

Still on the sill

By Megan Rohrer

One day, when Jesus and the disciples were in a boat on the sea, a great storm came upon the boat. The disciples were very frantic. They woke up Jesus, who was sleeping, and yelled, "Can't you see that we are dying!?!". Jesus raised his head and looked at the chaos that was engulfing them and said, "peace, be still." Then, immediately the chaos became calm. (Matt. 8:23-34; Mark 4:35-41; 5:1-20; Luke 8:22-39).

I see this story illustrated nearly everyday, when I look at the street in front of our church. There is chaos and stress filling the air. Waves of deadlines, obligations, commitments, responsibilities and traffic undulate in the ebb and flow of Van Ness and Sacramento. Even in our church we are sometimes engulfed in the urgency of our good intentions.

Perhaps it is because God knows how easy it is to get drawn into the swirling chaos around us, that Psalm 46 commands us to "be still, and know that I am God." This passage reminds me of our homeless friends that find God in their stillness everyday.

Sitting on the sill of our church is a man whose mostly toothless grin is beautiful enough to warm any heart. He sits on the sill in his knit stocking cap and quietly feeds the pigeons. He does not say anything to the people passing by. He just smiles, because he knows that this church is the only place he has ever been where people are nice to him. And, this is the only place where anyone has ever bothered to learn his name.

I know that some people are frightened of our homeless friends who sometimes gather and sit on the windowsills in front of our church. Their weather-torn faces show the storm that continually attempts to capsize their lives. It also reminds us of how close we are to the same fate.

I hope that when we feel afraid of our homeless friends, while we take care of our own safety, we may also allow our hearts to be still and know that God is with us and with the people whom we fear. The smile that we offer our homeless friends may be the only one they ever get. You are welcome to join us as we share hospitality with the homeless every Tuesday and Thursday from 2-4 pm.

Please pray for our homeless friends:

Health Needs: Larry, Spencer, and Anonymous;

For Comfort and Guidance: Jeffery, Billy, Robert Nash, Michael, Robert, and Kevin