



November 29, 2017

THEY MUST HAVE BEEN AFRAID

The voices of our faithful ancestors repeat the words again and again in the scriptures: Do not be afraid. "Fear not," said the angel to the shepherds on the day that Jesus was born. "Do not be afraid," said the angel on Easter morning at the empty tomb.

From the book of Isaiah: "do not fear, for I am with you; do not be afraid, for I am your God."

And from the 23rd Psalm: "Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil."

It is the first message of the Christmas story, when the angel Gabriel visits Mary:

"Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus. He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High."

The scriptures are full of the assurance that we need not fear. Was it because those people all had such confident faith that they were never afraid? I think it was just the opposite. They must have been afraid, again and again, and God was always ready to ease their fears.

When we are afraid, God is with us, and God's message is always the same: do not be afraid.

I'll see you in church.

Peace,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Matt". The signature is stylized with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

*Rev. Dr. Matthew Wooster
Senior Minister*