

“You are the Light of the World

The Rev. Deacon Lisa Kirby

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Our Isaiah reading cautions the Jews about keeping the law literally but not in spirit. He criticizes their ways of fasting calling them ritually correct, but spiritually self-serving. He questions their motives saying that a righteous fast is to “share your bread with the hungry, and bring the homeless poor into your house. “THEN, then your light shall break forth like the dawn and your healing shall spring up quickly”

We’re going to talk about light today.

This week’s Gospel tells us that we ARE the light.

I’ve pointed out on a number of occasions, that we are given all the tools and resources we need to carry out the ministries to which we are called. And it’s right here in Matthew:

You ARE salt of the earth, you ARE the light of the world. There is no you should be, or you may become. It is you ARE—It’s a spiritual gift. You are, period.

God simply chooses to create and commission salt and light for the earth. By grace, God chooses us.

The trick is for us to BE and to act as salt and light. Being salt and light involves giving ourselves away. Light spreads over the world, like the self-giving that enlightens the world to liberate it from bondage and darkness.

Bishop Brian Mass says that “Ultimately to be salt and light, to be used by God as God intends, is to dissolve and to dissipate, and in the process to flavor and enlighten.

Cortney and Ashley both talked last week about being aware of the people around you, knowing that some of the people you see are being bullied, or are in some sort of pain or sorrow.

I know you have looked into someone’s eyes and they are not bright and glowing, it seems that the light has or is dwindling. You are light---give them some of yours. Even if you only have a little light. Share it. Giving light does not diminish your light. It’s akin to when light all the candles in the church from one flame--- that one flame burns just as brightly as the candles to whom it has given light. The sun shines on solar panels to produce energy, or we might say to empower, without diminishing the brightness of the sun.

We live in a world where there are pockets of fear, uncertainty, and darkness. I say to us all: don’t let the light go out. Be joyful and a sign of hope: Be the light, no matter how the darkness beckons.

In the spirit of the Reconciliation theme of our Diocesan Convention, we need to also, use our light to shine on the issues that divide us from one another, and illuminate the fears that keep us from reaching out, that we may move from fear and misunderstanding to light and reconciliation.

One of the reasons we study scripture to see what it is God is calling us to do.

I think it's pretty clear what our Gospel lesson is calling us to do.

As it says in the Gospel

We are called to let our light so shine before men, that they may see our good works and glorify our Father who is in heaven.

What we do is to glorify and give thanks to God.

Give light, share light, and don't ever let the light go out for anyone anywhere. I beg you to let your light shine for all the world to see—

Hymn 221 (LVS): *This little light of mine, I'm gonna let it shine. Let it shine, let it shine, let it shine.*

Jesus gave it to me, I'm gonna let it shine. Let it shine, let it shine, let it shine!