



Wish you were here! Merry Christmas.



Woodstove Cooked —Thanksgiving at the Cabin



Paul and Art Raising Outdoor Kitchen Roof
Collaborating MM Clergy Since 1970 Still At It



Celebrating New Gas Fireplace
No more wood splitting for Jean
(Except at the Cabin)

Doing Christmas When Your Hearing is Shot

I had to turn off my hearing aids.

More often, even hearing aids don't guarantee I can hear. It was the concluding part of the Hallelujah Chorus where everyone stands while the choir and orchestra end the presentation in resounding triumph.

My head just about exploded. I couldn't hear a thing. Until I took off my hearing aids. The thought came to me that sometimes there's too much noise in Christmas.

In fact saying it louder doesn't make it any clearer. (Ask any hearing-challenged person!)

The Christmas stories convey the kind of truth so deep that our human ears can't hear it and our human minds can't really grasp it.

Or maybe we have tried to make history out of simply profound poetry and missed its truth just as the hearing impaired miss waves of sound

Four Gospel writers gave it their best shot and four centuries later the creed-writers, trying to untangle things, further mystified us with words that theologians have attempted to explain ever since and which good Christians often admit to reciting with their fingers crossed.

How can we say with words what it is for the Presence of Life itself that we call "God" to appear among us simple creatures?

We preachers have tried our best to explain more than we know.

We all have had our hearts inspired by great music.

We have been challenged by the old stories of scriptures.

We have tried listening for the angel voices and songs.

But of course God does not speak in words. Some cosmologists say that the language of the universe is equations. God speaks in equations? (I never could learn equations!)

So here I am standing with my hearing aids in my hand, my head ringing with Hallelujahs so much that my head hurts. I'm not feeling spiritual.

Then, without my hearing aids, silence blessedly returns. And I think of the Christmas carol that surely was written for the hard of hearing:

"O little town of Bethlehem, how still we see thee lie..."

*"How silently, how silently the wondrous gift is given,
So God imparts to human hearts the wonders of His heaven.
No ear may hear his coming"*

Maybe that is why the great spirits have been those who dwelt in silent darkness, who awaited the slow coming of the dawn, who tracked the timeless stars, who cultivated sycamore trees, who tended their flocks by night, who in the stillness knew whatever it is we call "God."

Be still and know God... The heavens are telling the glory of God... There is no speech... There are no words.

No hearing aids necessary.

Silent night = Holy night.

Have yourself a quiet little Christmas.

—Art Morgan, December 23, 2014