



JANUARY 2024 HUG~IN~A~MUG - Vol.92

give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus (1 Thessalonians 5:18 NIV).

*Greetings to you all as we transition into the year 2024!
God bless you richly, everyone.*

I woke at 4:40 this morning and stepped out onto the porch to see what the streets and landscape looked like. I was greeted by the full Cold Moon, a phenomenon, being the brightest and longest full moon of the year 2023! I all but gasped, as I saw my entire neighborhood bathed by exquisite moonlight, showing every frosted windshield, holiday lights of homes down Oak Lane, and Mt. Washington and her snowy cape, contrasted against the sky.

I've spent the past two weeks convalescing and being "alone" at times. However, I believe every detail of these days has been orchestrated by our God in three persons, with His Spirit giving me rest and time to ponder a host of "little things." I experienced thanksgiving for a banquet of "little happenings" and some really "marvelous gifts" given me, from my faith family of three, who folded me into their Christmas Eve with a simple phone call, after they heard of my being "alone."

The scripture quoted above comes from the beautifully wrapped gift my friends gave me. One of three I opened on Christmas Day, the scripture printed on a unique, 3D-Pop Up Greeting Card: "**this is the will of God**" almost roared in my ears! What a promise to "take to the bank." Because this family had created a day that I shall always remember to erase loneliness. And I've experienced such PEACE ever since that afternoon when the phone rang and their invitation was extended to me.

Paul's heart-pounding conviction in his short letter to the people of the Thessalonian Church demands being in the spirit of joy, prayer, and thanksgiving of God's faithfulness. For all the speedbumps these two weeks put in my way, the words "this is the will of God!" brings me enormous joy, prayer, and thanksgiving. And please, I am not dwelling! I am telling! It is the lamp unto my unsteady feet, for it's the "**in all circumstances**," that He has guided and inspired me to share and care. God took over and orchestrated my three-day weekend, Christmas Eve day and Christmas day. Family is the key word, it seems, to all "holiday gatherings," and yet many widows/widowers on my radar are found to be left alone, often victims of complicated obligations laid on their offspring. Which is, I believe, even more reason for our ministry to care and share and check our radar screens for hurting folk.

I feel so privileged these past nine years to sit down to meditate, search scripture, have a deadline with the district board of editors, word smiths that they are ☺....And suddenly be touched by a key word, scripture and theme by the Holy Spirit, driving me inside, out of the moonlight, to craft this love letter to you all today.

Now then: We have prepared and celebrated with our faith families and houses full of Family; had a Sunday Morning Church Service, the Sunday Christmas Eve Day Candlelight Service, and a Christmas Day Monday worship. We have welcomed the birth of Jesus Christ, Lord, and Savior, knowing He came for the purpose of dying on the cross, and that through His Resurrection and Ascension to heaven, we have full salvation and a precious relationship through Grace alone with Him.

All I can say is: WHAT JOY! Pat Reck, Hug Author