

December 13<sup>th</sup>

Isaiah 7:10-16

Sue Smith

Isaiah is prophesizing for the first time after responding to God's call, saying "Here I Am; send me!" It is a prophesy to Ahaz during a time of war, but it can be interpreted to be a prophesy for creation as well. It is a prophecy with a sign of hope and a sign of despair. These are the same feelings we have about creation – hope for its future, despair at the current ruin. What is the hope in this prophesy? There will be a child born named Immanuel – God with us. And that child will eat curds and honey – a sign of the abundance in God's creation. What is the despair? The land of the kings Ahaz has been at war with, but with whom he is considering an alliance, will be destroyed – a sign of despair about the desecration of God's creation. How are we going to hold on to hope in this season of Advent and not end up in total despair? We need to consider who we build alliances with and how those alliances will impact creation. Congregations can and should examine their alliances. Do our alliances contribute to climate change and the desecration of creation? Or do our alliances contribute to the hope of a renewed creation? May they contribute to hope. We all want Heaven and Nature to sign in this Advent season!

Prayer: Creator God, in this Advent season, help us to find hope and not despair in the care of your creation. Amen.

Action Item: Review your congregation's investments – are you allied with the fossil fuel industry?