

WAITING IN HOPE: RECOVERING FROM HURRICANES ETA AND IOTA

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LUKE 21:25-36 | BE ALERT

ADVENT WEEK 1 | SMALL GROUP STUDY GUIDE

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 28, 2021



LEARN HOW YOUR LOVE HELPS BRING RECOVERY AFTER HURRICANES IN HONDURAS

Weather extremes are now a regular occurrence in Honduras — the poorest country in Central America. Stagnant droughts dry up rural farmer livelihoods, and frequent hurricanes devastate homes, crops and infrastructure. With few economic prospects, many rural Hondurans are forced to migrate into urban areas and other countries to earn a living.

Since the early 1990s, Lutheran World Relief has partnered with local organizations, government officials, farmer cooperatives and other value chain actors in Honduras to grow inclusive and sustainable rural economies that afford Hondurans, especially women and youth, opportunities to thrive where they are.

The back-to-back storms in 2020 are of particular concern for Honduras' economy, as half the population reported food insecurity. The pandemic's effects on the informal labor sector have been significant, and 3 out of every 4 workers have reported significant income loss.

WATCH



https://youtu.be/PSc_qayMHHU



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DISCUSS

1. Listen to the sound of water at the beginning of the video. What feelings emerge for you?
2. Ernesto said his family was caught off guard at 4 a.m. by water rushing into their home. Have you experienced something that took you by surprise? What initial reactions did you have?
3. Throughout the video people travel by boat or on foot through the water. There is so much loss and destruction from the hurricanes. What do you imagine it would be like to see your community in this way?



BIBLE STUDY

Are you tired of waiting? As Advent begins, it may feel like you've been in a perpetual state of waiting: to feel safe and free from illness, to have dialogue across differences and to work towards peace. The text reads, "there will be signs," and you wonder what signs are meant for you to see. We question whether we have the ability to discern what is right and good in a world that is so loud and filled with people vying to have their voices heard. In a season focused on decorations, lights, presents and extra worship services, congregation members may not know which signs to heed.

The text tells us, "Be on guard," watch and be alert. Yet, it feels as if this is how many people have spent the last two years — listening and watching and pivoting. We've become experts at figuring out how to do the usual things in a new way at work, worship, school, travel and play. But there is fatigue, and many may already be asking, "Can we get a break from waiting?" Read together **Luke 21:34-36**.

1. What are you waiting for in your life? How do you think your experience of waiting is different from the original message of Luke's Gospel?
2. The text reads: "Be on guard so that your hearts are not weighed down." What is weighing on your heart? How can you offer your worries to God?
3. At the beginning of Advent, what things can you focus on to help you be more alert to God's presence in your life?



Gregg Brekke for LWR

Ernesto Lemus in his home in Honduras after Hurricane Eta.



PRAY

God of Signs and Wonders, be with us. When we feel overwhelmed, calm our hearts. When all we do is wait, give us your peace. When the ground beneath our feet feels unsteady, give us strength. In this season of waiting and hope, turn us to your Word, your love and your grace. We wait, trusting that your Savior will be born among us. We pray all this in the name of Jesus, the One who calls us near. Amen.



SHARE YOUR LOVE

As we eagerly wait for Christ's coming, so many of our neighbors around the world are also waiting ... For food. For clean water. For medical care. For hope.

When you help neighbors like Ernesto through Lutheran World Relief, you spread hope throughout the world. Who will you reach next?

Visit lwr.org/hope to make your gift and be a light in the darkness for someone in need.



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