His Star Beckons

The sweet smell of gingerbread baking. Ornaments on the tree, each holding a memory of years gone by. The nostalgia of eggnog and garland. Christmas carols known by heart. “Come all ye faithful. Come let us adore him.” So familiar, we need not remember the words, they simply flow. How effortlessly we slip into the season. How easily we cloak his birth with tradition.

As I write this reflection, my tree is twinkling. The Christmas carols are playing. The eggnog is in the refrigerator. I feel the rhythm of the season surrounding me. Sheltered by home fires. Warmed at the hearth of tradition. But I wonder, as lovely and comforting as it may be, am I not leaving his gift unopened under the tree that I have so carefully decorated?

For, is he not inviting me, us, to embark upon a journey? To listen for something in the sky that sounds like voices singing? To gaze upon a star in the black night that stirs our hearts? Is there not something beckoning us to travel long distances from lonely hillsides where shepherds graze their flocks? To voyage across wildernesses following a distant, yet persistent, star? To journey without knowing fully where we are going, what we are seeking, or what we shall find?
Is he not beckoning us to listen for him, search for him, catch our breath at what we might find? Calling us to step out of the rhythm of our traditions, encouraging us to realize that the voices in the sky, the star in the dark night, exist now, here, in each of our lives, if only we were to stop a moment to listen, to gaze?

For I believe that the gift that he is holding out to me, to us, will not be found under a tree next to a carved Jesus tucked into a manger. The gift of his Love embodied shall not be found in the traditions of the familiar, but rather on the journey to which he is calling us into the unknown.

Calling us from wherever we are to where he is. Where he always is. Beside the lonely, the hungry, the lost. Those who mourn, those who despair. Calling us to allow him to enter into those same places that exist in our own hearts. Encouraging us to trust him anew so that we might find ourselves journeying toward his love, and then bowing down before him in unlikely places and in unexpected ways. So that we might find ourselves whispering in wonder, “Here he is. Right here before us. The King of Angels. Christ the Lord.” The miracle of his love, his redeeming, wondrous love unfolding before us.

So, in this season, let us not remain beside home fires, warming beside the hearth of tradition. But rather, may we embark upon the journey to which he is calling us. May we listen to the voices that sing in the sky, follow the star that shines brightly. Let us journey without knowing fully where he leads, or what we might find, until suddenly we find ourselves unexpectedly before him. And, then, let us adore him. Come, let us adore him, Christ our precious Lord.

Rev. Linda L. McCarty
President & CEO

*In gratitude to all of you who listen to his voice throughout the year; bowing down before him in Guatemala.*

*In gratitude to all of you who support this mission, day in and day out, embodying his love.*

*In gratitude to the One who loves us so much that he chooses to enter into our darkest night, our deepest pain, bathing us with his light and his love, every day of the year.*

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