

Advent Week Three

Day 19, Thursday, December 16th

"And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among those with whom he is pleased!"

Luke 2:13-14

Life is full of "and suddenly" moments. Moments in time that can forever change our perspective. When "and suddenly" moments appear, they can come in all shapes and sizes. They can be full of surprise, delight, joy, and healing, but they can also be full of hurt, brokenness, despair, fear, and anguish.

For the shepherds who experienced this "and suddenly" moment their first reaction was one of fear but then peace settled in. Peace- the Shalom of God. In John 14:27, Jesus says "Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. Not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid."

It's not difficult to experience God's peace in those joyful moments that happen suddenly: to run into an old friend unexpectedly or to receive an unexpected promotion or encouragement. These are the good "and suddenlys" that we are happy to welcome into our lives.

But what about the other kind? When the car appears in our lane out of nowhere or we receive a phone call with devastating news. Maybe we go to our place of employment to find out we have been let go or experience the sudden death of someone dearly loved. No matter what the circumstance this one thing remains: God's peace will be there, overshadowing, hovering over the pain, the fear, and the anguish. God is always present.

REFLECT: Have you experienced any "and suddenly" moments recently? Have you seen God's presence in those moments?

PRAYER: God, in all the "and suddenly" moments that happen today, let us reach out to you knowing that you care and that your peace is there, ever present in every moment of our lives. Amen.