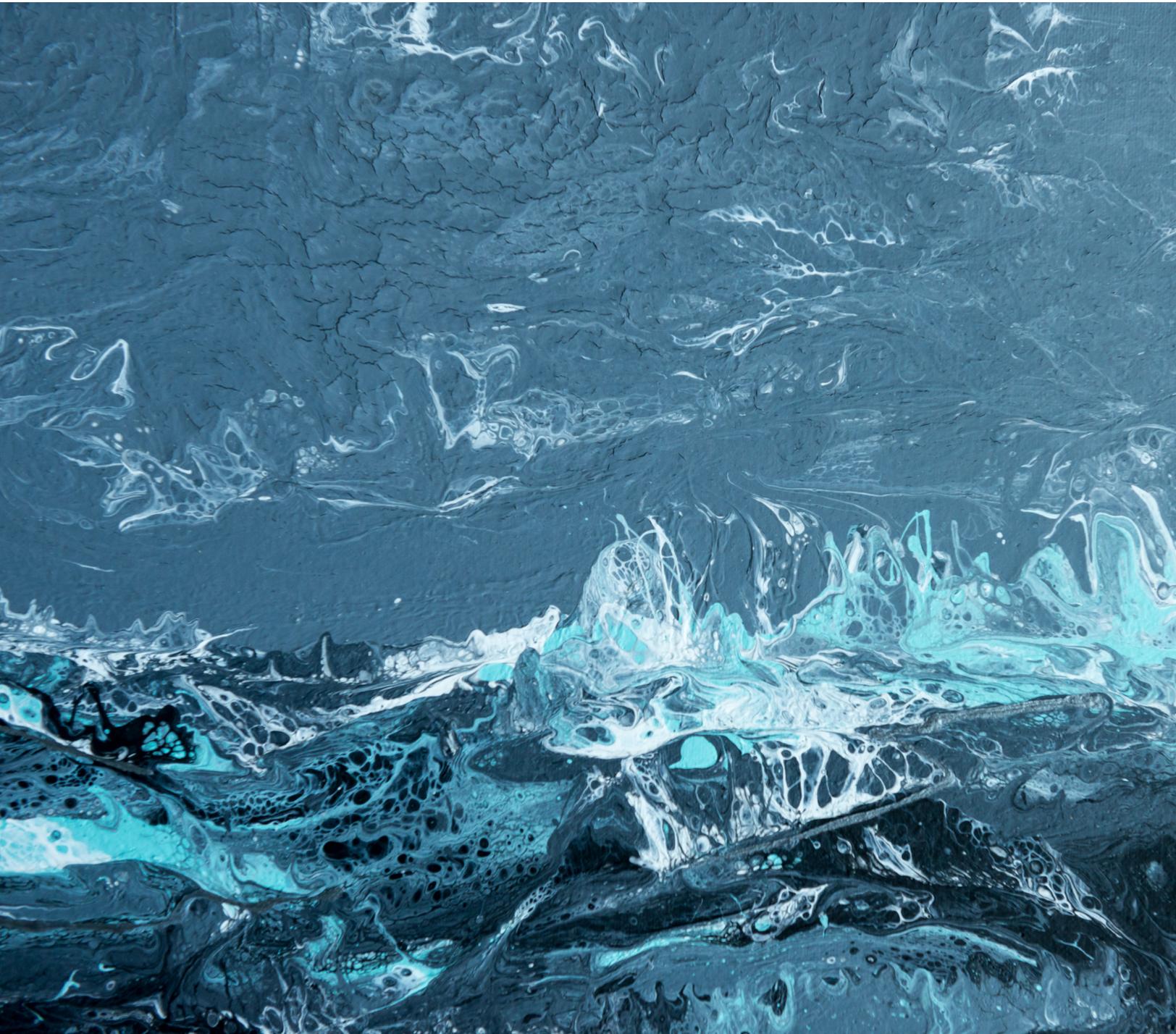


Leaven + Liturgies

E I G H T

VOLUME 2: ADVENT



SEATS + SEASONS GUIDE / STORIES / ART / LYRICS

Eight, Volume 2: Advent serves to further unpack the text of Romans 8 by exploring the theme of longing for the return of Christ. As we participate in active waiting for Jesus we co-labor with the Spirit in putting our sin to death and are further conformed into the image of Christ. Our King is surely returning. Even now, we hear "glory" as an echo on the wind as we seek to re-remember the song of eternity.

Called to Re-Remember

What if we've forgotten the song we were made to sing? Romans 8 reminds us of that ancient melody that we have spent our lives trying to re-remember. Opening with "no condemnation" and ending with "no separation," this beautiful text illuminates the new identity for those who follow Christ. Now as adopted children, the believer has a new family, an inheritance, and a relationship that will never again be broken with "Abba (Daddy), Father."

