



September 6, 2017

LEAVE IN PEACE

Along the trail to the outdoor chapel at the summer camp where I grew up was a sign that said: "Enter in Silence. Leave in Peace." The first part was practical. The second part is a promise that has remained true.

Sometimes we enter our church with quiet reverence, and sometimes we enter at loose ends. Some days, we appear "put together" on the outside – but on the inside we hold tension and stress as noisy as a gravel freeway.

It is my hope and confidence that we always leave feeling better than we came. After we have worshipped together, after Church School, seminars, and conversations during Community Hour, I believe we will feel better than we did when we arrived.

This is not because God promises a simple fix for all that is wrong, and it certainly is not because church is an entertaining distraction from our real lives. Just the opposite: church is the place to look honestly at our lives and remember that the love of God holds the center. Church is the place we share gratitude, wonder, reconciliation, and the assurance that we are God's people and this is God's world.

Being more secure in God, we may hold our own lives with less fear. We become free to notice the goodness and beauty around us and within us, and to love boldly – without measuring the cost.

And so I trust that we will leave church better than when we arrived, because we "leave in peace," and the peace of God makes us secure.

I'll see you in church.

Peace,

Rev. Dr. Matthew Wooster
Senior Minister