



Thursday

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Prepared for you by

Rev. Carol Mork

John 1:[1-9] 10-18

[In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ²He was in the beginning with God. ³All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being ⁴in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. ⁵The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.

⁶There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. ⁷He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. ⁸He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light. ⁹The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world.]

¹⁰He was in the world, and the world came into being through him; yet the world did not know him. ¹¹He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him. ¹²But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, ¹³who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God.

¹⁴And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth. ¹⁵(John testified to him and cried out, "This was he of whom I said, 'He who comes after me ranks ahead of me because he was before me.'") ¹⁶From his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace. ¹⁷The law indeed was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. ¹⁸No one has ever seen God. It is God the only Son, who is close to the Father's heart, who has made him known.

I take the dog for his last trek outside about 9:00 each night. On some nights the full moon illumines the entire area we walk; even on thinly clouded nights, the shrouded light is good enough to make our way to do the necessary business. On other nights, when the calendar indicates "new moon," there is only darkness with pinpricks of stars dancing in the clear sky. And on still other nights, there is only darkness – clouds, thick clouds, prevail and no light peeks through.

On those nights I take my trusty little flashlight, its 24 inch radius illuminating just enough to make our way out and back. Do we really need it after walking this land for nearly ten years? Probably not, but there is comfort in that little bulb or that full moon or in the mercury light shining through the barren trees from the neighbor's yard a mile away.

The light shines in the darkness and the darkness has not overcome it. "In him was life and that life was the light of all people." Several years ago a friend sent me another translation and wondered about it: "The light shines in the darkness and the darkness did not *apprehend* it." *I thought about that for quite a while even checking a dictionary definition. I smiled – the first definition given is "to arrest." Well, maybe not. Second meaning, however, is "to understand or to perceive." Perhaps that isn't so far off. How could darkness understand light? Surely our darkness cannot understand, cannot perceive, cannot apprehend, cannot overcome this light come into the world. As we sing in the Holden liturgy, "Jesus Christ is the light of the world." Thanks be to God.*