



Raquette Lake Chapel Sunday Blast *August 23, 2020*

At this Sunday's Chapel worship, Dennis Dewey will be the guest worship leader!

Sunday Readings (12th Sunday After Pentecost-“Proper 16” Year A)

Exodus 1:8-2:10: The new king of Egypt becomes worried about how many Israelites are living in Egypt.

Psalms 124: “Our help is in the name of the Lord!”

Romans 12:1-8: Paul tells us how we are to behave in the Christian community.

Matthew 16:13-20: The disciples do not grasp that Jesus ushers in the time of the Kingdom of God.

Not a sermon... about Psalms in difficult times.

“I Hope This Email Finds You Well” was the title of a Times article about how sensitive we have become while trying to authentically stay in touch with each other. “Well, no, this email does not find me well — I’m terrible, thanks,” the article goes on.

One of the points that the author, Tim Herrera, makes is that we struggle at being honest in situations that we have not paid much attention to before, like simple greetings. In an email, “I hope you’re doing well,” is something I have written quite often. Or in a phone call or greeting someone in a store: “Hi, how are you?” If we are thinking about our words in asking – and answering – we may find there is something deeper there than we intended. Do we really want to know how someone is doing? Do we really want to tell someone else that “I’m not doing so good since you ask!”

There are a group of Psalms for times like this, and we can call them “Psalms of Disorientation.” These Psalms, unlike the ones we looked at last week, do not tell a story about how life is good and things are going smoothly. Our smooth trip down the highway has hit an unexpected and unplanned for detour. We don’t know where it will lead us and how long it will take. One thing the Psalms repeatedly tells us is “we are all in this together and God is still there whether you see God or not!”

Maybe to Christians the most memorable verse of Psalm 22 is “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?” the words Christ cried out while suffering on the cross. The last verse asks for help: “Do not be far from me, for trouble is near and there is no one to help.” To a lesser degree I suspect we have all suffered these feelings at some point in our lives. Is there really comfort in knowing that we are not alone in our suffering? Yes I think so. Is there really comfort knowing that God is by our side during these times? Absolutely yes! We can take solice in these Psalms knowing that we are in a place where other people of faith have gone before with God beside them.

I suggest you look at a few of these this week while you are on your personal detours, and while you do, try to feel the presence of the Holy Spirit beside you: 13, 22, 32, 35, and 50. May the peace which passes all understanding be with you. - Vance

Prayers for many of our friends and family facing cancer treatments; those who have died from COVID-19 and their families and for those who have the disease; for relief from the California fires; for a safe opening of schools.