

The Sixth Sunday after Pentecost
Proper 14 C
Genesis 15: 1-6
Hebrews 11: 1-3, 8-16
Luke 12: 32-40

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Episcopal Church of the Resurrection
(outdoors!)

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Do you know how often people are told not to be afraid in the scriptures? Over 300 times! Angels say it when they meet people. Jesus says it in the gospel this morning.

God says it to Abram in the passage from Genesis we just heard. God had made a promise to Abram that he would be the father of nations, more people than he could count. Abram had yet to see one single heir. Yet the scripture tells us that Abram believed. He had believed enough to move from one place to another at God's direction. Now he was called to wait, in faith. And not be afraid. God took Abram outside to show him those stars which would match the number of his descendants and repeated his promise, his covenant with Abram. Those stars, the same stars we see, are witnesses to God's promise; witnesses to Abram's faith and God's faithfulness.

I wonder if faith isn't something we HAVE or don't have, but an *environment* we live in. A direction we move in. Faith is being open to God, flexible and ready for God.

What holds us back from being flexible, being open to God? Fear. Anxiety. Not knowing. Our need for control of our timeline and lives. Yet God wants us to be ready. Ready to move like Abram literally moved into new territory.

Jesus tells us in today's gospel that in order to get ready, to be flexible, we have to give up that which holds us back --- like those things we cling to --- our possessions perhaps, perhaps the control of our timelines and the direction we had planned, and most certainly *give up the fear* which holds us back, so that we can receive what really matters.

So, don't be afraid, little flock.
Be ready to receive God's love and direction.
Be ready to share God's love.