If we have an inheritance, then we have assurance that we can dwell secure as Sons and Daughters of God. We have been given a job to do as co-heirs with Christ: to rule and reign with him in this life and the next. We are now Vice-Regents and "Underkings."

This text also speaks compassionately about the brokenness we will encounter within us and in all creation. Romans 8 appeals to us directly in its acknowledgement of the experience of human suffering and sets our mind to see the Son and Spirit who intercedes on our behalf who is present and sustaining us in every moment of our waiting.

"For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory that is to be revealed to us." v. 18

I started Leaven + Liturgies in response to my own desire to be a part of a collaborative, creative community and to anchor my affections in the story of scripture.

We are a storied people. With the help of the liturgical calendar the Leaven + Liturgies community rehearses the redemptive narrative of scripture together over a shared meal, discussion questions, and seasonal liturgies in order to center our hearts on God's story and speak identity over the co-creator in Christ. In response to the good news of the gospel, the community collaborates together.

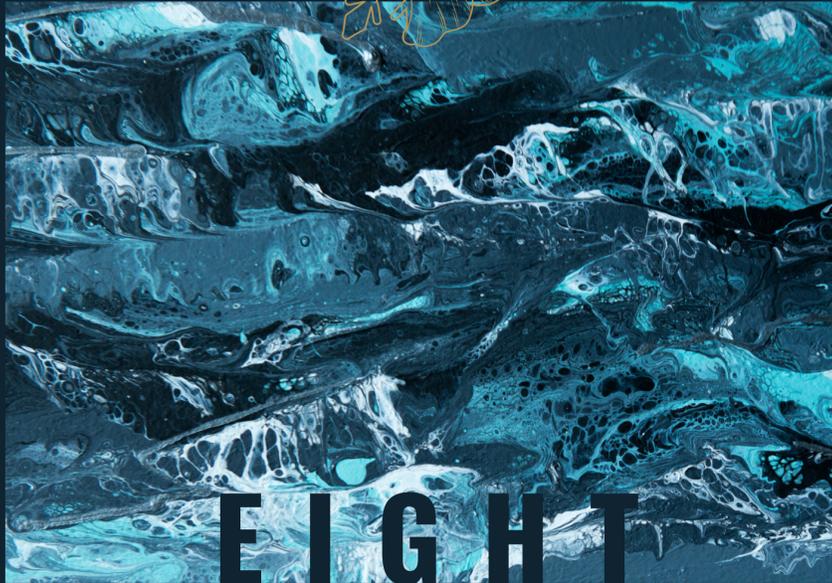
These songs have been shared at our table and mulled over in community. I hope that you will be blessed as we unpack over two volumes, 8 songs in Romans 8.

