September 7, 2026

Dear Friends in Faith,

It is so hot and dry out! How hot and dry is it? It is so hot and dry that chickens are laying hard-boiled eggs, cows are giving evaporated milk and I saw a dog chasing a cat and they were both walking.

I have to give credit to the internet for these jokes but the hot and dry weather is no joke.

I don't know how many days it has been since we've had rain at the lake but we will certainly have an early fall in our yard. Even if it rains in Oxford, it is probably not raining at our house.

I have discovered that it is pretty hard to write sermons on hope -my chosen sermon series topic for September - when it is so dry. Mainly because everything in nature seems like it has lost hope. Leaves are turning brown, limbs are wilting, and we have to put out new hummingbird food everyday (or it turns to alcohol). We can't let our cats out on the screened in porch for long periods of time. We seem to have more roaches and other insects trying to come inside. And when I have to walk the dog at 5 PM - ugh.

When planning this sermon series on hope, I looked for scriptures that had personal hopeful meaning for me and for others. There were other scriptures that I could have used, but these are the ones I chose. Here is the scripture for this month's sermons:

9/6 Psalm 42: 1-6a "Hope in God's Community"
9/13 Isaiah 43: 1-7 "Hope in God's Love"
9/20 Jeremiah 29: 10-14 "Hope in God's Future"
9/27 John 16:25-33 "Hope in God's Peace"

I invite you to read these selections and study them. Do they give you hope? What other scripture gives you hope? In what circumstances in your life have you needed these scriptures to get you through? Do you find yourself in a place right now where you need the hope-filled word of God?

Perhaps a dry and hot season is actually the best time to think and study about hope. We don't need hope during a perfect autumn day. We need hope during a long, hot and dry summer that never seems to end.

You hope for what you cannot see. You hope for what you dream about. Your hope is all about what isn't right in front of you. Hope for rain, hope for cooler weather. Hope for colorful fall foliage.

Just hope.

I hope you have a cooler week-

Amelia