

# Awaken to God's Presence | Hope

## SUMMARY KEYWORDS

Faith, spiritual practice, divine connection, hope, sacred community, spiritual transformation, covenant of peace, sacramental living, whole life stewardship, holy risk, courage, God's love.

## SPEAKERS

Blake Smith, Joelle Wight

### **Joelle Wight** 00:04

A gift of peace in the midst of troubling times. Faith Unfiltered Podcast offers this series of guided practices to help you connect with the divine no matter where you are or what's going on around you, take a deep breath and allow your spirit to find calm in the storm of life.

### **Blake Smith** 00:28

Welcome to a time of reflection and spiritual practice. I'm your host for today, Blake Smith, and this is Awaken to God's Presence, a series where we offer short, guided spiritual practices to help you pause breathe and reconnect with the divine. This is also the first episode under our new name, Faith Unfiltered: Brewing Justice and Peace. In light of revelation given in recent years, coupled with the inspiring words of Community of Christ, president and prophet, Stassi Cramm at the 2025 World Conference, calling us to hope, I invite you to take this time to reflect on how the Spirit is calling you to hope in this moment.

For this time of inner reflection, I invite you, if possible, to find a quiet place to sit and be fully present in the moment.

Wherever you are right now, take a deep breath.

This is your invitation to pause and make space for the holy.

In these next few minutes, may you feel grounded, renewed and gently awakened to God's loving presence in your life.

Listen with an open mind and heart. Allow the Spirit to speak to you as I read these familiar words from Doctrine and Covenants, section 164:9, which was given to the church by President Steve Veazey in April of 2010. Pay attention to the ways in which the Spirit is speaking anew to you in these moments.

*Beloved children of the restoration, your continuing faith adventure With God has been divinely led eventful, challenging and sometimes surprising to you, by the grace of God, you are poised to fulfill God's ultimate vision for the church.*

*When your willingness to live in sacred community as Christ, new creation exceeds your natural fear of spiritual and relational transformation. You will become who you are called to be. The rise of Zion, the beautiful the peaceful reign of Christ awaits your wholehearted response to the call to make and steadfastly hold to God's covenant of peace in Jesus Christ.*

*The covenant entails sacramental living that respects and reveals God's presence and reconciling activity in creation, it requires whole life stewardship, dedicated to expanding the church's restoring*

*ministries, especially those devoted to protecting the sacredness of creation and relieving physical and spiritual suffering.*

*If you truly would be Community of Christ, then embody and live the concerns and passion of Christ.*

*The challenges and opportunities are momentous. Will you remain hesitant in the shadows of your fears, insecurities and competing loyalties, or will you move forward in the light of your divinely instilled call and vision?*

*The mission of Jesus Christ is what matters most for the journey ahead.*

Pause...

Take a moment in the silence to reflect on what you've heard, what feelings are bubbling up, what has been stirred in you.

Pause...

Now listen to an excerpt from President Cramm's 2025 World Conference sermon. Again, listen with an open mind and heart allowing the Spirit to speak to you.

*The Holy Spirit is alive among us, and yet, as we gather in this powerful moment, we do so with full awareness that the past several years have been profoundly difficult. We carry with us the wounds from those challenges, grief, uncertainty and the lingering effects of hard decisions, there is still healing to be done within the body of Christ.*

*But friends, what brings us to this moment ... is not chance.*

*We are here because of the intricate weaving of a divine story, God's story, a story that stretches across generations.*

*Ours is a journey threaded into the great tapestry of God's work. Through time, we are connected to the disciples who walked before us.*

*Just as they faced storms of doubt, persecution and loss, so too have we navigated seasons that have tested our faith.*

*Friends ... we are part of something sacred and still unfolding. Hope is not something we stumble upon. Hope is something we choose, and our collective story reminds us, it is especially in the hardest times that choosing hope becomes an act of faith, an act of courage.*

*Just like the disciples who experience spiritual renewal at Pentecost, we are being called to let go of what is comfortable, to open our hearts to what God is doing anew. This is a season of holy risk, a season of possibility--If we have the courage to trust where the Holy Spirit leads.*

*May we open ourselves to new insight into how we are being called to live, to serve and to choose hope as we step into the future together.*

Pause...

Again... take a few moments in silence to reflect on these words. How do you sense the sacred still unfolding before us? How are you being called to show courage in this season of holy risk?

Pause...

In closing, offer a silent prayer for the faith and courage to risk something New and become a blessing of God's love and peace.

Pause...

Amen.