

Sermon for Christmas Day @ 9:30 a.m. @ Bethesda UMC/Baltimore

Scriptures: Isaiah 52:7-10; Psalter UMH p.818 – Psalm 98 (*Response 2*); Hebrews 1:1-12; John 1:1-14

“One”

How lucky we are to have a chance to center Christmas with the powerful reflection by the Gospel according to John: Everything is connected. The beginning and the end are all of one piece. Human flesh reveals truth so we can understand it. The farthest star and the tiniest atom come from the same source, and we can pattern our lives by one loving energy.

The quiet of a shared meal offers us a pattern and energy for the whole year. We do not have to claim superiority in our faith rituals, only equality beyond all anyone can fully describe. Evil exists, but always it is rooted in choice, not in the nature of things.

These grand statements are not proved in test-tubes or formulas or profit and loss statements, but in lived experience. Forgiveness, and renewal, and inner peace show themselves in every day and every life.

All is one. John's eternal Word becoming flesh is as vulnerable as Luke's baby in a manger. God's incarnation is not a one-time thing, but goes on again and again throughout history and in all lands. To work with this conception of reality is to open oneself to the constant opportunity of grace: to do right, and to receive some kind of good.

There is no end to this. There is only the beginning. Now. Here. Unified. Beneficent. Steady. Equal.

One.

Amen.