

Tuesday, October 29

Birthdays: Candy Geer

Prayers for: Mark & Jennifer Doremus; Brandon Drath; Michael & Kelly Edwards, Michael, Skylar, Jillian, Jocelyn, Silas; Grace England

Matthew 13:1-9 “And others fell on the good soil and yielded a crop, some a hundredfold, some sixty, and some thirty.” (v.8)

Recently our pastor told a story of a shoemaker concerned that his life might not be amounting to much. Troubled, he approached his pastor: “I am not a deacon, or an evangelist, or a missionary. I’m just a shoemaker—how can I serve God?” The pastor sat quietly and thought then turned to him and said, “Make a good shoe.” There is something about spiritual aspiration that always seems a little suspect with Christ. When he overheard his disciples arguing about who is chief among them, he shocked them by saying, “he who will be first shall be last.” When James and John begged Christ whether they should call down thunder on a Samaritan, he scolded them. And when Peter attacked an approaching soldier, Jesus rebuked Peter and healed the soldier. Christ redirects aspiration. Likewise, in today’s reading he insists how much my life yields isn’t as important as that it yields—even its just making a good shoe.

Ezra 5:1-17; Psalm 45; Revelation 4:1-11

Wednesday, October 30

Birthdays: Janeth Gallegos, Fred Talley

Prayers for: Sarrah Joy Estrella; Lauren Fennel; Wade & Valerie Fennel; Kevin & Dena Fennell, Kelsey, Darcy, Rory, Danielle; Barry Firestone

Revelation 5:1-10 And they sang a new song, saying, “Worthy are You to take the book and to break its seals; for You were slain, and purchased for God with Your blood men from every tribe and tongue and people and nation. (v.9)

During his tenure, Pope John Paul II not only traveled more than any other pope in history, he traveled more than all of them combined. His visits to 129 countries were equivalent to circling the earth 31 times. While I was not raised Roman Catholic, John Paul’s passion and outreach thrilled me. When he addressed a crowd in Detroit in 1987, he declared “every human person—no matter how vulnerable or helpless, no matter how young or old, no matter how healthy, handicapped or sick, no matter how useful or productive—is a being of inestimable worth.” He went on to say that the ultimate test of America was, “to respect every human person.” John Paul’s successor, Pope Francis, today insists we “build bridges not walls.” This is the Christianity I know. That Christ’s sacrifice was targeted to peoples of every nation. His sacrifice was not and is not restricted or exclusive to anyone on earth.

Ezra 6:1-22; Psalm 119:49-72; Mathew 13:10-17

Wednesday, October 31

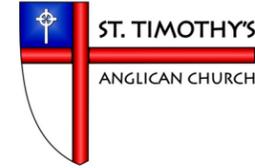
Birthdays:

Prayers for: Josiah & Casey Ferrill; Linda Flavin; Benjamin & Tey Flores; Silvia Flores; David & Linda Flower; Joe & Joyce Fontaine

Psalm 50 “I know every bird of the mountains, and everything that moves in the field is Mine.” (v.11)

In 2015 a white-tailed eagle set a world record for the highest recorded bird flight. Released from Dubai’s Burj Khalifa tower (the tallest man-made structure on earth), the eagle began its half-mile descent with an attached camera. Stunning video captured the expanse of Dubai’s territory below as the eagle soared. At ground level, trainer and eagle conservationist Jacques-Oliver Travers stood waving his hands in what seemed a crazy attempt to capture the eagle’s attention. After nearly 5 minutes of soaring, the video captures the eagle’s jarring discovery with a sudden torpedo-like descent—amazingly—straight to the beckoning arms of his trainer. I am sometimes tempted to think I am nothing in a sea of humanity. And yet, if a bird can spot a single individual a half a mile away, how much more can the omniscient Holy Spirit pierce my own personal inner most thoughts, motives, struggles, and prayers? I took comfort knowing if a mere bird can do this, how much more an all-knowing God?

