**Psalm 130 – Help (A Long Obedience in the Same Direction series)**

**Opening “welcome” question:**

* What hopes do you have for the future…on a personal level?...for our community?...for our world?

**Worship – Psalms of Hope**

* Look up and read together some of these references to hope which are found in the Psalms: **Psalm 25:3,5,21…Psalm 33:18,20,22…Psalm 37:9,34…Psalm 71:14-18**
* Lead into prayers of praise and worship…

**Word (Psalm 130) – “Israel, put your hope in the Lord, for with the Lord is unfailing love and with him is full redemption”**

**Choose one of the following two approaches: A. questions coming directly from the Bible study guide from the series, or B. other questions emerging from the talk on Sunday**

1. **Questions coming directly from the Bible study guide**

* What insight does this psalm give as to the psalmist’s relationship with the Lord?
* The psalmist is obviously in deep trouble or distress of some kind. What keeps his situation from being hopeless?
* How does God’s mercy inspire hope (vv.3-4, 7)?
* What reasons does the writer give Israel for putting their hope in the Lord?
* What are some false hopes that people have?
* Throughout the psalm, the character of God inspires the psalmist’s hope. What is it about God’s character that maintains your hope?
* For what are you waiting and watching in your spiritual life?
* In what “depths” do you now find yourself, perhaps as a result of your experience of waiting?
* How might worldly hopes be holding you in the depths?
* What part can God’s forgiveness play in reaching into those depths?

1. **Questions emerging from the talk on Sunday (select from the following)**

* How do you react to Eugene Peterson’s statement that “To be human is to be in trouble”? Is it realistic, or overly pessimistic?
* Given an acceptance of our human sinful nature, how is it that we can “stand” before the Lord?
* Is suffering an inevitable part of the human condition and, if so, how are we called to respond to it in Christlike fashion?
* Discuss what this psalm tells us about God…
* How might you use this psalm to help explain the Gospel to someone?
* How easy do you find it to “wait on God”? What does “waiting on God” really mean?
* Do you agree that “waiting on God” is a necessary part of fully experiencing God’s forgiveness and redemption?
* What is the inter-relationship between personal redemption and collective redemption? What is the importance of the latter?
* “The evangelical church seems to have lost the vision for Scripture-saturated prayer. We tend to use casual phrases to express felt needs, rather than biblical phrases to honour God.” Do you agree with this statement? How can we be believers who pray the Bible?

**Prayer:**

* Pray for each other and for us as a fellowship around your responses to the above questions.
* Pray for all involved or caught up in the war in Ukraine – leaders, soldiers, civilians, refugees. Pray for our individual and collective responses. Pray for peace, forgiveness and reconciliation.
* Pray through Psalm 130 collectively as a group, or alternatively Psalm 71:14-18 as a prayer of hope-filled response.