

First Sunday of Advent, December 3

Relationship

They shall be my people and I will be their God, in faithfulness and in righteousness. Zechariah 8:8b (NRSV)

In the summer of 1999, I met a dear friend for the first time. We did not spend much time talking together those few days and did not talk or see each other until a year later. The way our relationship grew was by working together teaching young children about Jesus as she brought her children to Bible Camp in Gameti. The bond that knit and strengthened our friendship was our oneness in Christ. Over the years we have each weathered storms, but the relationship and the caring abides. Possessions will pass away, places will change, but relationships can last a lifetime.

Understanding the prophet Zechariah's word "righteousness" to mean "in a right relationship" is illuminating. God wants our relationships to begin with him. He forged a relationship with us long ago. God got his hands dirty in creation forming humankind, creating us in his image. Then he sent his Son to dwell with us, to be in relationship with us, and to show us what relationships should look like. And by Jesus' death and resurrection, we were once again put in a right relationship with God.

Our stories are unique, interwoven and winding through many other people's stories all through our lives. But the common thread is the One who came to dwell with us and the One who promised that he would be with us always, until the end of time. Emmanuel God with us.

Gracious Father, thank you for calling us your children and for your gift of immeasurable love who came to dwell with us and be with us always. In whose name we pray, Amen

Lois Graff (Lutheran)

On Eagle's Wings Governing Board Member