Nehemiah 1:1-11; Revelation 5:11—6:11; Matthew 13:18-23



ST. TIMOTHY'S TIMES DAILY DEVOTIONAL READING

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PO Box 380 Winter Park, Florida 32790

Prayer for St. Timothy's

*Most loving God, whose wisdom
has guided St. Timothy's
Anglican Church
since its beginning,
stir up your Spirit in our midst
and lead us forward in the work
we are called to do.*

*Enable this congregation to
continue in service to you and
in ministry within and
beyond our walls.*

*Cleanse us of petty rivalries,
sensitivities, vanities,
discourtesies – everything
which distracts us, thus freeing
us to rejoice in the good
performed by others.*

*Grant that we may be united in
a common purpose and share in
a single spirit...*

*your Spirit, Lord.
Bless our work together that we
may faithfully envision what you
are calling us to be and to do,
and bless our efforts to be
faithful to your calling.*

*Grant that your attractive
goodness may be seen in all our
faces, your warm accents of
love heard in all our words, and
in our lives may we show
something of you to
all the world.*

*Through Jesus Christ our Lord,
AMEN.*

Tuesday, October 1

Birthdays: Barry Firestone, Michael Johnson, Esmeralda Ramirez

Prayers for: Dele & Kemi Oduola, Francisca, Gabriel; Alfred Ongiro; Rudy & Trisha Ortiz, Evelyn, Angilina

Psalm 100 Shout for joy to the LORD, all the earth. Worship the LORD with gladness; come before him with joyful songs. (vv.1-2)

I love the processional hymn with which our church opens worship because of the joy I feel permeating the sanctuary as I walk down the aisle following the crucifer, the choir, the Gospel bearer, and the acolytes. Every Sunday, we “come before Him with joyful songs” and that always lifts my spirits, such that I delight to “worship the Lord with gladness.” In our parish, the joy we experience in worship extends to the fellowship, the office work, and even our Vestry meetings. We love, laugh, and have fun with each other. And yet, there are Christians who go about looking glum and dour, and churches that simply feel “dead” when one goes to worship there. We Christians serve a living Lord who came that we might “have life and have it more abundantly” (John 10:10). So, let us find reasons to rejoice, that others may want to come to know “the Lord of the Dance.” In Jesus’ “blessed are...” sayings in the Beatitudes, he uses the Greek word makarios, which also means “happy.” In Christ, we can be both “blessed” and “happy”!

2 Chronicles 29:1-3, 30:1-27; Psalms 97, 99; 1 Corinthians 7:32-40; Matthew 7:1-12

Wednesday, October 2

Birthdays: Pat Alvis

Prayers for: Clarence Onunekwu & Chidimma Akanite, Kendrick, Adanna; James & Caroline Osteen

2 Kings 18:9-25 The field commander said to them, “Tell Hezekiah: ‘This is what the great king, the king of Assyria, says: On what are you basing this confidence of yours?’” (v.19)

Good question. On what do we base our confidence? The Assyrian king goes on to taunt Hezekiah, the King of Judah, “But if you say to me, ‘We are depending on the Lord our God’—isn’t he the one whose high places and altars Hezekiah removed, saying to Judah and Jerusalem, ‘You must worship before this altar in Jerusalem’”? In fact, Hezekiah had destroyed the idolatrous altars not dedicated to the worship of Israel’s true God. He also refused to pay tribute to Assyria. So, King Sennacherib was trying to use Hezekiah’s reforms against him, to divide (and conquer) the people. The pagan monarch failed to understand that Israel’s God was not confined to Jerusalem, or any altar erected to Him. Israel’s king and people could have confidence in their God because He was with them everywhere, even when they were forced into exile. Today we, too, can place our confidence in this same good and loving, omnipresent God.

Psalms 101, 109; 1 Corinthians 8:1-13; Matthew 7:13-21

Thursday, October 3

Birthdays: Alondra Sierra

Prayers for: Lizbeth Oviedo; Paul & Heather Palmer; Chris & Meagan Patton, Christopher, Cohen; Mike & Jane Pavelka, Pam, Nicholas

Psalm 105:1-22 Look to the LORD and his strength; seek his face always. Remember the wonders he has done, his miracles, and the judgments he pronounced...” (vv.4-5a)

The famous Dutch Catholic priest, Henri Nouwen, once wrote, “Perhaps nothing helps us make the movement from our little selves to a larger world than remembering God in gratitude. Such a perspective puts God in view in all of life, not just in the moments we set aside for worship or spiritual disciplines. Not just in the moments when life seems easy.” It’s easier to remember God’s goodness and thank Him when things are going well. But can we remember to do that when we’re in the trenches, trying to fight our way out of worry, fear, or depression? For a while, I tried to keep track of God’s blessings by writing them down. But that became too tedious. Instead, I just started trying to remember them as I was driving my hour-long commute. It was a wonderful way “look to the Lord” and “seek His face.” Try it sometime!

