

peace be with you

weekly devotional

from the desk of Rev. Marta Wheeler

SAINT PAUL BENSON

Whispers in the New Year

Early this morning an angel whispered in my ear
"What can I do for you today?"

This ornery angel is dappled in color
tempting touch with velvety soft ears
while gazing lovingly into my eyes.

She teaches me
to dwell in wonder and curiosity
and when you don't know what else to do
chase a ball.

Today an angel spoke softly into my ear
dispensing encouragement to
respond in love to prayers and unearth ways
to change the world with loving kindness.
A prayer of gratitude for colleagues
is offered up.

This evening an angel serves up a fine baked
spaghetti, fresh greens, baked bread,
and a spoonful of pink peppermint ice cream.
My silver-haired angel is kind and thoughtful
reminding me that I am worth the effort,
loved and lovable.

Even more so these days.

Continued

January 11, 2023

Psalm 40:1-11

I waited patiently for the LORD; he
inclined to me and heard my cry.

² He drew me up from the desolate
pit, out of the miry bog, and set my
feet upon a rock, making my steps
secure.

³ He put a new song in my mouth, a
song of praise to our God. Many will
see and fear and put their trust in
the LORD.

⁴ Happy are those who make the
LORD their trust, who do not turn
to the proud, to those who go astray
after false gods.

⁵ You have multiplied, O LORD my
God, your wondrous deeds, and
your thoughts toward us; none can
compare with you. Were I to
proclaim and tell of them, they
would be more than can be counted.

⁶ Sacrifice and offering you do not
desire, but you have given me an
open ear. Burnt offering and sin
offering you have not required.

Continued

Whispers in the New Year

Continued

And now, releasing this day into the cold night sky
I ask God's blessings for kind words
spoken, for those who've met me on a
path soft and level or rocky and steep,
making each day easier to bear.

Blessings upon
those who I see, hear, and touch, reassuring
all over again of our gracious
God's goodness.

In the past I was more concerned about getting
facts and figures straight, recalling dates of events
and phone numbers. Now it seems vastly more
important to remember the kindness shown to me
and to live in gratitude.

Another contrast that comes to mind is winter
walking compared to the rest of the year. My eyes
are drawn to empty nests cradled in tree branches,
the perfectly groomed pine trees, and the
windswept clouds in the blue sky. The birds that
winter-over have less cover, and the cardinals, blue
jays, and finches are ever more brilliant. Even so, it
takes more effort to leave the warmth of the house
and soft blankets. Sometimes there is an argument
taking place between my mind and heart, but only
on the coldest days does the rational mind win and
keep me from really feeling alive from the
temperatures greeting the skin.

I may be a little envious of those who come back home with a bit of a tan and wonderful
stories about their trips to the sea. While it would certainly be nice to sit on the beach
with a good book, listening to the tide flow in and out, the same sun rises and sets upon
us and awaits our noticing.

Waiting patiently, breathing deeply, gazing softly upon what and who we love and have
loved. Know God in all of these.

We pray in gratitude for you,

Marta

Rev. Marta Wheeler

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January 11, 2023

Psalm 40:1-11

Continued

7 Then I said, "Here I am; in the
scroll of the book it is written of
me.

8 I delight to do your will, O my
God; your law is within my
heart."

9 I have told the glad news of
deliverance in the great
congregation; see, I have not
restrained my lips, as you know,
O LORD.

10 I have not hidden your saving
help within my heart, I have
spoken of your faithfulness and
your salvation; I have not
concealed your steadfast love
and your faithfulness from the
great congregation.

11 Do not, O LORD, withhold
your mercy from me; let your
steadfast love and your
faithfulness keep me safe
forever.