Christina Ichniok 

Leaven + Liturgies



Leaven + Liturgies



EIGHT

VOLUME 2

01. WE GROAN

Romans 8:18-28

02. DETHRONE ME

Romans 8:13

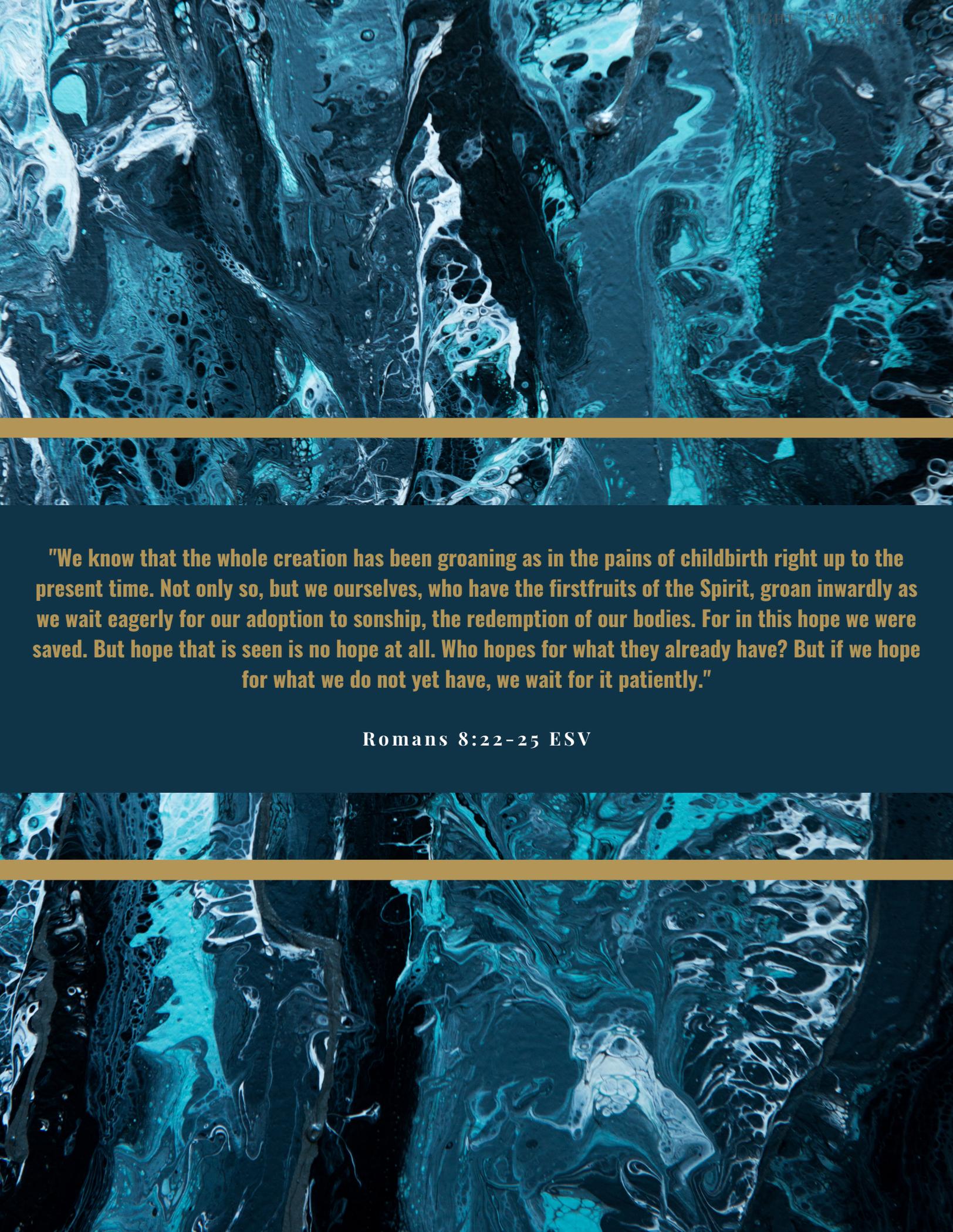
03. ANSWERED

Romans 8:31-39

04. ASKING (GLORY ON THE WIND) [FEAT. KATE BLUETT]

Romans 8:29-30





"We know that the whole creation has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time. Not only so, but we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for our adoption to sonship, the redemption of our bodies. For in this hope we were saved. But hope that is seen is no hope at all. Who hopes for what they already have? But if we hope for what we do not yet have, we wait for it patiently."

Romans 8:22-25 ESV



Why the Liturgical Calendar?

Christ has redeemed all things, including time. Through the use of the liturgical calendar we are invited into the story of incarnation and resurrection and can practice together the transformative power of the gospel. Seasons of celebration (like Christmas) are preceded by intentional opportunities for reflection, repentance, and remembering. Entering into the Church Year yields our hearts and minds to live out the redemption story all year long.

What is Advent?

Advent is the first season celebrated in the Church year. It begins four Sundays before Christmas Day. Advent means "coming" or "arrival." In the Advent season we posture our hearts to wait expectantly by the power of the indwelling Spirit. We remember our longing with hope for the day of Christ's second coming when he makes all things new. Advent is a season of preparation and reflection as we anticipate the celebratory arrival of Emmanuel ("God with us") at Christmas. Advent is a time to slow down, to resist the frenetic pace of our culture and its corresponding story of materialism. We have all we need in Christ, and yet, we long for final glory at Christ's return when all of our weeping is turned to perpetual joy.

Setting the table for redemptive waiting

Colors of the season: Purple/violet, royal blue

(symbolizing prayer, penitence, and sacrifice as well as the coming of the kingdom)

Flowers + Décor: Evergreen, red poinsettia; consider decorating with a bare Christmas tree until Christmas Day in anticipation for the celebration of the first Advent

Practices: Advent Wreath

Representing each week of Advent the wreath itself symbolizes God's eternity. Its circular shape reminds us of our God who has no beginning and no end as well as our own sure hope of eternal life. As we prepare for Jesus' coming, we remember each of the four weeks proceeding Christmas the virtues of hope, love, joy, and peace.

Week 1: HOPE (Purple/Violet)

We posture our hearts toward hopeful expectation and anticipation as well as the hope of our forgiveness in Christ.

Week 2: LOVE (Purple/Violet)

We remember the love of Christ for us and moving toward others with that same love empowered by the Holy Spirit

Week 3. JOY (Pink)

We celebrate the joy that we hold even in suffering because of the first Advent.

Week 4: PEACE (Purple/Violet)

We call our souls to peace in our prayer and penitence knowing that our savior has come to rescue and redeem and is surely returning a conquering King.

Christmas Eve: Christ Candle (White)

You may also include a fifth candle to be lit on Christmas Eve. This candle is known as the Christ candle in celebration of the life of Jesus. It is white to represent the purity of our savior and his sinlessness.



Leaven + Liturgies

Advent

INTRODUCTION TO THE SEASON

Read the "Introduction to Advent" included in this Seats + Seasons Guide aloud.