2 Kings 18:28-37; 1 Corinthians 9:1-15; Matthew 7:22-29

Friday, October 4

Birthdays: Vicki Bayang, Jeff Weissling

Prayers for: Liz Pearsey; John & Tracy Pegues; June Powell; Steve & Carol Powell; Susan Pride; Mike & Cecelia Railey; David & Carol Ray

Matthew 8:1-17 A man with leprosy came and knelt before him and said, “Lord, if you are willing, you can make me clean.” Jesus reached out his hand and touched the man. “I am willing,” he said. (vv.2-3)

Whenever I read this passage, I’m always amazed that the ailing man would question Jesus’ willingness to see him healed. And I’ve heard Christians praying at hospital bedsides, “Lord, if You are willing, please heal [this person].” Call me naïve, but the way I understand Jesus and his ministry, He was—and is—always willing for his children to be healed. The difficulty is that we have to trust our Lord for the means, timing, and nature of that healing. In fact, we may have to accept that death is the ultimate healing. At our Vacation Bible School last summer, when the children were asked about times they knew God had listened to them, one girl said she had prayed for her grandma, “And she got well.” She also prayed for a neighbor. “Did he get better?” asked a little boy. “Much better!” the child exclaimed, “He went to heaven!”

2 Kings 19:1-20; Psalm 102; 1 Corinthians 9:16-27

Saturday, October 5

Birthdays: Nicholas Gerber, Maggie Schiltz

Prayers for: Adrian & Eliana Ramirez, Esmeralda, Fernanda, Adrian; Tony & Nema Redding; Alan & Jan Rendl; Ted & Donna Ritts, Eric

1 Corinthians 10:1-13 No temptation has overtaken you except what is common to mankind. And God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can endure it. (v.13)

I’ve heard it said that people often take comfort from this Scripture verse by misinterpreting it as “God won’t give you more than you can handle.” Then they wonder why they feel so overwhelmed at times, and God doesn’t seem to be helping. But perhaps that’s not a wrong understanding, since the Greek word for “temptation” can also mean “testing.” We could, therefore, read the second part as “when you are tested, God will provide a way out so that you can endure.” When we have faith and ask God for His help, it does seem to happen that way. While Jesus never promised us a rose garden, he did promise us, “I am with you always, even to the end of the world” (Matthew 28:20 TLB). So, even when we are tested (or tempted) and fail (or fall), Jesus is right there to forgive us, pick us up, soothe our ruffled feathers, and set us on the right path again. He knows our every weakness, sympathizes, and can help. All we need to do is call on him.

2 Kings 19:21-36; Psalms 107:33-43, 108; Matthew 8:18-27

Sunday, October 6

Birthdays: Art DePue

Prayers for: Braden Richter & Jessica Bradbury; Corey & Sloane Ritts, Declan, Elyn, Lochlan; Martha Rodabaugh, Lauren, Cassie; Kathy Rohm

Acts 12:1-17 So Peter was kept in prison, but the church was earnestly praying to God for him. (v.5)

Things happen when the church prays. I wish we would all take God at His word. He tells us to pray because He wants to unleash power in our lives and in our circumstances. I am not a big bumper sticker fan, but I have seen one that reads “Prayer Works!” The simplicity of this is true. Prayer is not magic; instead it is entrusting who we are to who God is. It is a relinquishing of control, believing that the answers He gives are the best ones for our life. Whether it is a simple request for a peaceful night’s sleep or for the seemingly impossible. God’s desire is for us to believe Him and trust in His power. He desires to prove Himself to us in our relationship with Him. Prayer works because God acts when we pray. When the church met to pray for Peter, an angel suddenly appeared to Peter and led him out of prison. Can you see the direct connection between the prayer and the sudden answer to their prayer? Let us take God at His word. Things happen when we pray. We believe, we hope, and we watch for His answers.

