

Advent Reflection

December 5, 2020

*HOPE*

**Romans 15:7-13** NRSV

Welcome one another, therefore, just as Christ has welcomed you, for the glory of God. For I tell you that Christ has become a servant of the circumcised on behalf of the truth of God in order that he might confirm the promises given to the patriarchs, and in order that the Gentiles might glorify God for his mercy. As it is written,

“Therefore I will confess you among the Gentiles,

and sing praises to your name”;

and again he says,

“Rejoice, O Gentiles, with his people”;

and again,

“Praise the Lord, all you Gentiles,

and let all the peoples praise him”;

and again Isaiah says,

“The root of Jesse shall come,

the one who rises to rule the Gentiles;

in him the Gentiles shall hope.”

May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.

*Reflection by Laurel H.*

My cat died two days ago. She helped me when death invaded, changing the holidays forever. One parent died in November and years later, the other in December. Sneakers padded through both events with me gently on four white paws. She was a tuxedo cat, always looking her best. I miss her.

The shepherds dealt with danger every day. They had no hope, until angels appeared. They told of the birth of the Christ Child in a simple, amazing story that Jews and non-Jews understood. A savior born as a baby lying in a barn beneath a special star. Luke tells us that angels sang songs praising God.

“May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit,” Paul tells us in Romans 15:13. Yes, I have hope because my hope does not depend on how I feel. Hope comes from the Holy Spirit. Hope comes from a loving God who cares for us whether we feel like praising Him or not. Hope is here, we know it is.