

"The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it." John 1: 5

Last night in the town I live (and I am sure in the surrounding areas as well) the power went out due to a severe windstorm and remained out for most of the night. As we awoke this morning, news began to trickle in that power was still out in certain places in town, namely the schools; I have heard of a snow day, but a wind day is a new one for me. As I arrived at the church this morning the power was on, but for a moment, once again went off. Thankfully, power was restored in time for me, and maybe many of you, to tune in to the Inauguration of the 46th President of The United States of America Joseph R. Biden Jr. I have been asked many times before why I pay attention to the politics of other countries and why I care? My answer to that question at those time and now remains the same; for me to believe that we are separate from one another simply by the boarders we have created is to ignore our commonality and is to ignore our common purpose and future. Regardless of where we live our actions, policies, and practices effect the whole of creation. That is why I pay attention and that is why I care.

Yet as I watched and was deeply moved by the songs, poetry and profound nature of that historic event, I could not help but note the symbolism at play in our lives over the last twenty-four hours. Last night when the lights went out it was dark. The night literally enveloped us all. All the members of our family one by one, found our way to our front windows to look outside, at one point I even stood on my front step, and even though we knew what our front yard looked like, you could barely make out any of the familiar terrain. Yet even through the darkness we found our way to our flashlights and candles and our lives went on; we were not overcome by it. We played a board game as a family, talked about our days, and read books. We all went to sleep with the hope that by morning the lights would be back on, but even if they were not, we went to sleep with the assurance that sun would rise, and that light would break the darkness that had enveloped us.

I do not want to spend much time commenting on the politics of the US as I am sure there are many different opinions, but many have said, myself included, that the last fours years have been a dark time in the history of that country and the world. Yet today, listening to President Biden speak, watching and the first female Vice President, Kamala Harris, being sworn into office, and particularly listening to You Poet Laureate, Amanda Gorman's incredible words, I noticed immediately a sense of hope and a sense of an assurance that a new day had dawned.

As faithful people the hope of a new dawn is incredibly important to us. Particularly as Christians it is ingrained into our theologies and beliefs. Christ himself was a light that shined in the darkness and was not overcome. The Easter promise of resurrection is one that sings of the joy that comes with the dawn; that God's love never ceases to overcome the hated and violence, just like the sun never ceases to rise. We know this to be true in our own lived experiences. Each of us has experienced grief, fear, worry and dread and yet in the face of that

each of us has also experience hope for a better tomorrow. For some, like those grieving, that tomorrow is not immediate, yet the hope remains; the promise that it will remains.

Today I feel hope. Today I am living fully into the promise of our faith which reminds us, "*The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.*"

Sincerely,

Rev. Adam Hall