"A LITURGY FOR THE GROANING OF ALL CREATION"

Read Romans 8:18-28.

Participate together in the corresponding liturgy.

Allow a few moments of silence for reflection.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Question 1: *The scriptures tell us that all of creation is groaning for the revealing of the children of God (v.19). On that day creation will be set free from it's bondage to corruption (v.21).*

What do you think that future glory will be like?

Question 2: *The Spirit helps us in our weakness and intercedes on our behalf as we wait with patience (v.25). What does it look like for you to wait on the Lord?*

Question 3: *Is it hard to believe that God is working all things together for your good (v.28)?*

COLLABORATION + CULTIVATION

You are invited to share your art with this community and share in the art of others. Whether you are bringing a completed work, or a work in-progress, this community exists to spur you on as you pursue the creative vision God has placed on your heart. This is a safe and sacred space for you to begin or continue the courageous journey of becoming all God has called you to be as a co-creator with Christ. We are a community of varied skill-sets and gifting and are committed to genuine, gentle, and generous collaboration.

SAVE US,
OH

KEEP US
IN

Lord. Hope.



FOR WE ARE
WEAK,

Spirit Intercede.

WE GROAN

Inspired by Romans 8:18-28



A Liturgy For The Groaning Of All Creation

Leader:

We wait with eager longing for the revealing of the children of God.

Our broken hearts are yearning for your returning. All things you will restore.

People:

Save us, oh Lord. Keep us in hope.

For we are weak. Spirit Intercede.

Leader:

We know this present suffering isn't worth comparing to what you have in store.

We are your sons and daughters.

Now we cry, "Abba, Father" with groaning too deep for words.

People:

Save us, oh Lord. Keep us in hope.

For we are weak. Spirit Intercede.

Leader:

We ache to see your glory;

our tired hearts transforming.

You will work all things for our good.

If we hope for what we do not see,

we wait by your Spirit patiently.

For redemption of our bodies, we groan.

People:

Save us, oh Lord. Keep us in hope.

For we are weak. Spirit intercede.

Pause + Pray

GROAN: (GR-O-AN)

