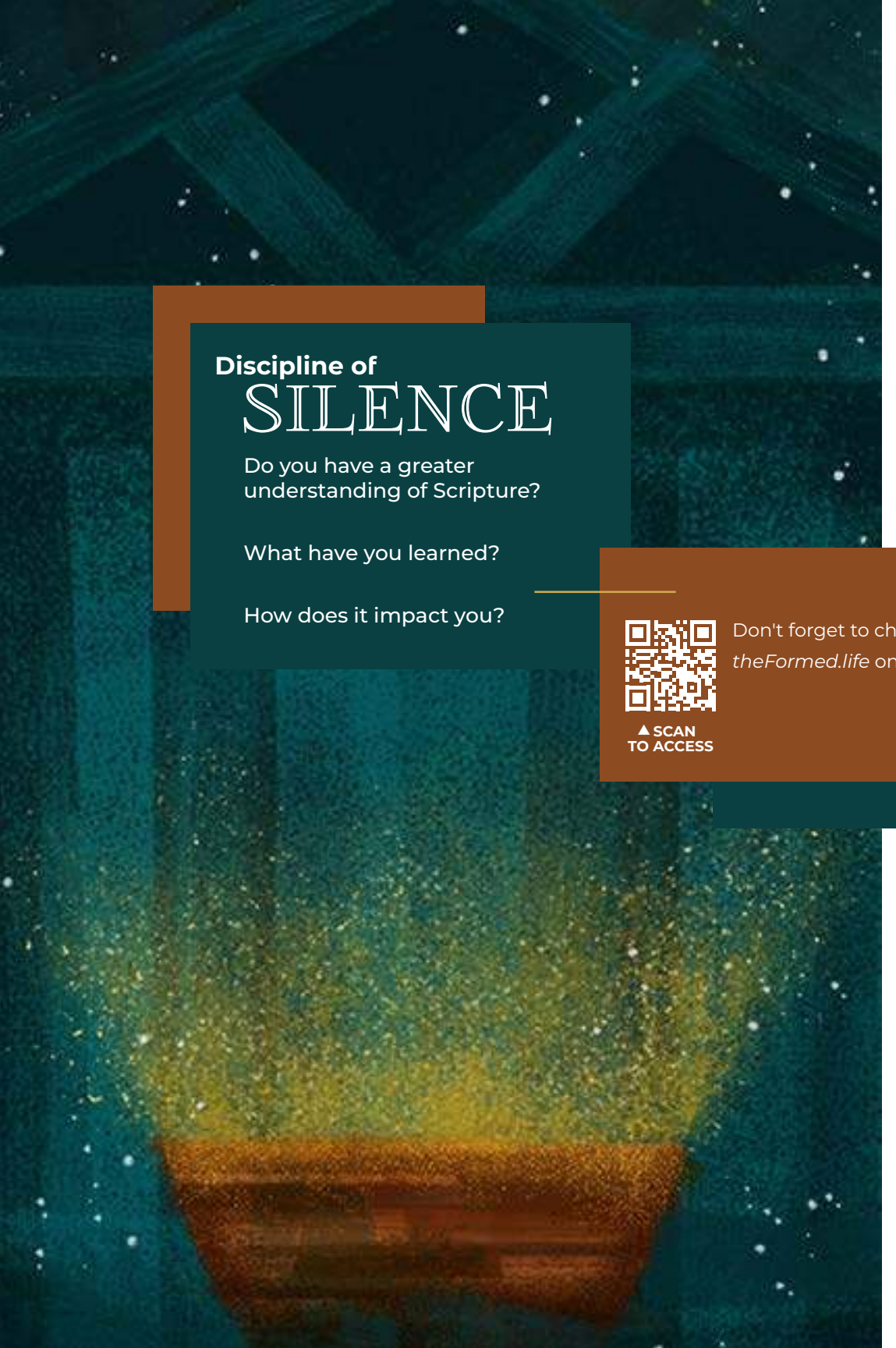
Take some time to pray for your church family this morning. Pray that each of us would be still and know that he is God.

WAITING FOR A NEW HOME

READ: **Isaiah 65:17–25**

SERMON NOTES:

Gather in person or online with your faith community at one of our five campuses.



