

Advent Devotional Day 5

Thursday, Dec. 6

John 1:9

The true light that shines on all people was coming into the world.

The customary decorating battle has begun. It is not a domestic battle. Jannette tells me what to do and I dutifully do it (just kidding - sometimes I don't do it 😊). The battle is putting the lights on the tree. It is a pre-lit tree, but not all the strands light up, so I have to add lights, otherwise the dark places on the tree stand-out more than the lighted parts. It is my least favorite part of decorating.

Growing up, I watched my mom put the lights on the tree. She took the time to painstakingly intertwine the strands of lights with the individual branches, expending great effort and energy to have a light on the tip of each branch, highlighting the symmetry of our bottle brush artificial Christmas tree.

Years later, I saw a different method. The non-prelit Christmas tree was erected in the Sanctuary on a Friday evening, along with other decorating by the women. Then on Saturday it was the job of a couple of men to put the lights on the tree. I watched as they took the strands of lights and quickly shoved the lights into the tree, almost haphazardly. They plugged it in, stood back and said, "Now we have time to go out to breakfast." I thought to myself, "This is going to be messy."

John 1:6-9

⁶ *A man named John (Jesus' cousin) was sent from God. ⁷ He came as a witness to testify concerning the light, so that through him everyone would believe in the light.*

⁸ *He himself wasn't the light, but his mission was to testify concerning the light.*

⁹ *The true light that shines on all people was coming into the world.*

The light of Christ shining on all people might appear to us to be messy. The light shines on everyone, not just those who sit in the pews, not just those who recognize the light. It sounds like the light is haphazardly put on people, anybody and everybody. The men plugged in the tree lights. I was surprised - it looked great. The tree was full of light, it looked like every branch had light.

To our surprise the light of Christ shines on all people - even us.

Recognize the light shining on your life,

Pastor Jeff