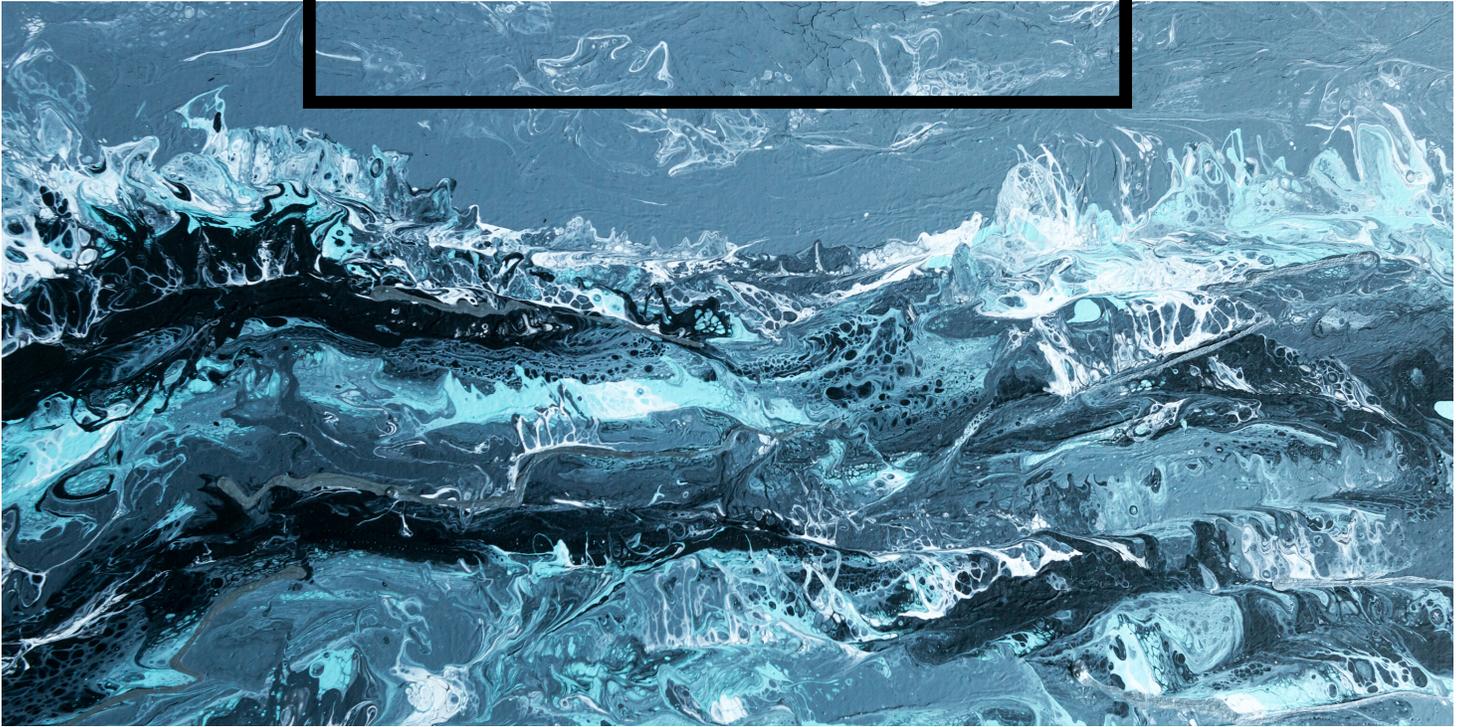
A DEEP CRY OF PAIN OR LOSS IN RESPONSE TO SUFFERING OR DESPAIR

PAUSE: Are there areas of your heart that long to cry out to God to ask him to move on your behalf? Are there areas of brokenness you hope he will restore?

PRAY: Ask the Lord for his healing comfort in your life. Ask him for a courageous hope to believe that he has come, is guiding you by the Spirit, and is surely coming again.



LAMENT AS AN ACT OF FAITH



Written by Rachel Wilhelm
Painting by Tiffany MacLeod

Lament is an honest prayer and cry for help in suffering at the face of an injustice, failure, or crisis. The posture of lament is faith, even though the one lamenting feels doubtful, or angry, or sorrowful, because lament is aimed toward the only one who has the power to fix the problem. Since the Fall, the disease of sin has had its way in all of creation. In Romans 8:22, it says “For we know that the whole creation has been groaning together in the pains of childbirth until now.” There is an understanding that there is something not right or missing from creation; a certainty that the cycle of life to death will come as it always does, and we, as part of God’s creation, take part. We cannot help but reflect what all of creation is already doing by yearning for the hope of glory, and for the time when we get to sing a song of redemption and praise in the presence of God in the new heavens and new earth.

I worry a lot. Since having children, the tendency has gotten a little worse, given that there are some things that are simply out of my immediate control, or any control I have at all. Through learning the hard way, I found that making God my first phone call instead of fretting before friends or family, to be the most effective way to order my struggles. I was able to see the rhythm of lament many times after I stepped into the car and started with, “God, please hear me. I need you. I beg you to see me.” Naturally I would launch into the details of my suffering, hashing it out, asking God questions, expressing my fear or doubt in the open. After exhausting myself with the enormity of my sorrow, the situation felt hopeless, and I would be out of words to state my case. The only option, as God and I were together, was for me to remind God of who He is, the promises He’s made, and ask Him to move in my situation. By reminding God of who He is, the natural flow would turn quickly to praise of Him and my faith would be strengthened, believing that the God I take my complaint to hears me, and is able to act.

LAMENT AS AN ACT OF FAITH (CONT.)

Romans 8:23-25 states my actions well: “And not only with creation, but we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies. For in this hope we are saved. Now hope that is seen is not hope. For who hopes for what he sees? But if we hope for what we do not see, we wait for it with patience.” Going directly to the Lord with my impatience, anger, sorrow, fear, doubt, anxiety or helplessness is an act of patience and faith in itself. My active groaning before the Lord is a statement of hope: that I know already that God is willing and will do, and my anticipation is set before Him in faith. Because this is the thing: we already groan; Scripture is clear about that. It’s about who we groan to. Do we groan to someone who can do nothing about it? Or do we groan in our spirit to the One who has all the power to make all things new? This is all the work of the Spirit in us. “For we do not know what to pray for as we ought, but the Spirit Himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words.” (Rom. 8:26) Even if our groaning is messy in our lament to the Lord, God’s grace is sufficient by the power of the Spirit and His groanings on our behalf. This work is also evidence of the Father’s relationship with us as His sons and daughters. He hears us, He wants to hear us, and He gave us the Spirit who prays with us all those things that we forget, or don’t even know of yet. There is no need for self-sanitizing in our prayers; the Lord has us covered!

All this brings us right back to faith. Lament starts by an act of faith through the work of the Spirit in us, and it ends in a faith boost because it reminds us of the hope that we have: “if God is for us, who can be against us?” Lament is an act of faith that is carried out in the bosom of the Father where we are safe and free. Lament is a chance for us to behave like sons and daughters and go into the world and represent our Father well, knowing that nothing can separate us from the love of Christ. Not even tribulation, distress, persecution, famine, nakedness, danger, or sword. Through Him we are more than conquerors, because we remember that He loves us (Rom. 8:35-37). Remember that your inward groaning is a natural move of the Spirit within you. Step into lament with your posture toward the Father where it is safe, with all confidence that you will be heard, knowing that “all things work together for good, for those who are called according to His purpose.” (Rom. 8:28)



DETHRONE ME

"For if you live according to the flesh, you will die;
but if by the Spirit you put to death the misdeeds of the body, you will live."