2 Kings 20:1-21; Psalm 118; Luke 7:11-17

Monday, October 7

Birthdays:

Prayers for: David Ronkainer; Al Rosso; Horacio & Leticia Salazar Jr., Manuel, Elizabeth, Horacio III, Victor, Santos; Ramin Salbi; Kay Sanford

Psalms 106:1-18 Then they believed his promises and sang his praises. But they soon forgot what he had done and did not wait for his plan to unfold. (vv.12-13)

Hear the passage today. They believed...They forgot. Maybe I am not alone. Have you ever walked to another part of your house to do something, then found that you are trying to remember what you came to do? After standing in the room bewildered for a while, finally something jogs your memory and you carry on. Likewise, we Christians also tend to forget God’s place in our hearts, especially when we are busy and our lives are going well. It frustrates me to forget God. God must sigh at our short memories. But the good news is He knows what it takes to get our attention. A rainbow, a dove, a burning bush, a pastor, a friend, a verse, a loaf of bread, a cup of wine. God is active through His Holy Spirit in His pursuit to keep us remembering! Look for the Spirit moving around us. And when he jogs our memory, be glad, and thankful. God has the best counsel and direction for our lives.

2 Kings 21:1-18; 1 Corinthians 10:14—11:1; Matthew 8:28-34

Friday, October 25

Birthdays: Kathy Buckner

Prayers for: Gene & Genevieve Chism; Maureen Clairday; Scott & Ashley Clarke, Chase, Weston, Trevor; Keith & Lisa Coe; Allan & Sue Cox

Matthew 12:22-32 A large crowd followed him, and he healed all who were ill. (v.15b)

We’ve been trying to get a healing service going at our church. In the meantime, we have prayer ministers anoint and pray for healing for any who wish, immediately after receiving Communion. It’s been said that Jesus had a ministry of “mealing and healing,” and having healing prayer right after partaking of Christ’s Body and Blood in the Eucharist is an ultimate example of that. Our congregation is blessed to have lay persons who not only believe in the healing grace and power of God, but who obeyed His call to minister that grace to others.

Ezra 3:1-13; Psalm 31; 1 Corinthians 16:10-24

Saturday, October 26

Birthdays: Susan Howard, Kristen Johnson

Prayers for: Carlina Craze; Robin Cross, Edward; Michael & Kay Daigle, Paul, Peter, Kaylee; Bill & Caroline Davies; Mary Karen Davis

Philemon 1-25 Therefore, although in Christ I could be bold and order you to do what you ought to do, yet I prefer to appeal to you on the basis of love. (vv.8-9a)

In this short little book, Paul was sending a runaway slave, Onesimus, back to his master, Philemon. Onesimus had run away to Paul, had become a Christian, and was like a brother to him. Paul wants Philemon to welcome the former slave back without punishment. He makes an interesting distinction here—whether it is better to authoritatively coerce someone into acting, or to request that they comply, out of love. My grandma used to say, “You can catch more flies with honey than vinegar.” She was right (and so is Paul), but I had to find that out the hard way. As Christians, we are to “speak the truth in love.” Not always an easy assignment, but the right one.

Ezra 4:7, 11-24; Psalms 30, 32; Matthew 12:33-42

Sunday, October 27

Birthdays: Brenda Spiess

Prayers for: Dorie Dawson; Shane & Kristina Dear, Jacob, Lauren; Fisoye & Solape Delano; Michael & Sonia Delgado, Michelle, Megan

Luke 10:25-37 “But a certain Samaritan who was on a journey, came upon him; and when he saw him, he felt compassion...” (vv.33a NAS)

While I loved the group of Christians I grew up with as a teenager, they did have a zero tolerance for other religions. It was a conflict for me since I also claimed a colony of loving Muslim relatives on my mother’s side. My mother herself risked her life during the 1944 bombing raids on Japan to save my father—a starving American POW. Her father was known to constantly invite strangers to his home. And her mother died of a heart attack while on a walk to bring money to someone in need. How on earth could I condemn my relatives as my elders were teaching us to do? And Christian elders who, themselves, were caring and loving and went the extra mile as well? I could never square myself with my mother’s religion, although I tried. But I could never square with my elders’ sweeping condemnation of Muslims either. Christ charged us to love God and our neighbor. In today’s reading, he used a man from a religious sect as an example of that neighbor—the Good Samaritan.

