

## We Are God's Light in the World

The following verses which I recently used for my own meditation talks about the light, for me spoke of what we are trying to do as a parish - rethink, refocus who we are and how we do ministry moving forward.

Matthew 5:14-16

"You are the light of the world. A city on a hill cannot be hidden, neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead, they put it on its stand and it gives light to everyone in the house." In the same way, let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven."

At some time in your life, you may have experienced a feeling of being in total darkness, maybe you could not see your hand in front of your face. The first experience that came to mind for me was my first encounter with a 'funhouse' at one of those traveling carnivals when I was young. My older cousin who dragged me along thought it great fun. But five years younger I thought it was the scariest place I'd ever been. But thankfully when we got closer to the exit the tiniest glimmer of light came in, it was such a good feeling. It brought me hope, I was going to make it out, back into the light.

That's the kind of responsibility we have as Christ's ambassadors in this world. Our light, yours and mine that shines with God's love and ideals is a light in a dark world. I value our traditions, even too getting down on my knees to pray, our liturgy, the poetry of it truly speaks to me. Our beautiful buildings are peaceful places of rest and security away from the world. As a traditional Christian church, we have been shining our light on our traditions, what we know, and what we own. Since the 70s or so we have been slowly dwindling in numbers and relevance. I fear Covid 19 is going to help speed up that process.

This pandemic has also 'enlightened me' in so many ways. I have prayed more, learned more technology than I ever wanted too, and have been much more observant of the world around me. It has in some ways been a time of contemplation. It has taught me how blessed we truly are.

I believe God hears our prayers; I also believe in the collective power of all of us praying for others. But, if a man sits on a blanket in a doorway, without shelter or food, what good is it to him if we pass him by 'saying poor soul, I'll pray for you'. First, we must show God's love and compassion, and then maybe, just maybe we will have the opportunity of telling him about God's love.

**"Those who are burdened by life and who have no hope, will see the light and be drawn to it."**

**Carolyn Larsen**

How we do ministry moving forward is going to look different but the challenge is can we take some control to determine how we want it to be different. How do we be Christ's ambassadors, God's light in this world? What will make us relevant in our communities?

Charlotte Ewbank