

FCCS May 19, 2017  
Rev. Curran Reichert

“Inquire Within”

John 14:15-21

*Spirit of God that dwells in me- open my eyes that I may see- come fill my heart and make me whole. Spirit of love I am yours. Amen*

When I was Ellie’s age, I used to spend hours on hot summer afternoons in my grandparent’s front yard performing sprinkler routines for them. It was Southern California, San Bernardino to be exact, it was hot and smoggy.

No matter, Mama and Papa would pull out their lawn chairs- little short squatty things- bring out tall glass of sugared sun tea and act as if they were endlessly mesmerized by my ability to make water rainbows above my head.

I never questioned their love for me. I wish they could have known Ellis Jane, I wish she could have danced in the sprinkler for them-they would have loved it, she would have loved it the way I did.

They’ve been gone a long time now, though my memories of them feel fresh as ever. I can still smell the inside of the motor home that lived in their driveway as it readied up for summer adventures-the “Coach” we called it- a long white Winnebago with a Good Sam’s RV insurance sticker on the spare tire.

It was all Windex and clean sheets, the smell of pleather seats roasting in the hot summer sun and whatever that blue stuff was that kept the commode working.

It was King of the Road on eight track tape and Joe Cartwright the marmalade cat with a blue rhinestone collar that rode on the dash board and walked on a leash through the KAO’s of the Grand Canyon.

Those memories are there- just beneath the grocery list and the daily too do’s running in my mind.

I was in my early twenties when my mom called me in NYC to say that “Papa went home to be with Mama in the great hereafter.” I remember my mom weeping and saying that she felt like an orphan.

I hated to hear her say that, it was the loneliest thing she’d ever said- there was nothing to be done. Just to know it and to know that one day I too would surely feel that pain- that was/is the weight of it- still.

So, you see, there is something profoundly soothing about the statement we hear in the Gospel of John this morning; Jesus says to the disciples, “I will not leave you orphaned.”

He does not say he will never leave them, indeed he is about to do just that. Jesus speaks instead about what is left **to** the disciples, not left **to** them; no buildings or instruction manuals he speaks of what is left **in** them; Jesus says, “I live, so you live, I am in God and so too are you in God and here is the remarkable part- Jesus says to those he loves- “I am in you.”

You will not be left orphaned- because **I am in you**.

Now, all I have to do is look in the mirror to know that my parents are in me, literally and figuratively. Likewise, when I get to missing my grandparents, I can find them inside too- just as I can find friends and relations I have loved and lost along the way, but how seriously do I go looking inside myself for God?

I wonder how we might treat ourselves differently if we began and ended our day really resting into the God within;  
how much more vulnerable,  
how much more authentic we might or courageous would we be?

Then there is the matter of how we would be with others if we truly believed that God was in each person we meet?

When I lay beside Ellis Jane at night holding her hand as she drifts off to sleep, listening to the sound of her breathing it is not hard to feel the God in her- and there is nothing to be said, simply beholding is all there is.

I think touching that God place inside feels a lot like being watched while dancing in the sprinklers.

It feels like glimpsing our wholeness.

And if for a moment, we know what it feels like to touch our own enoughness, what might it be like to live from that place?

Mind you a preacher only preaches what they themselves need to hear- so trust me- I've tried this out a lot this week; touching into that God place when I felt at my wits end with myself or someone else.

The God gaze is a loving one, a compassionate and forgiving one- so when I clench up and incline toward judgement, I challenge myself to picture the Godself in those with whom I am becoming frustrated.

I hope for them as I hope for myself, more of life that springs from the deep generative well we all carry, that "yes" place.

Inside each of us is a template for wholeness- inquire within. I believe we all long to act from a place of wholeness rather than a place of woundedness and that is Jesus' prayer for his people.

My prayer this week is that we all seek to lead from the God-place inside. That we dig deep enough and be thoughtfully enough to build relationships more than reaction-ships, and that we dwell within the abiding possibility of living and moving and having our being from the indwelling of God.

Amen