

peace be with you

weekly devotional

from the desk of Rev. Marta Wheeler

SAINT PAUL BENSON

Swinging Spirits into 2023

Moving into the New Year
two young n's climb up the smooth bark tree
and carefully shift into the seats
of the swings
made of courage.

No fear prevents us from enjoying
the view below.

No fear inhibits us from exploring
the site above.

No fear hampers us from surveying
the skyline vistas.

Leaning into all there is
for us in that moment our eyes meet
and we boldly reach out for the swing
ahead, yet
elegantly we drop
into warm, calm waters
soothing and supporting us with love.

In good time we will return
to shore where Wisdom awaits with wonder.
For now, we watch the ribbon of red,
orange, and pink
create beauty.

Continued

January 4, 2023

Isaiah 60: 1-6

Arise! Shine! Your light has come; the
Lord's glory has shone upon you.

² Though darkness covers the earth
and gloom the nations, the Lord will
shine upon you; God's glory will
appear over you.

³ Nations will come to your light and
kings to your dawning radiance.

⁴ Lift up your eyes and look all
around: they are all gathered; they
have come to you. Your sons will come
from far away, and your daughters on
caregivers' hips.

⁵ Then you will see and be radiant;
your heart will tremble and open
wide, because the sea's abundance
will be turned over to you; the
nations' wealth will come to you.

⁶ Countless camels will cover your
land, young camels from Midian and
Ephah. They will all come from
Sheba, carrying gold and incense,
proclaiming the Lord's praises.

Swinging Spirits into 2023

Continued

Even in sleep we learn and
are prepared to daringly climb
the smooth bark tree again, then lithely
swing our legs
gathering goodness
through our bare toes
before transitioning into the
next seat of the swing made of hope.
Smiling, we
are guided

from ivy swing one to ivy
swing two and are astounded
when soaring even higher and views
are glorious
as promised.

The seat of the swing made of truth
unites one essence to another
regardless of status and we gain
uncomplicated
truths from the

universe beyond, the soul
of the earth, and humanity.
Oh, the blessings of deeply inhaling
fresh air
touching one another
humming a holy
song of profound peace.

From the Desk of Rev. Marta Wheeler
January 4, 2023

God's grace shines through the darkness of uncertain times, loneliness, illness, and fear. As we humbly enter into prayer, we may discover new possibilities that will swing us into the next moment. This scripture describes a vision from Isaiah that all people will be drawn back to Jerusalem through the Light of God's glory. Those that come back to God will be restored! Peace, righteousness, salvation, and praise mark their redemption. It is our decision to return to God each week, both individually and as a congregation.

Light is so important during winter. A bright blue sky can brighten our days but when the sky is overcast and all we see is brown and grey, more effort and dependence upon God is required to stay emotionally and spiritually centered. Keeping our hearts open, we find sparkles of Love if we dare to look around. Once again, snowflakes bring brightness into the sky and light upon the ground.

During this week of Epiphany, we pray this blessing upon you:

*Arise! Shine! Your light has come;
the Lord's glory has shone upon you.*

Marta

Rev. Marta Wheeler