

# DARE WE SPEAK ABOUT HOPE?



**RHYTHM 1:  
LISTENING TO GOD**





# LISTENING TO GOD

## RHYTHM 1

### Something to consider

We're a week in with speaking about hope. Perhaps it will be a good time to reflect on your observations.

In theology there were always two schools of thought regarding hope. Some, on the one hand, used to say that hope is something far away. It speaks about the end times. Things will get better with time, they'd say. After World War 2, Apartheid and recent catastrophes this has proven not to hold enough weight. How can we believe in hope as something out there when we do not see things clearly changing throughout history?

On the other hand, there are those who say that hope is already realized. That we can feel it now and experience the fullness thereof through the Holy Spirit in our daily lives. Although this is certainly true, it so happened that this idea led to a very individualistic understanding of hope: hope is true for *me* here and now. But what about the whole world? The whole of cosmos, our entire history?

Perhaps hope is to live with faith right in the tension between both of these extremes. The shorthand phrase for this is "already-not-yet." Indeed, there are some things we experience of God's reign in the here and now. At the same time, we groan with the whole creation, awaiting God's transformation at every step along the way.



# LISTENING TO GOD

## RHYTHM 1

### MOVEMENT 1: SILENCE

Find a quiet spot. Try to silence all the noise in your life. It might help to close your eyes, listen to the sounds around you, and simply breathe in and out.

You will have many thoughts dwelling around in your mind, try to move through them into real silence.

You can even light a candle if that helps you to become silent.

### MOVEMENT 2: READ

Read the text, slowly and out loud.

Be sensitive to the movements of the Spirit.

Stay with words or phrases that affect you and catches your attention.

Do not analyse but listen and wait.

### 1 Peter 1:13-21

**13 Therefore, with minds that are alert and fully sober, set your hope on the grace to be brought to you when Jesus Christ is revealed at his coming. 14 As obedient children, do not conform to the evil desires you had when you lived in ignorance. 15 But just as he who called you is holy, so be holy in all you do; 16 for it is written: “Be holy, because I am holy.” 17 Since you call on a Father who judges each person’s work impartially, live out your time as foreigners here in reverent fear.**



**18 For you know that it was not with perishable things such as silver or gold that you were redeemed from the empty way of life handed down to you from your ancestors, 19 but with the precious blood of Christ, a lamb without blemish or defect. 20 He was chosen before the creation of the world, but was revealed in these last times for your sake. 21 Through him you believe in God, who raised him from the dead and glorified him, and so your faith and hope are in God.**

### **MOVEMENT 3: REFLECT**

Read the text aloud for a second time.  
Think about and reflect on the words or phrases that the Spirit has placed on your heart.  
What phrase or word stands out for you?  
Spend time with that phrase or word.  
What is the Spirit telling you or doing in you?

### **MOVEMENT 4: PRAY**

Read the text a third time.  
Talk to God about your deepest emotions and feelings.  
What discomfort or resistance does this word create in you?  
How does this word comfort you?  
Toward what is God inviting you?

### **MOVEMENT 5: CONTEMPLATE**

Bring your mind to God and rest in the presence of the living God.  
Allow the Word to sink deep into your heart and body. Choose a symbol or sign to remind you of this Word throughout the day.  
Continually remember it as you continue with your day and life.



## **Carol Penner | Coming to a City Near You**

Jesus comes to Jerusalem, the city nearest you.

Jesus comes to the gate, to the synagogue,  
to houses prepared for wedding parties,  
to the pools where people wait to be healed,  
to the temple where lambs are sold,  
to gardens, beautiful in the moonlight.  
He comes to the governor's palace.

Jesus comes to Jerusalem, the city nearest you,  
to new subdivisions and trailer parks,  
to penthouses and basement apartments,  
to the factory, the hospital and the Cineplex,  
to the big box outlet centre and to churches,  
with the same old same old message,  
unchanged from the beginning of time.

Jesus comes to Jerusalem, the city nearest you  
with his Good News and...  
Hope erupts! Joy springs forth!  
The very stones cry out,  
“Hosanna in the highest,  
blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!”  
The crowds jostle and push,  
they can't get close enough!  
People running alongside flinging down their coats before him!  
Jesus, the parade marshal, waving, smiling.



The paparazzi elbow for room,  
looking for that perfect picture for the headline,  
“The Man Who Would Be King”.

Jesus comes to Jerusalem, the city nearest you  
and gets the red carpet treatment.  
Children waving real palm branches from the florist,  
silk palm branches from Wal-mart,  
palms made from green construction paper.  
Hosannas ringing in churches, chapels, cathedrals,  
in monasteries, basilicas and tent-meetings.  
King Jesus, honored in a thousand hymns  
in Canada, Cameroon, Calcutta and Canberra.  
We LOVE this great big powerful capital K King Jesus  
coming in glory and splendor and majesty  
and awe and power and might.

Jesus comes to Jerusalem, the city nearest you.  
Kingly, he takes a towel and washes feet.  
With majesty, he serves bread and wine.  
With honour, he prays all night.  
With power, he puts on chains.  
Jesus, King of all creation, appears in state  
in the eyes of the prisoner, the AIDS orphan, the crack addict,  
asking for one cup of cold water,  
one coat shared with someone who has none,  
one heart, yours,  
and a second mile.

Jesus comes to Jerusalem, the city nearest you.  
Can you see him?



# DARE WE SPEAK ABOUT HOPE?



**RHYTHM 2:  
REAL TALK**





# REAL TALK

## RHYTHM 2

### YOUR INVITATION

During lockdown, we realise that our community is a gift from God.  
The people, their opinions, our differences – all gifts from God.  
These are, however, gifts that ought to be shared.

Therefore, we invite you to our conversation **tonight at 18:00.**

We will be hosting this conversation on **Zoom.**

You can login with the details provided in the Bron  
and E-Community groups.

### PREPARE

There are no formal preparations that you need to do. It will,  
however, be important that you try to read 1 Peter 1:13–21.  
This will be the basis of our conversation.

### THINK ABOUT

As you look at the text, think about these three questions. We will  
give an opportunity for you to reflect on these or to post more  
questions that you think will help us.

**-1-**

What does Jesus' death and resurrection have to do with hope?

**-2-**

Do you understand hope as something that is here now or  
something that only speaks to the future?

**-3-**

What will it mean to you to live with hope daily?

