



Monday, May 20, 2013

**READ-** The Psalter: Psalm 8

This psalm reminds us in a glorious way of the majesty and glory of God's creation and the tremendous responsibility God has given us as stewards of that creation. Rather than making us feel powerful to "have dominion" over all things, this passage reminds us of our smallness in comparison with the greatness of God AND our accountability to God for the way we use and maintain the created world we've been given.

**REFLECT-**

- What do you do in an intentional way to be a good steward of the air, earth, water, nature and animals that God has given us? Do you recycle? Do you use electricity, water and gas in a conservative way? Do you know where the food you eat comes from and the people or animals that may suffer because of the way in which it is gathered or produced? What can you do differently?

**PRAY-**

Creator God, help me to be more conscious of the ways in which I use the resources of creation so that I may be a good steward of those gifts. Amen.

Tuesday, May 21, 2013

**READ-** Wisdom Literature: Proverbs 8:1-4, 22-31

Proverbs is a collection of wise sayings and teaching designed to instruct and guide. This passage emphasizes the creative, life-giving force of God's wisdom which has been eternally present and is available to us each day that we live if we seek it through prayer and scripture.

**REFLECT-**

- The Holy Spirit is a tremendous source of wisdom and guidance for our lives, but we must be open, aware and responsive to the Spirit's presence and influence. In what ways are you intentional about listening and responding to the wisdom of the Spirit?

**PRAY-**

Source of all wisdom, keep my heart open and listening to hear, receive and act according to your will and for your glory. Amen.

Wednesday, May 22, 2013

**READ-** The Epistle: Romans 5:1-5

Paul reminds the Roman church here that, although they are to live according to God's laws, they cannot on their own be justified; that it is only by faith that we receive God's grace and regardless of what we may suffer to hold fast to that faith, the end result is our eternal hope of salvation and reconciliation with a loving God.

**REFLECT-**

- Does your experience with suffering correspond with Paul's that it has the capability to produce endurance, character and in the end, hope? Have you found that your suffering has brought you closer to God and filled with more compassion for others who suffer? Who needs your care and compassion born of suffering today?

**PRAY-**

O Great Comforter, help me to reach out to someone today who is suffering and share with them your love and compassion. Amen.

Thursday, May 23, 2013

**READ-** The Gospel: John 16:12-15

Jesus wasn't able to tell his disciples everything he needed them to know in his brief time with them, but he promised that the "Spirit of truth" he would send to them would continue that teaching and guiding work. Our culture and circumstances are very different than that of Jesus' time. Sometimes we need new truths for new decisions we must make and we must rely on that Spirit of truth to help us navigate that new ground.

**REFLECT-**

- Our church is divided about many issues today. Is "the way it has always been" always the way in which God is leading us? How can we go about discerning what may be new truth from Spirit and what is false teaching and not of God?

**PRAY-**

Lord, help us to allow your Spirit to guide us as we address issues within our church so that we may act according to your will. Amen.

Friday, May 24, 2013

**READ-** Sermon Text: Acts 1:15-17, 21-26

Peter quickly emerged as a strong leader for the disciples and he felt that they must replace Judas with a twelfth disciple to complete that core group which Jesus so carefully chose to carry out his work. They chose Matthias by casting lots, yet we never hear of him again.

**REFLECT-**

- John Wesley taught that we should use scripture, reason, experience and the tradition of the ancient church as our guides in making important spiritual decisions. This choice of Matthias was hasty and made in a random manner. What might we learn from it?

**PRAY-**

Loving God, help me to use all tools of discernment that you give us so that I may make wise choices that are according to your will. Amen.