

BEING A WELCOMING PEOPLE

Scripture: Isaiah 26:7-15

December 7, 2020

Message: We are in the midst of Advent. And still the pandemic rages. Somber times.

(v. 7 – 8) **The way of the just is uprightness; O most upright, You weigh the path of the just.**

Yes, in the way of Your judgments, O Lord, we have waited for You; the desire of our soul is for Your name and for the for the remembrance of You. (NKJV)

Do you notice that when you feel good about yourself – a decision you made, perhaps, you stand just a little bit taller. When you feel like you are in a good place with God, you are more comfortable in your life? When we let our ego get in the way, we may veer off the path of righteousness – of being in that right relationship with God. When we allow our wants – our ego – to take us away from spending time with God – we consciously or unconsciously turn away from God.

When we realize we have wandered away from God, we may feel off-kilter – out of synch – and then, perhaps ashamed. We seek that lost relationship. We suffer a sense of despair. We seek the comfort of God's presence in our lives. We hunger for God's presence. We yearn for that place of peace. We want to share the comfort we enjoy with others. By spending time with God – in worded or wordless prayer, we find a sense of peace. By turning – or returning – to God, we can find forgiveness. We are made welcomes with forgiveness.

(v. 15) **You have increased the nation, O Lord, You have increased the nation; You are glorified; You have expanded all the borders of the land. (NKJV)**

As we prepare to welcome the Christ child in our lives, may we welcome the lost, the least, the traveler and the immigrant. This Advent, may we slow down and think about our relationship with God.

Prayer: Gracious and loving God, we know you are ever with us. May we focus this season on being a welcome people. May we find that close relationship with You that we seek. Amen.

Name: Jane A. Ensminger
Church: Crim Memorial United Methodist Church
District: Mon Valley
Church Location: Philippi
Email: janeaensminger@gmail.com
Position: Certified Lay Servant, District Lay Leader, Spiritual Formation Task Force