The people who walked in darkness
have seen a great light;
those who lived in a land of deep
darkness—on them light has shined.

Isaiah 9:2
NRSV

"Longing for Christmas"

December 1, 2019

What is your heart longing for this Christmas?

At _____, the deepest longings of our hearts are laid bare.

"You have made us for yourself, and our hearts are restless until they find rest in you." St. Augustine of Hippo

_____ fulfills our deepest longings.

In a world of violence, division, and suffering, we're _____ for hope.

Hope for Israel – Isaiah 9:2-7

In the 8th Century BC, the _____ Empire conquered Israel and threatened Judah.

In the face of their Assyrian conquerors, there was little reason for Israel to _____.

In spite of all this, Isaiah spoke of a great _____ in their darkness.

Isaiah pointed to the birth of a _____ who would establish peace and justice.

Hope for Judea – Luke 1:5-25

Jesus was born "in the days of King _____." (Luke 1:5)

Zechariah and Elizabeth were a _____ couple living in an occupied territory.

With the promised birth of John the Baptist, hope _____ for a couple who were beyond hope.

Hope for the World

The prophecy of Isaiah points not only to the birth of Jesus, but also hope's fulfillment at his _____.

We anticipate the coming of Christ by participating in the _____ of Christ.

The hope of Jesus is foretold in the past, fulfilled in the future, and _____ in the present.

Action Steps

1. _____ your heart for the coming of Christ.
2. _____ for Jesus to bring hope into the place you need it.
3. _____ with someone your need for hope. Pray together.
4. _____ hope by serving "the least of these."