M/M
It May Not Seem/Feel Like it but Help is on the Way Pt.2! John 11:17-44.
A time of fun, rejoicing, celebration, fellowship, anticipation, love, joy and new life while also being a time of pain, anxiety, depression, sadness, despair, grief and loneliness.

Therefore, we must consider what sites and sources of hope are available to us or what fresh sites and new sources of hope, divine insight, peace, closure and even clarity might we discover during this time of year.

In between these spaces of pain and possibility, despair and deliverance, apathy and actualization, grief and generosity, burden and blessing, God might be up to something!
Advent—The arrival of a notable person, thing or an event.
Advent thus becomes a time of great anticipation for change, renewal and restoration.

Advent represents the radical reorienting of relationships e.g. last will be first and the first shall be last etc..

Advent represents this divine in-breaking of the not yet but soon to come (sign of the times) that has appeared in the right now!

Advent represents God’s response to the needs, longings and desires of God’s children.

Advent serves as a reminder that God has not and will not forsake us and empire does not have the last word!

Advent reflects the reality that God knows, God cares, God sees and God is there!
What then shall we do?

Perspective - How do we see ourselves, this year, God’s grace, our future?

Proclamation - What words do we speak to ourselves, God, family and friends during this season?

Proximity - Where do we go (psychologically, spiritually and geographically) during this season. What sites or sources are we allowing to influence our minds, body, spirit and energy?

Presence - Based on how we see, what we say and where we go, are we ourselves present. What are we in the presence of?
(V 1-6) Jesus is fully aware of the/our situation and values the/our relationship, and what seems like a delay (V6) is not reflective of a dismissal concerning the severity of the/our situation.

We can confuse sovereignty with a lack of concern. (Kairos timing) Isaiah 55:8-9.

(V 7-10) Jesus is willing to go into an uncomfortable and dangerous space/place in an effort to be present with those whom he loves.

(V 11) Jesus makes a declaration about who Lazarus is and what Lazarus means to him and the disciples! John 15: 14-16

Jesus makes a declaration about what he is going to do!
(He has fallen asleep but I am going to awaken him!)

(V 15) Jesus’s response reveals another divine plan at work.
Trust without being able to trace, pain that has a purpose in it, loss that can give birth to new life!

(V 16) There are others who love us enough or have loved us enough to put themselves in a vulnerable and dangerous position with or for us. Hebrews 12:1
Like Martha (because of a relationship with Christ) we can express our authentic feelings concerning the nature of the situation.

“Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died.
Like Martha are we willing to express our belief even in the midst of our unfavorable or undesirable reality/circumstance?

Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego answered the king, “O Nebuchadnezzar, we have no need to present a defense to you in this matter. 17 If our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the furnace of blazing fire and out of your hand, O king, let him deliver us. 18 But if not, be it known to you, O king, that we will not serve your gods and we will not worship the golden statue that you have set up.” Daniel 3:16-18
In spite of how we feel and what we see, can we receive the pronouncement of divine turnaround!!

“Your brother will rise again.”

The LORD is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear?
The LORD is the stronghold of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?
2 When evildoers assail me to devour my flesh—my adversaries and foes—they shall stumble and fall. Psalms 27:1-2

Do not be afraid of them, for I am with you to deliver you, says the LORD.” Jer 1:8
Do not fear, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by name, you are mine.  
2 When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; and through the rivers, they shall not overwhelm you; when you walk through fire you shall not be burned, and the flame shall not consume you.  
3 For I am the LORD your God, Isaiah 43: 1c, 2-3.
Like Martha we must be willing to make audacious declarations of hope based on who we know Jesus to be. (Jesus has receipts)
Like Martha we must be willing to share the slice of hope for a turnaround or the residue of evidence that new possibilities are on the horizon!
Be reassured that the Lord cares too much not to act!

The eyes of the LORD are on the righteous, and his ears are open to their cry.

16 The face of the LORD is against evildoers, to cut off the remembrance of them from the earth.

17 When the righteous cry for help, the LORD hears, and rescues them from all their troubles.

18 The LORD is near to the brokenhearted, and saves the crushed in spirit.

19 Many are the afflictions of the righteous, but the LORD rescues them from them all. Psalms 34: 15-19 (NRSV)
What might be in the way of us believing that restoration/revival and resurrection is possible?

9 Jesus said, “Take away the stone.” Martha, the sister of the dead man, said to him, “Lord, already there is a stench because he has been dead four days.
Like Christ, we must make sure we stay connected to reliable and proven power sources!

40 Jesus said to her, “Did I not tell you that if you believed, you would see the glory of God?” 41 So they took away the stone. And Jesus looked upward and said, “Father, I thank you for having heard me. 42 I knew that you always hear me, but I have said this for the sake of the crowd standing here, so that they may believe that you sent me.”
Hold fast to the reality that Jesus is not done speaking new life into dead situations!!!!

43 When he had said this, he cried with a loud voice, “Lazarus, come out!” 44 The dead man came out, his hands and feet bound with strips of cloth, and his face wrapped in a cloth. Jesus said to them, “Unbind him, and let him go.”

0 The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly. John 10:10