

“The Gift of Light”
John 1:1-14

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First Presbyterian Church of Moscow
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Over the last few weeks, I have been noticing a few headlines. They were a bit apocalyptic. They suggested the world was going to end. It didn't. We're still here. I read those headlines and the hype about the apocalyptic nature of what was about to happen. And if it's not the end of the world, it's some kind of cliff. What a contrast for me to think about all of that and then to be here and to sing these songs and to hear this story again, and the beauty of it, and the wonder of it. It's great. It's quite a contrast.

And yet there probably is something to all the hype. Not the hype itself, but behind it. There is always a bit of a concern. I think we know a sense of the darkness in the world. It's not as if there aren't wars and tragedies and all kinds of things that cast their shadows.

So there is that darkness, and I don't know why, but for me it all seems to pile up as we get into the darker days of winter. The sun seems to be less and the darkness seems to grow. So it's perhaps appropriate that in this moment when we've just gotten past that darkest day we hear this story again. We think again about what God is doing and what God has done.

I can hardly ever think about this particular night without thinking of a sunrise. I know it's night, and it's the opposite time of the day. But it's like watching the horizon, and then that moment comes when the sun peeks over the hill and the rays of sunlight start spreading out across the Palouse. That's what this moment always reminds me of, this moment when we celebrate the birth of Christ. It is this moment when we celebrate how God's light comes again into our world.

Oftentimes it feels like we struggle with these dark days and the darkness out there and we sometimes ask, “Where is God?” I think this night is one of those answers to where God is. God is with us because God has come among us in Christ Jesus, and in his coming among us his love and grace are now with us. It is a light that comes that allows us to live, to have hope.

I always wonder at this coming of Christ, at God's willingness to become one of us, to come among us to let us know he is with us and will guide us. We sing these songs of joy because it is real joy to have God come and show us the love and grace only God can give. It is light in our darkness.

Merry Christmas!

Let's pray:

Gracious God, we are incredibly thankful that we are not left to sit in darkness but that you indeed come to be with us and to guide us and to bring us light. Let us live into your light and know the fullness of the hope you bring, the grace you offer, the love you share that allow us to know the peace you give. Through Jesus Christ we pray. Amen.