Romans 8:13 ESV

There's a killer on the loose haunting me.
I feel it in my bones inside of me.
I hear it in my soul calling me.
It bids me die so eagerly.

Oh, how I die!
Oh, to come alive!
Oh, Spirit mortify!
Oh, to vivify!

Now I see you mean to dethrone me.
Your reign reaches the depths of me.
These thoughts, these wants - appalling;
vice and wound stirring.

Dethrone me, completely.
Set fire to my sin
making beauty from ashes within.
Dethrone me, completely.
Refine me in this skin
as the war rages within.

Oh, how I die!
Oh, to come alive!

This life I seek, I find in the undoing.
It's there your hands are renewing.
You're elbows deep into the uprooting.
Even still my heart is dueling.

Make us ready for your returning.
Lead us safely home.
Make us now your hands and feet
to hasten kingdom come.

Pause + Pray

MORTIFICATION: (MÔRDƏFƏ'KĀSH(Ə)N)

THE ACTION OF SUBDUING DESIRE AND/OR ACTIONS PARTICULARLY THOSE OF MORAL CONSEQUENCE

PAUSE: Are there behaviors, attitudes, or desires that you try in your own strength to put to death?

PRAY: Thank the Lord that the work that he has started in you he promises to bring to completion in order to conform you into the image of Christ. The Spirit intercedes on your behalf to help you come alive to the things of God (vivification). The Son has purchased your righteousness once and for all. Christ's return is imminent.

