

A Journey in Faith

Dick Lopez

Manhasset Meeting (attender)

The Lutheran Church has always been kind and generous to my family and me. For this, I will always be grateful.

A few years ago our minister abruptly took leave for another calling, leaving many of us feeling betrayed and abandoned. For a time, it felt like being on a ship without its captain, navigator, or rudder, with little hope of finding ourselves. For me, little did I realize that it was a blessing for it came at a time when I was questioning and coming to terms with a few issues of faith—***seeing God as revealed to us by the Lutheran Church and other religions, and seeking to understand my relationship with God.***

My journey took me to a place where I questioned everything: the teachings and traditions of the Lutheran Church, its organization, leadership, human frailties, politics, liturgy, and most important, how its members and clergy respond to God's will.

As I reach the twilight of my life, I realize that I must come to terms with myself and my personal relationship to God. While I am a slow learner, I believe that I am getting the message and beginning to hear and respond to God's will. Maybe I have been doing that all along without realizing it.

While I will always be a Roman Catholic and a Lutheran at heart, I know that God brought me to the Manhasset Quaker Monthly Meeting. I now gather there with a small group of people every Sunday, in silence to eliminate the superficial chatter of the mind, calm the heart, and seek the source of love and truth in our lives. Friends describe this source in various ways; God, the Spirit, the Inward Light, The Divine, the Christ Within, the "still small voice." What I like about this "unprogrammed" approach to worship is that there are no prearranged prayers, readings, sermons, or hymns. We just wait for divine guidance. What I love most about this worship is the responsibility that it places on me, the individual.

During worship, anyone may rise to give a spoken message. When I go home, I feel energized, like I have been spiritually lifted and blessed.

I have tried sharing this Good News with those-in-charge of the Lutheran Church, but with limited success. So I am now content knowing that I have been blessed with a quiet place where I can worship.