

December 16

Psalm 139:11-12 (NRSV)

If I say, "Surely the darkness shall cover me, and the light around me become night," even the darkness is not dark to you; the night is as bright as the day, for darkness is as light to you.

Years ago while on vacation near St. Maarten, on an island called Saba, Fred and I discovered that the island often loses power. As it turned out, we ate our first dinner by candlelight at a restaurant since the island lost power while we were dining. It was beautiful to begin our vacation this way, since we had nowhere else to be and were excited just to get away.

After our meal, we had no flashlights, but we decided to explore the area as best as we could. The road was totally dark. We heard singing at a nearby community building which had its doors open. People were singing hymns that we recognized, so we went inside and very carefully found empty seats. Everyone was filling the room with song as we joined in singing familiar hymns. In the complete darkness, we had no idea who was sitting just beside and around us, trusting that it was ok that we were a part of something very uplifting.

All of a sudden, the lights came on and we could see a mix of people of different skin colors and ages. We could also now see the words to the hymns which were being sung. I will never forget how profound this moment was for me. It was truly an example of how God "sees" us....light or dark, man or woman, child or adult, ...we were all the same, equal in darkness and light to God. When the lights were out, our minds could not focus on anything but the beauty of our song, unified and perfect in God's love. I was actually sad when the lights came on and we could allow ourselves to get distracted with everything around us, seeing the differences instead of focusing on what we all had in common: a love of singing praises to God.

This moment in time will always impress on me an awareness of how "darkness is as light" to God. May we all understand that we can take these moments of awareness to live and love fully as God has created us to do. This Advent season, take time to sit in darkness. Let it cover you while you discover what comfort and love God provides when your eyes cannot distract you. Blessings to you and yours!

~ Tina Pfeiffer