

“Where God Lives”

2 Samuel 7:1-10; Ephesians 2: 19-22

The second grade Sunday school teacher asked “Where does God live?” and Billy quickly responded with great confidence, “God lives in my big sister's bathroom!” All the kids laughed yet being the good Sunday school teacher she was she followed up with, “Billy, what makes you say that?” “Well,” Billy replies, “every morning my dad goes up to the bathroom, knocks on the door and shouts, ‘My God, are you still in there?’”

While Billy may know where God lives, the rest of us still ask, “Where is God?”

Where is God? Where does God live? Where is God's presence found? These are questions with which we have wrestled for ages. Young and old ask this question. The campers I was with this past week believe God lives at Kirkmont but what they really want to know is where is God in the midst of crisis? Maddie just lost her grandfather a week before camp. Why did God have to take him and where did God take him? It's not just the youth with questions. My elderly father asked not long before he died “where is God in the eternal?” “Where can we find God's presence?”

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At camp we sang, I am a C. I am a C-H. I am a C-H-R-I-S-T-I-A-N. And I have C-H-R-I-S-T in my H-E-A-R-T. And I will L-I-V-E E-T-E-R-N-A-L-L-Y. So we look to have Christ in our hearts.

In a reading this morning we find King David, King of the United Israel, wanting to build God a house where God would live. David is thankful to God for all God has done in leading Israel to prosperity and peace.

David knows that he could not have led the nation without God's leadership, so he wants to prepare a place for God to dwell.

David has a lavish palace for himself and it does not seem right that God is living in a tent. God needs a proper home, a temple, one with suitable splendor, perhaps gold, marble, stained glass would be nice.

When Ann Marie and I went to Istanbul 6 years ago, we saw up close and personal the Hagia Sofia which surely could house God. This magnificent structure was built 1500 years ago by Constantine to emulate God's grandeur, to show God's glory.

So, David tells his pastor, Nathan, his desires and Nathan's first response is, “Go on and do it. God has been with you through it all. It sounds good to me. 2

I'll call the session together and we will start a capital campaign immediately.” But later God comes to Nathan and tells him, “Nathan, call off the session meeting. There's not going to be a building campaign while David is king. I don't need a house of cedar or a palace of marble and gold. Don't build me a home, a temple, let me make you my home, my dwelling place. Let me live in you!” Amazing, isn't it? God could have the greatest architects, the strongest labors, the best engineers of all time construct a house.

Yet God chose to dwell in the people, in the hearts of the nation of Israel. That is the story of King David and the Israelites, the Jewish faithful. God lives in God's chosen people and in the passage from Ephesians we hear that God invites us, those of us here today, to be a part of that ongoing household.

God brings us in, adopts us, through the cross of Jesus Christ. It is through the death and resurrection of Jesus that we are brought into the one family of God and given access, direct access to God so we can pray...

*Breathe on me Breath of God- Adam Aaron

You have seen the cross described that way. The horizontal beams of the cross demonstrating are common relationship with all people on earth, set with the vertical beam which illustrate our connectedness with God that's making the cross of Jesus Christ, where God lives and dwells. The Book of Order describes worship in W - 1.1001 as “Christian worship joyfully ascribes all praise and honor, glory and power to the Triune God. In worship the people of God acknowledge God present in the world and in their lives.” That is who we are and what we are about. This is where God lives.

I've heard it said, going to church doesn't make you a Christian any more than sleeping in the garage makes you an automobile. I believe it. Don't go to church...be the church.

Ephesians says, we are God's household, a holy temple, a dwelling place for God. This means that the presence and power of God, God's Holy Spirit, infuse us so that we become God's own family, God's abode. God reconciles our flesh and blood and claims it as God's own, so that we are those among whom and through whom God moves and works in the world.

Where does God live in you?

*How Firm a Foundation- Adam and Aaron

Here again God's Word to us. "Christ is building you into a place where God lives through the Spirit." (Ephesians 2:22). May we fulfill our calling and be where God lives. Amen.

Preached by Rev. David Montgomery
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6th Sunday of Pentecost, Year B
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Ephesians 2:19-22 (CEB)

¹⁹ So now you are no longer strangers and aliens. Rather, you are fellow citizens with God's people, and you belong to God's household. ²⁰ As God's household, you are built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets with Christ Jesus himself as the cornerstone. ²¹ The whole building is joined together in him, and it grows up into a temple that is dedicated to the Lord. ²² Christ is building you into a place where God lives through the Spirit.

2 Samuel 7:1-10 (CEB)

⁷ When the king was settled in his palace,^[a] and the LORD had given him rest from all his surrounding enemies, ² the king said to the prophet Nathan, "Look! I'm living in a cedar palace, but God's chest is housed in a tent!"^[b]

³ Nathan said to the king, "Go ahead and do whatever you are thinking, because the LORD is with you."

⁴ But that very night the LORD's word came to Nathan: ⁵ Go to my servant David and tell him: This is what the LORD says: You are not the one to build the temple for me to live in. ⁶ In fact, I haven't lived in a temple from the day I brought Israel out of Egypt until now. Instead, I have been traveling around in a tent and in a dwelling. ⁷ Throughout my traveling around with the Israelites, did I ever ask any of Israel's tribal leaders I appointed to shepherd my people: Why haven't you built me a cedar temple?

⁸ So then, say this to my servant David: This is what the LORD of heavenly forces says: I took you from the pasture, from following the flock, to be leader over my people Israel. ⁹ I've been with you wherever you've gone, and I've eliminated all your enemies before you. Now I will make your name great—like the name of the greatest people on earth. ¹⁰ I'm going to provide a place for my people Israel, and plant them so that they may live there and no longer be disturbed.