Discipline of SILENCE

Do you have a greater understanding of Scripture?

What have you learned?

How does it impact you?

▲ SCAN TO ACCESS

Don't forget to check out *theFormed.life* online.

ChristCommunity
an Evangelical Free Church

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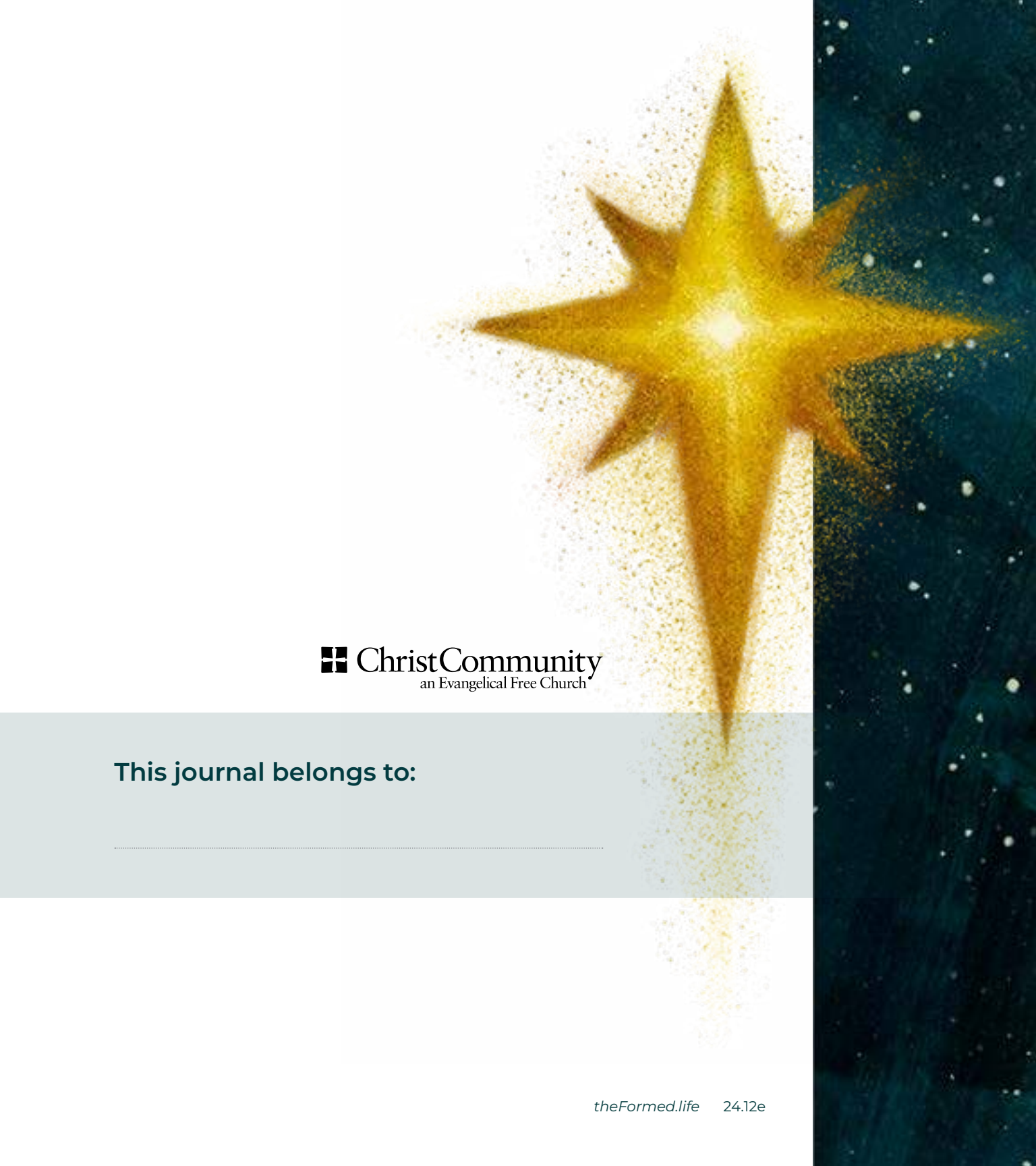

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