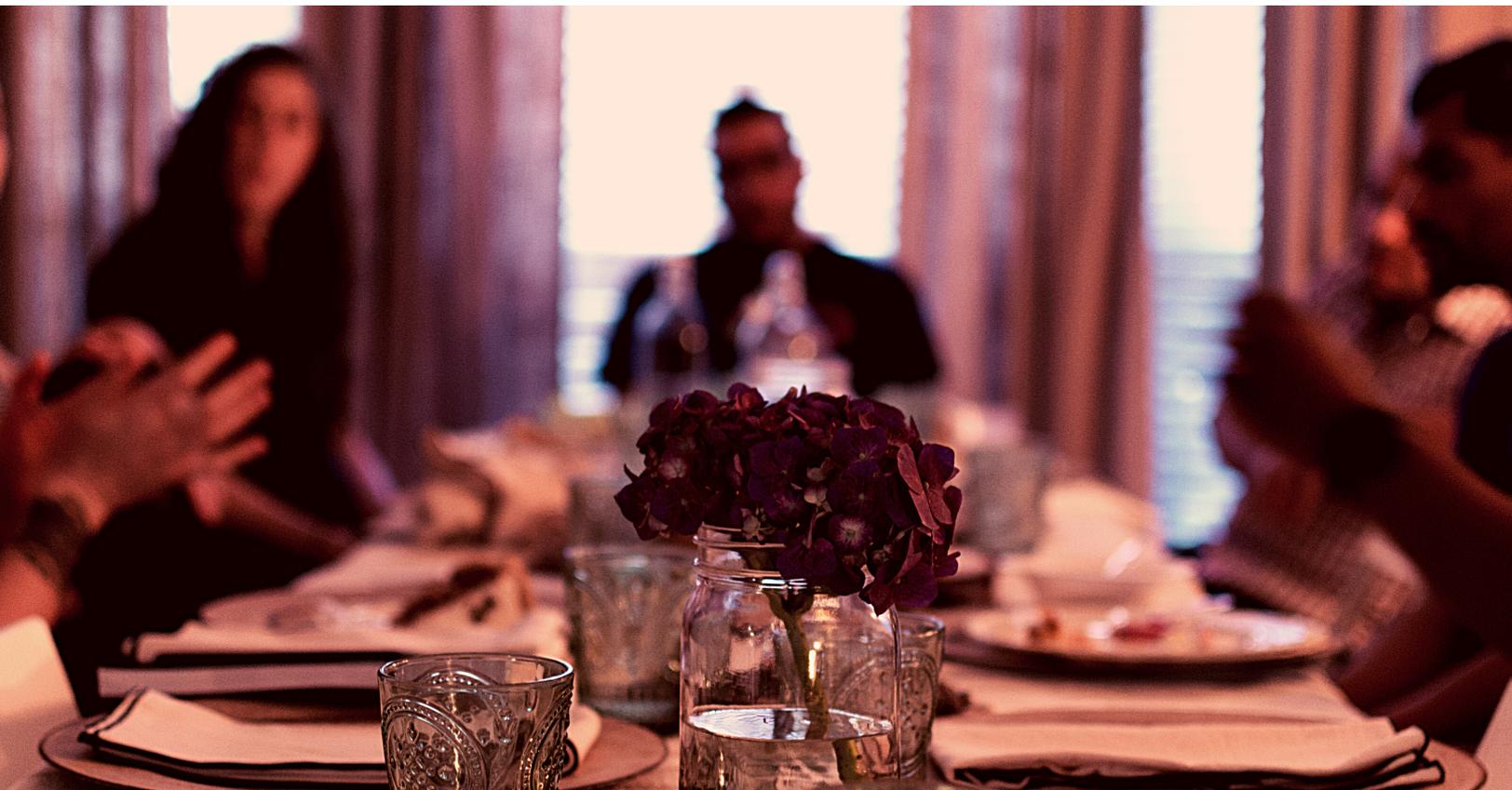
COMMUNITY STORY: ISRAEL MARTINEZ

The Bible is telling a story. We see this from creation to man's sin in the fall. We see this in redemption in Jesus' gospel and the future restoration of all creation. There is hope in Jesus who came in His first Advent as our Redeemer and who He is coming again as our conquering King in His second Advent. The story of scripture is of our Triune God calling us to Love God, to love people, and make disciples of all nations for God's glory. The ultimate mission of this gospel call should compel us to take community seriously. God is calling us to be part of His Kingdom. He is calling us to repent of our sin and to turn in belief of Him to fully partake of His Kingdom. Being involved in God's Kingdom means we need to have community by investing in people and being part of His church. Investing in people means we are investing in God's Kingdom when we make disciples or learners/followers of Jesus. As we love God and people we will make disciples of all nations which allows us to glorify God by truly living in biblical community. "Koinonia" is the Biblical word where we get our English words community, joint-partnership, or fellowship. Community is so essential in what it means to be a true disciple of Jesus Christ that makes other disciples. When one starts to invest in other disciples in true love of people, one can start making disciples which leads biblical community and building God's church. Deep gospel community is essentially found in God's church. The Church of God is where disciples are harvested and true community is found with God and each other. The church is the essential community where disciples truly understand and live out the gospel as they love God, love people, and make disciples of all nations for God's glory.

We actively await Christ's return. We don't wait alone.

We set the table for redemptive waiting by slaying our sin together and beholding Christ as one body.

LEARN MORE ABOUT KINGDOM COMMUNITY // REDEEMERIRVING.ORG



ANSWERED

Inspired by Romans 8:31-39

Silence these cruel voices inside my head.
Oh, tune my ears to Christ instead.
If God is for us who is there to condemn?
Who shall bring a charge against God's elect?

Surest hope we hold of a returning King,
who gently over us sweetly he sings.
What then shall we say to all of these things?
He who did not spare his Son knows our suffering.

**For I am sure
the work he started he'll complete.
Even now my Jesus intercedes.
He fights for me;
and God is pleased with Christ in me.
Safe, Beloved, Called,
I'll always be.**

**Strongholds now will break;
shadows, scripts, and shame,
the weight of guilt, and blame,
at the sound of your name.
We know in all these things
your love is conquering.
Nothing separates even as we wait.**

The Son & The Spirit Intercede

"The present manifestation of [Christ's] heart for his people is his constant interceding on their behalf... Intercession applies what the atonement accomplished. Christ's present heavenly intercession on our behalf is a reflection of the fullness and victory and completeness of his earthly work... The atonement accomplished our salvation; intercession is the moment-by-moment application of that atoning work... The New Testament weds justification and intercession, such as in Romans 8:33-34: 'Who shall bring any charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies. Who is to condemn? Christ Jesus in the one who died - more than that, who was raised - who is at the right hand of God who indeed is interceding for us.' Intercession is the constant hitting 'refresh' of our justification in the court of heaven. Pressing in more deeply, Christ's intercession reflects how profoundly personal our rescue is."

*Taken from Gentle and Lowly: The Heart of Christ for Sinners and Sufferers by Dane C. Ortlund, © *date*, pp. 69-70. Used by permission of Crossway, a publishing ministry of Good News Publishers, Wheaton, IL 60187, www.crossway.org.*

Pause + Pray

"SHADOWS, SCRIPTS, AND SHAME"

(SHĀM) A PAINFUL EMOTION EXPERIENCED IN RESPONSE TO A PERCEIVED SHORTCOMING OR FEELING OF HUMILIATION CAUSED BY ONE'S SELF OR OTHERS

Pause: Our shame speaks a story over us. These stories become the scripts we live by. These pieces of ourselves cast a shadow over the true light we carry in Christ. It is only in taking on our truest identity as adopted sons and daughters of God that we can combat the cruel voice of shame and speak truth over our hearts instead.

Pray: *Heavenly Father, we thank you for the truth that in Christ we are made new. You have called us, justified us, are actively sanctifying us by the work of your Spirit and will one day bring us to glory in your eternal kingdom. We ask for your power to silence the voice of the enemy that would speak lies over us and take our gaze away from the goodness of Jesus. Heal us. Restore us. Give us the strength to wait with patience for your returning. Amen.*

"What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us? He who did not spare his own Son but gave him up for us all, how will he not also with him graciously give us all things?"

