

# ***Listening for the Promise***

## WEEKLY DEVOTIONAL

### **Fourth Sunday of Easter – May 11, 2025**

*“And now, behold, I am going to Jerusalem, constrained by the Spirit, not knowing what will happen to me there, except that the Holy Spirit testifies to me in every city that imprisonment and afflictions await me.”*

*- Acts 20:22-23 -*

We used to have an unofficial rule for the summer camp staff. We discouraged them from telling the kids exactly what the schedule for the day was. We didn't want the kids to get all geared up for a game of Bonkers and then have to deal with the near revolt if we had to change to a different game instead. Part of the purpose of this rule was to teach kids to live in the present, not always looking ahead to what comes next.

What we found was that this “rule” really frustrated the campers. All day long they would ask their counselors what was coming next. What's for lunch? What game are we playing tonight? Who is lifeguarding? What's for supper? And all day long counselors would answer, “Wait and see.”

Taking life as it comes, receiving what we are given is not our specialty. We like to prepare and plan and be ready. We like to have a good sense of what is coming next. And if what is coming next is something we don't like, we work hard to come up with ways to avoid it.

In Acts we see a very different approach from the Apostle Paul. He is going to be traveling to Jerusalem without a clear sense of what will happen once he gets there. He doesn't know what is coming his way. The only glimpse he gets into the future is that what is coming includes hardship. It includes things that will be unpleasant.

Uncertainty doesn't cause Paul to say, “Maybe I should just stay home.” It doesn't cause him to throw a tantrum demanding to know what is in store for him. Instead, Paul accepts that the future is, in many ways, uncertain, but he trusts that his future is in God's hands. He trusts that, come what may, God is watching over his journey. God holds his life in his care. God does the same for each of us. We don't know exactly where our lives will take us. We don't know exactly where God will call us to go. But wherever the Spirit sends us, we can go out with confidence that this Spirit goes with us. God is trustworthy. And whatever mission he has in store for each of us is a mission in his hands.