



Discussion Guide for “New Hope for a New Year” *To Be Continued* Week 5

Christmas is such an intimate celebration – a time to gather with friends and family – that we often forget the global sweep of the story. But two often-overlooked encounters with the infant Jesus remind us of God’s faithfulness – not only to us, but to the whole world! As we look toward a new year, how can we be filled with hope at what God will do?

Scriptures for Further Reading

[Isaiah 61:10-63:2](#)

[Psalm 148](#)

[Luke 2:22-40](#)

[Galatians 4:4-7](#)

Passage for Meditation:

Christian meditation is intentional prayer that invites God to transform us as we are mindful of Scripture. If you have never done Christian meditation, here is a [guide from](#) our Catholic friends. This week’s verse is: **The Sovereign LORD will show his justice to the nations of the world. Everyone will praise him! His righteousness will be like a garden in early spring, with plants springing up everywhere. – Isaiah 61:11**

Questions for Discussion

1. As you reflect on 2017, what were some of your highs and lows? Where did you experience God’s presence?
2. How was Jesus’ coming a fulfillment of God’s promises in Isaiah 61:10-62:3? How was his coming a surprise?
3. How do you think Simeon felt when he held Jesus? Discuss his words in Luke 2:29-35.
4. How do you think Anna felt when she encountered Jesus? Discuss her reaction in 2:38.
5. What do you look for God to do in 2018? What is God calling *you* to do in 2018?