

# **“Create in Me a Clean Heart” by Emmy Lu Daly**

**August 5, 2018**



## **Eleventh Sunday after Pentecost**

Create in me a clean heart, O God, and put a new and right spirit within me.

I'm standing here this morning I presume, because I turned 95 yesterday and therefore I must have gained some pearls of wisdom which I could share. Actually, if indeed I do have some wise words, they have come to me through God's guidance and support through many trials, challenges, joys, adventures. We'll see. Let's try this: "The first half of life we spend trying to make it a good one. The second half we realize it is". Doesn't that sound wise though? How about a poem I wrote in 2016?

**A DAY IN THE LIFE OF A 92-YEAR-OLD**

GETTING UP      BEING UP      STAYING UP      KEEPING UP      LETTING GO

### GETTING UP

Putting feet on floor, wait, ready? Stand.  
So far so good.

### BEING UP

Deciding which clothes. What's the weather today?  
Hate being cold, or hot. Oh well, grab a sweater.

### STAYING UP

Trying to read. Nodding off.  
Stand up. Do yoga stretches. Eat something.

### KEEPING UP

Confusing. What are all these things that keep people tuned in?  
iPads? iPhones? Kindles? MacBooks? Texting? Twitter?

### LETTING GO

Recognizing you're OK. You're still here.  
There's love and laughter all around. Relax.

On to the present time starting with Psalm 16:5:

LORD, you have assigned me my portion and my cup;  
You have made my lot secure.  
The boundary lines have fallen for me in pleasant places;  
Surely I have a delightful inheritance

This describes so well how grateful I am for my present home in the Armed Forces Retirement Home on 620 acres off North Capitol St. where I've now lived for a year and 4 months. I had lived in a senior subsidized apartment in Adams Morgan for 21 years and I was happy there. But the building was being gutted and I would have waited almost 2 year to move back in

to a much smaller space. The AFRH began taking applications from WW 11 women veterans. Residency includes continuing care -assisted living, nursing care and a unit for folks with dementia. This was the persuading factor. It took some time to adjust to a military facility where there are 330 veterans, 50 women vets, average 84. Most of them had long term careers in the military. I was in the WAVES for a little more than 2 years. Now I'm here, surrounded by beautiful rolling grounds with lovely walking paths. The dining room is spacious and bright with large windows looking out on the landscaped grounds.

The 3 meals a day offer a lot of variety of nutritious food. There as are many stimulating activities, fun games and outside music organization that come and entertain us. I have acquired many acquaintances (no pals). And, most of all, I have come to respect these folks who really did give their lives for their country. (However, a majority of them are very conservative—I share my political views with a just couple of people). So, I have, indeed, as the Psalm says...fallen into a pleasant place.

But on to a broader picture—my call, or as I describe it, my “thread” and the poem [“The Way it Is” by William Stafford](#) describes it perfectly.

Actually, the thread loosened a few times and I was pretty scattered. But my love of music, dance and poetry remained a strong thread. All my life I have sung in different venues – church choirs, musicals. Recovering from heart surgery, in and out of consciousness, I listened to the B Minor Mass. As recently as 5 years ago, I had a gig I took to retirement and nursing homes where I sang about 20 old songs, adorned with costumes and crazy hats. I called myself The Golden Miss Em - hah.

The thread really strengthened when I was led, and I am sure it was by the Holy Spirit (although I didn't claim that for a

while) to the Potter's House, joined the church, became an elder and very active in the drama group, The Potter's House Players. Everything about my life changed from then on. I recognized the thread was God's and Jesus's call.

The drama group dissolved, and eventually the Potter's House became strictly a restaurant and bookstore. I came to Seeker's Church in 2000 and the thread tightened again. Being a part of the Living Water mission group with Marjory, Nancy, Jean, Cynthia and Emily has supported me in my aging and kept me involved and challenged and happy. We laugh a lot, share our journeys and offer opportunities for spiritual direction to the community.

If I were to express my dominant state of being right now, I'd say it is one of gratitude. God has given me time to know myself, to know that I am loved unconditionally and have the strength and desire to share that love with my children, Lisanne and Fritz, Seekers, all my friends and residents in AFRH.

Marjory recently led a class on call and I wrote the following:

### **SPIRAL OF CALL**

I am having a great deal of trouble working with this spiral and all the ramifications. Truth to tell, I think I am living my Call right now which is to be present to the life here in the AFGH and to be involved in some of the activities offered, including volunteering in the library and the thrift shop and the sing-a long. And. t is a place where one can contemplate death and dying with greater acceptance and less fearand where I can work with my own preparations. There is time and space for spiritual growth and prayer with readings which can lead me to an awareness of what resurrection offers. I have felt a "peace that passeth all understanding" at least once and have become

more aware of God's call and caring for me as I move toward death and the As I open myself to this Path, I pray that Jesus will direct my actions with others—to be kind, helpful as much as I can be- be generous and compassionate .And to smile and laugh when it helps. Ah, and to hope that my family and friends will be with me to comfort me, to hold and touch me.

My physical strengths and weaknesses are a big part of this path. I won't spell them out but I realize that I am becoming frailer, in mind as well as body. I am taking good care as much as I can but rather than complain, I rest and try to follow God's path for me.

*[Emmy Lu concluded her offering of the Word with a rendition of "Mighty Like a Rose," sung as a duet with her son Fritz, who was born with Down Syndrom. Fritz stood by his mother's side during the entire sermon. The William Stafford poem that Emmy Lu read can be found in [Ask Me: 100 Essential Poems](#). Graywolf Press (January 7, 2014)]*