Romans 8:31-32 ESV

ASKING (GLORY ON THE WIND)

Featuring poetry written and performed by Kate Bluett

How long? Oh, Lord, how long?

Hear "glory" like an echo on the wind:

"Yes, glory, glory: you were made for this."

"Who me?" I say. For I know I have sinned.

The breeze brushes my forehead like a kiss.

"No, Lord, no, no - I know this cannot be.

If there were glory, you would see me shine!

There is no light in anything I see, in yours of course
but nothing gleams in mine."

"It is not yet revealed," your whisper says.

"Hold on until the breaking of the day."

"What then, will I see nothing until death?"

"Hold on, hold on." the echo fades away but all around
the darkness starts to lift.

What is there left but glory in this gift?

It's here already. Here it's working out.
The sunlight shining even through the night,
the echo's whisper rising in resound,
this glow this gleaming streaming through my sight,
this very now is glorified.

Oh hark! No whisper but a shout, a cry, a call,
reverberation waking up the dark and turning all to
good for us. Yes all!

All good in that one syllable - in **Christ**.

The voice, the call that thunders in our veins,
the gift once handed over, sacrificed, who died, who
rose, who intercedes, who reigns,
who touches every moment with his grace and
nothing can take us from his embrace.

We're chasing the melodies of ancient songs we used to sing.
Can you hear Him calling? Our deepest longing.
We're notes in a symphony of loudest praise to the Highest King.
Oh, for your returning, we're asking.

Inspired by Romans 8:29-30

**ON THE CREATIVE PROCESS:
KATE BLUETT**



Telling the story of "Asking (Glory on the Wind)"

When Christina asked me to write a couple of short poems to serve as spoken-word accompaniment to this track, I was thrilled. She sent me the rough recording and gave me some background on the album and the particular song. I started scribbling things down right away. The more I wrote, though, less I liked what I was writing. “Spoken word” evokes images of poetry slams in smoky bars, free-form words flowing like water. I’ve never been to a poetry slam, but I’ve seen some on YouTube. Surely I could do this. I could write like this. Only, the more I wrote, the less I could.

In deep frustration, I took advantage of a day when my mom was already scheduled to watch my kids. Settled in with my French press, I re-read Romans 8 and looked over my notes. The trouble was the words, my words: They weren’t coming out as free-verse; they were coming out in the same rigid, metered lines that I always fall into. While I can and do write free-form poetry on occasion, strict rhythm and meter (oddly enough) come more naturally to me. I finally decided, fine, I’ll just write these short poems as sonnets, and then we can cut them up if we need to. As soon as I decided that classic sonnets were okay—the same fourteen-line rhyming forms that Shakespeare wrote a whole book of—the words started pouring out. An hour in a coffee shop, after days of frustration, I had two complete sonnets that lifted me up beyond anything I’d hoped for. When I got home, I typed the sonnets out and didn’t have to edit a word. Nothing needed to be fixed. There they were. I sent them off to Christina, and—Lord love her—she ended up tweaking the recording to expand the available time for the poems, so we didn’t have to trim them.

That’s why there are two sonnets on this track, instead of two freely-slammed spoken-word pieces.

I realized it was okay to write in my own voice, as the poet I really am, rather than trying to fit a different pattern.

THANK YOU.

For those who wait for the sure coming of our Great King with hope, thank you.
For those who help us to re-remember the ancient song our hearts long to sing, thank you.
For those who faithfully sing Christ's song over the hearts of others, thank you.

Christina Teleneck

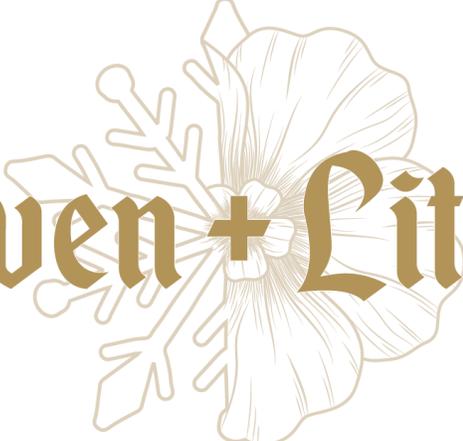


EIGHT

VOLUME 2

Christina Jelinek / Charlie Schaefer / Wes Ashworth /
Raul Medina / Grant McCurdy / Jeff Capps / Kate Bluett
Danielle McKinnon / Tiffany MacLeod / Philip Likens /
Cory Say / The Village Church Art & Business Fellowship

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Leaven + Liturgies

Leaven + Liturgies has been setting the table for creative community since 2019. It is our desire to see artists flourish through the showing of hospitality, encouraging gospel identity, and taking part in historical and new liturgy. We aim to cultivate Christ-centered creativity and collaboration through food, fellowship, and formation. Our Table Guide is made available for free to anyone desiring to host their own Leaven + Liturgies table.

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