

MEDITATIONS FROM DECEMBER 2017 SUNDAY BULLETINS

JOY TO THE WORLD

December 3, 2017

Rev. Donna Gatewood

Love, Joy, and Peace are part of the fruit of the Holy Spirit in us. Jesus told His disciples how they were to cultivate this fruit. Jesus prayed that His joy would be perfected in us. "The joy of the Lord" is ours for the asking.

Before Jesus was captured He prayed for us: "That My joy may be made full and complete and perfect in them; that they may experience My delight fulfilled in them; that My enjoyment may be perfected in their souls, and that they may have My gladness within them fulfilling their hearts."

Joy is instinctive with every human being. It is a divine heritage to be claimed and used. No person or thing, no outside circumstance, situation or condition can give it to us and nothing can take it away from us.

As never before, our souls should vibrate to the joy of giving. Let us practice joy, infinite joy: from my Spirit to your Spirit and make it felt in the hearts of all of mankind.

COME UNTO ME

December 10, 2017

Rev. Janet Friedline

The Bible gives assurance of God's presence. Be not afraid, I am here. I will never leave you, nor forsake you. Right where you stand is holy ground. To benefit from God's presence, we must do certain things. In order to have God "turn unto us," we must first "turn unto him." To understand that God will never leave us, we must first know that God is with us. In order for us to "be not afraid," we must trust God to do the work.

The invitation is "come unto me, and I will give you rest." God is in his kingdom. Jesus told us the kingdom is in us. We "come unto him," when we enter the sanctuary of inner being. God is in the midst of us, and that is where we will find him. In a time of stillness, we enter into his presence with thanksgiving and praise. The grateful heart is open and receptive to the still small voice of assurance. Let us rest in the knowledge that God is, and there is none else.

December 17, 2017

Christmas Service with special bulletin and no meditation on the back.

December 24, 2017

Christmas Eve Candlelight Service with special bulletin and no meditation on the back.

TRANSFORMING ADVERSITY

December 31, 2017

Rev. Donna Gatewood

Living the human existence means knowing the pain of what the world calls failure. Everyone feels the pain of failing at something sometimes. Even major biblical characters felt discouraged and despondent. For example, Moses said, “If this is the way you are going to treat me, put me to death at once...do not let me see my misery.” And the prophet Elijah felt overwhelmed with failure: “But he himself went a day’s journey into the wilderness, and came and sat down under a broom tree; and he asked that he might die, saying, “It is enough; now O Lord, take away my life.” The issue is not failure but our response to it. Rather than give up or give in, we must fear less and have more faith to pursue our goals relentlessly while always trusting God for guidance.

“Hast thou not known? Has thou not heard, that the everlasting God, the Lord, the Creator of the ends of the earth, faileth not, neither is weary? There is no searching of his understanding. He giveth power to the faint; and to them that have no might he increaseth strength. Even the youths shall faint and be weary, and the young men shall utterly fall; But they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary’ and they shall walk, and not faint.” Isaiah 40-28-31

Faith and hope are increased and fears and discouragement decreased when you keep in mind that failure, like success, is never final. God always has new experiences and wonderful surprises in store for us. Often what appears to be the end, in the hands of God, is a wonderful new beginning.