

## FEBRUARY 26-MARCH 11: HOLY GROUND

INTRODUCTION BY DR. MARYANN HAWKINS

*“...the ground where you are standing is Holy...”*

*“...be Holy as I am Holy...”*

*“...don't call [that/them] unholy...”*

What makes someone or someplace 'holy?' This Lenten season brings us to such a question. As we begin exploring for an answer we are confronted again and again with the One who makes the ground, the temple, the people, the person Holy. We sing the chorus “Emmanuel,” God with us, during Advent, and then as the new year approaches we can promptly forget that God is indeed with us. Just as God is with Adam and Eve as they walked in the Garden; just as God is with Hagar as she sat in the desert; just as God is with Joseph and Paul in prison; just as God is with Lydia by the river; so God is with us wherever we go.

There is a religious belief called Animism. The basic belief in Animism is that supernatural power (not attributed to God the Creator) organizes and animates the plants and rocks and animals. Animism would not suggest that these are possessed, not holy. Yet the God of the universe can make the very dirt under our feet, the rocks gathered in remembrance, the bread and the cup, the writing desk or the kitchen where a meal is prepared, Holy by God's own presence.

Christian Counseling and Educational Services of Hanover, PA state that C. Austin Miles (1868-1946) penned these words while meditating on the story of Mary of Magdala as she wept in the garden, on the morning of that first Easter:

*“I come to the garden alone, While the dew is still on the roses; And the voice I hear, falling on my ear, The Son of God discloses. // And He walks with me, and He talks with me, And He tells me I am His own; And the joy we share as we tarry there, None other has ever known.”*

The Holy God who is, invites us to acknowledge Emmanuel, so that God's holiness can be recognized by those around us. May these devotional thoughts remind you that the God of all Creation invites all of us to walk, sit, work -- to be -- in his presence. Take off your shoes ...

### CONTRIBUTORS FOR THIS THEME

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