

December 23rd

Luke 2:13-14

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How astounding for a birth to be announced by an angel and heavenly array, breaking into song. Later, the Generous One speaks of Jesus directly and lavishly, including at his baptism. In seven verses, the words are nearly the same – words fit to announce a new child, too. To paraphrase:

“You are my chosen child, my beloved, in whom my soul delights and is well-pleased.”

Wouldn't it be magnificent if every child, everywhere, was welcomed by angels singing – in an unpolluted sky? Wouldn't we be stunned if the Generous One interrupted church baptisms to bless us with love and delight – and clean, safe, drinking water, where none existed before?

In high school Latin, Virginia Grande taught me that Luke 2:14 reads, “Peace on Earth to men of good will, not “Peace on Earth, good will to men.” She was right. Bibles were corrected. For example, Gafney's 2021 lectionary offers: “on earth peace among peoples whom God favors.”

Without inner peace, there is neither peace on Earth, nor for the Earth. Too often we try to soothe unrest inside with greed and arrogance; selfishness and short-sightedness; apathy and addiction. Destructive corporations show the same traits, with outsized impacts.

If only we were wise enough to remember being beloved, delightful, and having a place in the Generous One's soul. Surely, we would damage ourselves, and the Earth, less. Surely, we would find ourselves more often among the favored people, for whom heaven and nature sing.

Prayer: Grant that we know, always, that we are beloved, delightful, and pleasing to the Generous One. May we carry that message to the Earth, along with our love, generosity, and wisdom.

Action item: Embrace the message, “You are my chosen child....,” for yourself, then tell several people they are beloved and delightful to you.