

St. Mark's Episcopal Church
February 3, 2019
The Reverend Rick Veit

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A side note, but a great quote came across Facebook this week. It reads, “Let us feed the hungry, house the homeless, stop the killing and provide medicine for the sick. When we have accomplished that, we can sit around and argue about religion.” Even the Jewish people, not unlike Christians and Muslims and, and, how easy it is to live into the idea of having an exclusive right to God. Perhaps we should all come together and make sure the hungry are fed, homeless housed, the killing stopped, and provide medicine for anyone who is sick. Then, the world will be truly following Jesus as their LORD and Savior. But I digress.

Life is swollen with amazing highs and dark lows and everything in between. I read another great quip from Facebook recently about transmutation. “Transmutation: Grapes must be crushed to make wine. Diamonds form under pressure. Olives are pressed to release oil. Seeds

grow in darkness. Whenever you feel crushed, under pressure, pressed, or in darkness, you're in a powerful place of transformation and transmutation." It was the way of the world 2,000 years ago, and it is the same today. What is your transmutation story?

Sadly, we do not know why the world is the way it is. But we do know that in the midst of darkness comes light, in the midst of chaos comes order, with sadness and grief comes joy and freedom, eventually.

And the Psalmist so poignantly proclaims: "In you, O LORD, have I taken refuge;..Be my strong rock, a castle to keep me safe..Deliver me, my God, from the hand of the wicked,..For you are my hope..my confidence since I was young...I have been sustained by you ever since I was born; (even) from my mother's womb you have been my strength; my praise shall be always of you."

We trust in something greater than ourselves. We trust in the good of the world and in ourselves. And with the bad, we work and work and work to make things better, even when, especially when, things are really bad. Stand up and be a voice, work for those in need.

That is why I am involved here at St. Mark's. That is why I remain involved in ministry with our Mayor, our Legislature, and our Governor. That is why I have also been active as a police chaplain in the past. I continue to deliver Friday Food Bags to children who go hungry every weekend. Did you know I even had a talk radio segment on pop radio when we lived in the Washington DC area called Rev. Rick. It was tied to one of the finalists on American Idol.

What are you doing for the outcast, the rejected people of the world? What are you doing for the sick, the friendless, and the needy? Take a moral inventory for a moment. (Silence) Now prepare to get started, or maybe continue what has already begun in you.

And so we praise God in all circumstances, and we serve the people of this world, and especially not just our own or our favorites. We are one family, and all of us deserving of God's blessings.