

Good morning in the name that is above every name,

**SCRIPTURE:**

Psalm 16:8 (NLT) – Larger reading: Psalm 16:1-11

*“I know the Lord is always with me. I will not be shaken, for he is right beside me.”*

**STORY:**

In a severe storm at night on Lake Erie a passenger vessel was trying to make the harbor at Cleveland. The lighthouse had been struck by lightning, and the ship could not get its direction in the storm. But in the distance the captain could see the little lights at intervals along the breakwater. Although the great beacon light was out, the captain, watching these little lights closely, was able to bring his ship safely into the harbor. The lower lights had saved his vessel. One of the passengers on the vessel, so the story goes, wrote the evangelistic song “Brightly Beams Our Father’s Mercy” shortly after reaching Cleveland.

**REFLECTION:**

I call it “The Linus Syndrome” – the personal need for a security blanket (which was a phrase coined by Charles Schultz) while being very comfortable with who you are. Linus Van Pelt, the most intellectual and theological expressive of the Peanuts gang, has a fixation on his beloved blue blanket. He is seldom seen without. The other characters, especially his sister Lucy and his ever threatening grandmother, will go to great lengths to rid Linus of his blanket. Their criticism and futile attempts doesn’t upset Linus. He is at peace with himself and his world because he knows who is in charge.

We all need a security blanket of sorts ... some “lights along the shore.” A safe place to go to when life happens, things go bump-in-the-night and a “storm” is raging.

We are often told, especially as we get older, that we need to learn to cope ... whatever “cope” means. Isn’t picking up your blue security blanket coping? Aren’t there times when just covering your head, as Linus often does with his blanket when times get tough, is a wiser coping choice than fighting the demons that surround you? As the saying goes, “It is hard to drain the swamp when you are surrounded by alligators!”

As I climbed between my flannel sheets and a couple of layers of blankets last night I fully embraced The Linus Syndrome within me. I couldn’t do anything about the freezing temperature, but I could warm myself with the “security” of my “blue blanket.” As I drifted off to sleep I was at peace for all was right in the world because I knew who was in charge.

**QUOTE:**

“The older I get, the surer I am that I’m not running the show.” Leonard Cohen

**PRAYER:**

Heavenly Father, I'm "leaning on your everlasting arms" and I feel "safe and secure." Thank you for being there to dispel all the "alarming" things of life. In the precious name of Jesus I pray. Amen

***A new sermon series starts this Sunday called: "Half Truths" ... This week the idea that "Everything Happens for a Reason" will be looked at. It's a phrase that sounds biblical, but actually isn't unless you are living in the Old Testament world.***

***Worship is in our bacteria safe sanctuary at 10:30 or via Facebook page (Manatee United Methodist Church) or via YouTube on Monday (link will be sent out Monday morning).***