As you read each of the selected scriptures below, identify words, phrases, and/or images that convey to you something about God’s unfolding story in our world.

Hebrews 11:8-10
8 By faith Abraham, when called to go to a place he would later receive as his inheritance, obeyed and went, even though he did not know where he was going. 9 By faith he made his home in the promised land like a stranger in a foreign country; he lived in tents, as did Isaac and Jacob, who were heirs with him of the same promise. 10 For he was looking forward to the city with foundations, whose architect and builder is God.

Isaiah 35: 5-6
Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf unstopped; then the lame shall leap like a deer, and the tongue of the speechless sing for joy. For waters shall break forth in the wilderness, and streams in the desert;

The spirit of the Lord God is upon me, because the Lord has anointed me; he has sent me to bring good news to the oppressed, to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and release to the prisoners; to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favour, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all who mourn;

Jeremiah 31:31-34
The days are surely coming, says the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah. It will not be like the covenant that I made with their ancestors when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt—a covenant that they broke, though I was their husband, says the Lord. But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the Lord: I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. No longer shall they teach one another, or say to each other, ‘Know the Lord’, for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest, says the Lord; for I will forgive their iniquity, and remember their sin no more.
Listening to Our Story – New Testament

Mark 1:14-15
Now after John was arrested, Jesus came to Galilee, proclaiming the good news of God, and saying, ‘The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God has come near; repent, and believe in the good news.’

John 1:14  The Word became flesh and blood, and moved into the neighborhood. We saw the glory with our own eyes, the one-of-a-kind glory, like Father, like Son, Generous inside and out, true from start to finish.

Luke 4: 18-19
The Spirit of the Lord is upon me,
Because he has anointed me
To bring good news to the poor.
He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives
And recovering of sight to the blind,
to let the oppress go free
To proclaim the year of the Lord favor.”

God’s Spirit is on me;
He’s chosen me to preach the Message of good news to the poor,
Sent me to announce pardon to prisoners
And recovery of sight to the blind,
To set the burdened and battered free,
To announce, “This is God’s year to act”

Listening to Our Story – Restoration Scriptures

Doctrine and Covenants 6
6:1a A great and marvelous work is about to come forth unto the children of men:
6:1b behold, I am God, and give heed unto my word, which is quick and powerful, sharper than a two-edged sword, to the dividing asunder of both joints and marrow:
6:1c therefore, give heed unto my words.
6:2a Behold, the field is white already to harvest, therefore whoso desireth to reap, let him thrust in his sickle with his might, and reap while the day lasts, that he may treasure up for his soul everlasting salvation in the kingdom of God;
6:2b yea, whosoever will thrust in his sickle and reap, the same is called of God;
6:2c therefore, if you will ask of me you shall receive, if you will knock it shall be opened unto you.
6:3a Now, as you have asked, behold, I say unto you, Keep my commandments, and seek to bring forth and establish the cause of Zion:
6:3b seek not for riches but for wisdom; and, behold, the mysteries of God shall be unfolded unto you, and then shall you be made rich.

6:3c Behold, he that hath eternal life is rich.

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187 Blessed are they who shall seek to bring forth my Zion at that day, for they shall have the gift and power of the Holy Ghost . . .

189 And whoso shall publish peace, even tidings of great joy, how beautiful upon the mountains shall they be.

**Scripture 5: Doctrine and Covenants 163**

1. “Community of Christ,” your name, given as a divine blessing, is your identity and calling. If you will discern and embrace its full meaning, you will not only discover your future, you will become a blessing to the whole creation. Do not be afraid to go where it beckons you to go.

2 a. Jesus Christ, the embodiment of God’s shalom, invites all people to come and receive divine peace in the midst of the difficult questions and struggles of life. Follow Christ in the way that leads to God’s peace and discover the blessings of all of the dimensions of salvation.

   b. Generously share the invitation, ministries, and sacraments through which people can encounter the Living Christ who heals and reconciles through redemptive relationships in sacred community. The restoring of persons to healthy or righteous relationships with God, others, themselves, and the earth is at the heart of the purpose of your journey as a people of faith.

3 a. You are called to create pathways in the world for peace in Christ to be relationally and culturally incarnate. The hope of Zion is realized when the vision of Christ is embodied in communities of generosity, justice, and peacefulness.

   b. Above all else, strive to be faithful to Christ’s vision of the peaceable Kingdom of God on earth. Courageously challenge cultural, political, and religious trends that are contrary to the reconciling and restoring purposes of God. Pursue peace.

**Doctrine and Covenants 164**

9 a. 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.

b. When your willingness to live in sacred community as Christ’s 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 whole-hearted response to the call to make and steadfastly hold to God’s covenant of peace in Jesus Christ.

c. This 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 asserting the worth of persons, protecting the sacredness of creation, and relieving physical and spiritual suffering.

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

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

Consider the passages just read and your story as you have shared with others in congregations, mission centers, and other ministry opportunities.

What has God been up to in the midst of our story as a people from the beginning up to the present moment?

What words and phrases characterize the journey?

How does this look back help us understand our current reality and future possibilities?