



Grain

“Life has taught us that love does not consist in gazing at each other but in looking outward together in the same direction.” Antoine de Saint-Exupery

Submitted by Reverend Sue Schneider

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Field

“30 Truly I tell you, this generation will not pass away until all these things have taken place. 31 Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away. 32 "But about that day or hour no one knows, neither the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. 33 Beware, keep alert; for you do not know when the time will come...35 Therefore, keep awake--for you do not know when the master of the house will come, in the evening, or at midnight, or at cockcrow, or at dawn, 36 or else he may find you asleep when he comes suddenly. 37 And what I say to you I say to all: Keep awake." Mark 13: 30-33, 35-37

Thoughts

Who doesn't think about preparations at this time of year? Make plans for traveling and welcoming guests. Prepare a list of gifts. Look forward to being surrounded by love. Brace yourself for the relatives who grate at you only the way family can. Prepare not to eat as much this year or just expect to gain a few pounds. Prepare to be without a loved one for the first time on a Christmas, as though you could prepare for that. Get ready for intensified emotions - when we are lonely, life might seem lonelier; what is joyful, more wondrous. How can the season have so much influence over us, at least many of us? I don't know, but it seems hard to control. I do know there is an additional preparation to make room for.

Advent begins this new liturgical year with the shortest Gospel and reminders of the passion. We don't know when an epoch will end. We don't have control over everything, but monumental change will look something like the cross, leaving us with decisions to make, people to love, injustice to counter, alerts to our mistakes to recognize. Be awake. You will likely be imperfect and need forgiveness, but don't be completely indifferent and not notice anything.

Preparation seems to be about attention. Jesus entering into this world draws our attention to something more than what is brandished before us. During this season of preparations, take time in church and elsewhere to focus and notice. With community let grace direct our vision together in the same direction of hope born into this world. Happy Monday!

Prayer

Highly recommended.

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Many blessings upon you,

Pastor Cindy