

Sermon Title: “We Are the Ones We’ve Been Waiting For”

Rev. John Vaughn, D.Min

Date: November 28, 2021

Scripture: 1 Thessalonians 3:6-13

Key Verses: For this reason, brothers and sisters, during all our distress and persecution we have been encouraged about you through your faith. For we now live, if we continue to stand firm in the Lord... [and] may the Lord make you increase and abound in love for one another and for all. “
(v. 7-8; 12)

Passage Summary

In this portion of a letter to the church at Thessalonica, Paul is relating the results of his having sent his son in the ministry, Timothy to “check up” on the church, to encourage them in the faith, and to ensure that they are still practicing that which they have been taught. Paul was pleased to report that the Thessalonian church is remaining steadfast despite difficulties. His prayer for them is that they increase their good works. He also admonishes them to keep loving one another and to expand that love beyond their walls.

Sermon Summary

Since its inception, Ebenezer has been a place that has abounded in faith and works to fulfill our mission “an urban-based global ministry dedicated to individual growth and social transformation through living the message and carrying out the mission of Jesus Christ.” There are several reasons for this: (1) faith-rooted justice is in our DNA (2) we are a community dedicated to unconditional love, (3) we have played a role in developing everyday leaders. We have stood firm in times of challenges including this most recent pandemic. However, God still has more for us to do because “to whom much is given much is expected.” We must expand our sense of radical hospitality to those who desire a connection with the church of Jesus Christ. We must embrace our hybrid reality as our way of fulfilling our global mission to carry the work of Ebenezer everywhere. Finally, we must continue to show up for justice alongside our pastor. God has placed in our hands everything we need to accomplish all God has called us to do. We are the ones we have been waiting for.

Reflection Questions

1. What drew you to Ebenezer? What continues to draw you?
2. In what ways do you believe Ebenezer can expand its faith-rooted justice work in this season?
3. What are you called to do to help Ebenezer continue to live out our call for faith-based justice work?
4. How can our congregation better fulfill our mission of “individual growth” and “social transformation” in this season?
5. How can our congregation expand a sense of radical hospitality? Who’s missing from our fold? Who may feel left out?