

Christmas Eve 2012 - Benediction

The Holy One is among us and the world is full of the Glory of God.
God with us, Immanuel. The child has been born once again

gathered us here in winter's half light

to show us Glory.

We will not stoop to a lesser vision

while the paths to truth are many, and the stars at times unclear, we will not follow unthinking, victim
to each day's whim

or the demands of a society bent on twisting us into its own image....

we will not compromise the vision, nor give in to values, dreams that are beneath us

no, we will not.

We will not look down in humiliation or defeat,

nor let our eyes be drawn to the seduction of despair

we *will* look down deliberately.... to avoid the sucking quicksand

of moral shabbiness masquerading as sophistication,

OF AN EASY CYNICISM AND THE ETHICAL EQUIVALENT OF CHANNEL SURFING

**WE *WILL* LOOK DOWN NOT ONLY BECAUSE THE GROUND BEFORE US IS FULL OF
DANGER AND THERE ARE HARMFUL PLACES TO STEP AND WE NEED TO WALK WITH
CARE....**

not only that,

but also because the earth beneath our feet is holy

it is the very stuff of the creation we walk upon-

the matter of the universe come to settle among us

and when our oh so human feet kick up dust as we walk, and that dust swirls in the air, softening the
sunlight, we breathe it in – inhaling all that has gone before us.

The soil on the floor of that stable,

the soil that lies beneath the snow outside right now...

think about that - beneath the surface of the snow, things are creeping, scuffling, struggling to survive,
and gathering strength until the sun returns.....

that soil holds more secrets than any of us has yet perceived.

Deep below the surface of this world of history, are tectonic plates of mystery and wonder, shifting, shifting....and the world? The world has turned toward the light.

The earth beneath our feet is holy, and if we are looking for the divine
we would do well to look down.

Of course the whole world matters. But in the end it comes down to what you will do when you leave here tonight. To those you know, the faces and voices and people with whom you break bread and who trust you

to the choices that will face you tonight and tomorrow and the day after that.

Of course it's all complicated.

but maybe - maybe it's not.

Maybe we go from here tonight

in hope and peace and joy and love

knowing Emmanuel, God is with us.

Wouldn't THAT be a Merry Christmas???

Amen