

BLESSINGS ALWAYS

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Association Minister Message

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IT'S IN THE BOOK. Jesus says, "...and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you." (*Matthew 28:20*) I have been troubled this week with the photo of the President in front of St. John's Episcopal Church holding up a Bible. The Bible is a sacred text, a collection of faith stories, words, and a witness to the mighty power of God, words of human tragedy and human miracles. In it are reflections of words and deeds of faithful who give honor and praise to God about creation, the continuing creative holy power in every generation and promise of creation to future generations. Again it is a sacred and holy text—thus named Holy Bible—not just a prop or "*just a bible.*" Bishop Michael Curry, Episcopal Presiding Bishop, writes in response to the President's visit to St. John's Episcopal Church, "*The bible the President held up and the church that he stood in front of represent the values of love, of justice, of compassion, and of a way to heal our hurts.*" IT'S IN THE BOOK. Words from Jesus, the prophets, apostles, and other writers remind us that we are to love God, our neighbors, and ourselves in ways of generosity, gratitude, humility, and unconditional love. The Bible's message is proclaimed even now as we are bombarded by sights and sounds of killings, protests, and hatred that permeate the news cycle. This is all happening while still dealing with a pandemic where sickness and death numbers continue to rise. The Bible challenges the ugliness of the human condition and affirms the saving nature of being forgiven and living as beloved children of God. IT'S IN THE BOOK. There is balm in Gilead, there is hope of heaven on earth, there is resurrection faith, there is abundance that is shared to bring wholeness and holiness. The Bible offers insight of a God who is active in human situations, who cares, loves, forgives, laughs and cries with us, and shares with us and calls us to be co-creators of our world. However, we are also called to responsibility and accountability in all that we do. We are called not only to share this vision but make it possible for others to be included in living life as both as human and divine. Not as a prop but as living words. Not as a prop but as words of vision to be brothers and sisters together. Not as a prop but as words that change our lives, re-forming us, forgiving us, re-creating us, and blessing us with unlimited possibilities to love and support one another. IT'S IN THE BOOK. Read it and live it. BLESSINGS ALWAYS.