

peace be with you
weekly devotional

from the desk of Rev. Marta Wheeler
SAINT PAUL BENSON

Settling In

One moss green chair hammock hangs from
the hook drilled into the cedar beam above
and gently sways in the breeze.
It is calling out my name to come sit in the net.

Initially, I do not move
but wonder, what will change if I move from here to there?
What awaits me there in the chair?
Is it worth the effort? Will it be that sweet?

Over there in the shade of the old
walnut tree I'll be enfolded in the womb of
macrame threads, inhale the scent of
lavender and gaze at the wonder of vast blue skies.

Safe in the hammock chair my mind
ceases to dominate and honeybees
pollinate my spirit with
the peace of Christ as I breathe in the warming air.

Spaces that bring calm and remind us
of the peace that passes understanding are
prepared for us as we descend
to the valleys and then ascend mountains of joy.

As I move from my straight back seat
I find such sweetness in the hammock chair.
How could I not settle in and sway
with such little effort in moving from here to there?

September 15, 2021

Psalm One*

For those persons who choose to live
significant lives...

Their ultimate concern is the will of
God.

They make their daily decisions in
respect to such.

Compare them to a sturdy tree
planted in rich, moist soil.

As the tree yields fruit
so their lives manifest blessing for
others

and are purposeful and productive.

* Psalms/Now by Leslie Brandt, Concordia
Publishing House, 2003.

Life Cycles On

When feeling irritable, I find that going to
a quiet space to acknowledge my feelings
and to pray for guidance is the only thing
that keeps me on the path to living a
significant life! It's so easy to get in a rut
and keep going until I feel frazzled and
have nothing left to give to those who could
use a listening ear.

Continued

From the Desk of Rev. Marta Wheeler

September 15, 2021

Last week our beloved pet passed away. Freckles was part of our lives for eleven years and we are so grateful for her life with us. Long gone are the days when she would do her Houdini escape act, leaving me holding her collar and leash while she took off running and playing, only returning when her name was called by her favorite person on earth.

It's been years since she made a nest on the top of the couch when we were gone, then leapt off the top as though in the starting blocks at a track meet. She knew she wasn't supposed to be up there!

You know what happens when you lose a loved one. No matter where you turn, there are reminders of them. Suddenly Freckles wasn't under our feet, in the certainty that a morsel of food would drop to the floor. All at once she wasn't snuggling with me during morning prayers. My husband automatically reaches out his hand to pet her when watching tv, only her cushion is empty. Just a week ago we took one last walk around the neighborhood. She sniffed her favorite fire hydrants and was so happy to be able to go that evening when the weather was cooler.

Over our lifetimes we have learned to let go of what we need to let go of and even celebrate the continual circle of birth, life, death, and life transcendent. The Spirit of Christ reaches around us, and we know we are safe. As Psalm 139 reminds us, God was there from the beginning, when our first cells divided, and we were formed. We are promised that God will be there when we take our last breath. There is no way to hide from God's abiding presence. What peace that gives us.

Know that you are loved and precious in God's sight and hold your loved ones tight!

Marta

Rev. Marta Wheeler