

REFLECTIONS FOR 2ND SUNDAY OF ADVENT
 St. Andrew's Episcopal Church, Kent-Connecticut
Sunday December 8, 2019

DO NOT BE AFRAID

Parents ... Teachers ... Spouses ... Longtime Lovers ... Timid New-found Could-Be Beloveds ...
 Recovering Grievors ... Loners ... ***Be Not Afraid.***

Give Calm a GO.

We just might be the first species on the face of the earth that will worry ourselves to death. Yet --
 life is so much simpler than all the complexities we wonder, and angst, and fret about.

Some things are good and pleasant. Some are horrendous and brutal and fatal, and can never
 be recovered from.

Doing the kind, thoughtful, compassionate, INCONVENIENT thing is NOT one of the
 horrendous challenges we will face. Forgiving petty annoyances and behaviors is not. Picking
 up the pieces of a stressed family relationship or friendship one more time ... again ... as
 always ... is not.

Just DO, and BE what you wish life would do and be.

Life, in the aggregate, is only what one person at a time makes it.

THE PROMISE OF GOD is simpler than we seem to think. We just need to let go of naïve
 expectations ... let go of our fears that our accustomed thoughts or ways MIGHT need to morph a
 bit. Again.

***The Promise of God IS in the mundane everyday routine that is as dull as a grey winter
 afternoon that already had its flaming Dawn.*** This is what "incarnation" and Advent, and Christmas,
 are all about.

The Promise -- "I AM WITH YOU" -- is in the birth of babies, and the loss of friends, and the
 wisdom to reverence both.

The Promise -- "I AM WITH YOU" -- is in the worries that never happened, and the crises that did,
 and in learning to appreciate the way that each morphed us into strengths of soul and
 understanding and togetherness that come in no other way.

The Promise -- "I AM WITH YOU" is in Uncertainty ... in the uncertainties that are our shaky frame
 of reference for everything we do; it's in the thankfulness that we *are* still standing. It is in our hope
 for peace, and in the wisdom to *make* peace where we can; where *only we* can.

"I AM WITH YOU . . .". The Promise is timeless. It is with us NOW, not just "Someday". We know
 it every time we find ourselves being loved into Hope, again.

“I AM WITH YOU . . . “ . . . right here in the quivering hands on the bench next to us; in the shuffling swollen feet that almost make us late for everything these days; in the face in the mirror before and after make-up.

THIS is the Promise – that whoever you are, wherever you have lived, whatever you have lived-through, however you have been hurt or damaged, or *have hurt or damaged someone else*, HERE -- in the dimness and messiness and indifference of the mundane, exactly here, *is where God is*. This day, this moment, in our darkness and apathy and uncertainty; NOW.

And, once in a while, as in this time we spend together on Sundays, we remember that WE, too, are PROMISE to each other. We invite each other to come and see; to believe, and to be a little strong again, a little longer, just because we are here, together.

Come to me, and see God. Come to ME, and find tenderness; steadfastness. Count on ME.

Come to ME. Maybe I can be that sturdy cradle that my willingness to listen could become to the broken person who is sometimes too much in my face.

THIS IS THE MESSIAH THAT WE SING WITH OUR LIVES. Comfort . . . Comfort ye my people.

WE make belief and hope possible for each other. WE make Advent, and Life, believable for each other. Let's do it. This Advent.

Footprints in the sands of any one's life were not made by sitting down waiting for someone else to make them.