

Hope Presbyterian Church
Sermon-Based Bible Study Group



July 23, 2023 - Exile - #2 in the series Anthem of Hope

Texts Referenced: Isaiah 40:1, 3-5; Matthew 5:3 NIV

1. What stood out to you about the message?

2. Consider this definition of *exile* - *the state or period of absence (forced or voluntary) from one's home.*
 - How do many people with mental illness experience physical and/or emotional exile?
 - How have perceptions of mental illness created/reinforced a social stigma and/or an experience of exile for many with a mental illness?

3. **Read Isaiah 40: 1.**
 - What might "comfort" look like for people in exile - physical, emotional, and mental?
 - Why has the church found it difficult to "comfort" people with mental illness experiencing a sense of exile?

4. **Read Isaiah 40: 3-5.**
 - What do these verses say about how we, as the church, can address issues of exile experienced by those with mental health issues?
 - What might these efforts look like at Hope?

5. **Read Matthew 5:3.**
 - In what ways could someone be "poor in spirit"?
 - How does this verse help us understand there is no shame in seeking help for mental illness?

6. How can we pray for you?