

## Worship: Imagining our Future

### **Read Revelation 4:1-2, 6b-8, 21:1-5**

1. John is caught up into heavenly worship to be shown “what must take place after this”. Revelation 21 gives us the culmination of God’s story, the future He is preparing for us. What is the nature of that future?
2. This picture of our future seems to conflict with how Christians normally envision our future as heaven, spending eternity in a spiritual ethereal existence in the presence of God. In the sermon Tim spoke of this as a temporary “rest place” or waiting place before the renewal of all things. Does this change your understanding of the biblical story? If so, how?
3. Our worship is meant to “re story” us. James Smith says that every liturgy, every worship service has a “telos”, an end, a goal, a particular vision of flourishing that is loaded into its rituals, forming us into a people that desire and pursue that end. In the sermon Tim mentioned a number of our rituals that re story us toward that end. (Church architecture, day of worship, Kingdom oriented prayer, the sacrament, music – art – poetic liturgy activating our imagination) Which one stood out to you and why?

### **Read Isaiah 25:6-8, 35:1-2, 5-7, 10**

1. The biblical passages that point to this future are often deeply poetic, evocative, earthy animated our imagination. For new creation (the meeting of heaven and earth) is beyond our wildest dreams, beyond all possible comprehension. Which of the images in the Isaiah passage animates your imagination, gives birth to hope?
2. It was theologian Stanley Hauerwas who in an interview said – “Christians are embedded in a whole set of revolutionary, subversive practices, while failing to notice their significance. Simply to say that Christians are those who always go to church on Sundays may be a more significant practice than we know. Are there things that Christians should not do on a Sunday? That question has been lost, but we think it needs to be found again. In a world where work is integral to worth, where the majority of our neighbours see Sunday morning as a time to go to the lake or to mow the grass, just getting up, getting dressed, and going to church becomes a form of non-violent protest, a way of saying, “we want a different world”. Discuss.