A Word from Andy+….

I woke up early this morning before the sun rose with Paul's words to the Thessalonians on my mind: ***Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances…*** Really (?..!), I thought as my feet hit the floor. But I have to say, my friends, that I am indeed so thankful in the midst of these strange and difficult days. Remember and take note: Paul doesn't say give thanks FOR all circumstances, but give thanks IN all circumstances. And so, although I can't give thanks for this terrible situation we are living through and all the pain and suffering it is causing, I am finding ways to give thanks in these circumstances. I am finding that a heart open to gratitude and to God's power to always bring good from ill keeps me going every day. And I must say, you, dear friends at The Falls Church Episcopal, are a source of deep gratitude and I give thanks for you. THANK YOU!

Along with scripture (and the Word of God incarnate in you!), I have found that poetry helps these days. I offer words from two poets that were also on my mind early this morning. First is Tennyson's *Ulysses, "**Tho' much is taken, much abides…**"* Yes, indeed! Tennyson's words have always inspired me to keep moving forward in life searching for new ways of living and serving. The entire poem can be found here: https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poems/45392/ulysses

The other words are from the poet W. S. Merwin in his poem *Thanks,* a poet Anne Lamott introduced me to. Here's the link to the entire poem https://poets.org/poem/thanks. Merwin begins,

Listen
with the night falling we are saying thank you..."

and after naming so much life and pain in the world he concludes, "*we are saying thank you and waving dark though it is.*"

May these words and so many others encourage you to *rejoice always, pray without ceasing and give thanks in all circumstances.* And again, let me say thank you, thank you!

Pax,
Andy+