Haggai 1:1—2:9; Psalms 63, 98; Acts 18:24—19:7

Monday, October 28

Birthdays:

Prayers for: Art & Peggy DePue; Pete DeWitt; Lisa DiBiasio, Emma; Fr. Larry & Benda DiSano; Keila DiSano; Rebecca DiSano; Tom Donley

Zechariah 1:7-17 “But I am very angry with the nations who are at ease; for while I was only a little angry, they furthered the disaster.” (v.15)

In Zechariah we learn that power, especially ordained by God that is later abused, is big trouble. What is the tipping point? Zechariah points to personal gain. Based on a true story, the 2013 film *Philomena* exposed the horrific abuse of power of a religious organization orchestrating an orphanage by cruel financial gain. The scheme was to take in unwed pregnant girls and provide “penance.” However, the penance was not only cruel, it profited the orphanage as well; first by selling the girl’s babies to wealthy Hollywood stars, then contracting the girls to slave labor. While the film had its share of artistic license, the essence of this abuse was confirmed by numerous former residents who later emerged to corroborate the scandal in chilling detail. Seventeenth century theologian Matthew Poole paraphrased today’s verse as, “I whipped to smart but you wounded to bleed.” At the heart of this is the sobering command from Christ to always check ourselves: “For in the way you judge, you will be judged” (Matthew 7:2).

Psalms 41, 52; Revelation 1:4-20; Matthew 12:43-50

Sunday, October 20

Birthdays:

Prayers for: Fehintolu Babayemi, Oluwabukunmi David, Oluwafolawemi Anne; Kyla Bayang, Martin, Vicki; Bob & Mary Benning

Jeremiah 29:1, 4-14 I will be found by you,” declares the LORD, “and will bring you back from captivity. I will gather you from all the nations and places where I have banished you,” declares the LORD, “and will bring you back to the place from which I carried you into exile.” (v.14 NIV)

It’s been said, “You can’t go home again,” meaning, if you do, you might not find yourself welcome any more, or things would have changed beyond recognition. But all the Israelites who were exiled to Babylon could think about was going home. God, in His mercy, would make that possible, after their time of punishment and discipline. I left home to go to college when I was 18 and, many years later, moved back to my home town. It truly was very different, and after living there for another 13 years, realized it would never be home again, and moved away. Truly, heaven is our only real home, for Christians. Thank God, Jesus made that homecoming possible!

Psalms 148, 149, 150; Acts 16:6-15; Luke 10:1-12, 17-20

Monday, October 21

Birthdays:

Prayers for: Steve & Nanette Benoit; Ken & Patti Bill; Anne Birkhead; Ed & Zonia Bock; Jim & Kathy Boggs, Chris; Ruby Bosh, JB

1 Corinthians 15:30-41 What you sow does not come to life unless it dies. (v.36b)

I don’t even have to sow a seed to kill a plant. I confess: I’m a serial killer of potted plants, and no one should ever give them to me. Recently, a friend gave me herbs rooting in a glass of water, a clay pot, and a bag of soil to plant them in. I left the herbs in the windowsill (figured they need sunlight). Then forgot about them. They died and dried. So, I threw the herbs in a spaghetti sauce and it was delicious. Fortunately, when God “plants us in the ground” (we die), He then “harvests” us as resurrected people, filled with new life far more glorious than any potted flower. Thanks be to God!

Jeremiah 44:1-14; Psalm 25; Matthew 11:16-24

Tuesday, October 22

Birthdays: Alejandra Gallego, Christopher Patton

Prayers for: Bob & Bonnie Boyce; Frank Boyd; Jim & Carolyn Boyd; Nettie Briggs; Bob & Diann Brooke; David & Janice Brookes, Philip

Matthew 11:25-30 “Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest.” (v.28)

I have a chronic illness that causes pain and fatigue, so I am always tired. It doesn’t matter how much sleep I get. But this is one of my favorite Bible verses, because Jesus is not so much talking about physical rest, but rest for our souls—inner peace, that unexplainable sense that everything will be all right and that God is with us. No matter how much we might rest our bodies—even take a vacation!—if we don’t have rest in our souls, we will feel “weary and burdened.” This verse helps me to remember to “Let go, and let God.”

Lamentations 1:1-12; Psalms 26, 28; I Corinthians 15:41-50

Wednesday, October 23

Birthdays: Pat Landgren, Caroline Osteen

Prayers for: Bruce & Jane Brough; Tom Burgess; David & Betsy Burns; Nita Burrer, Jason; Brian & Gail Cahill; Brian Callahan

Psalms 38 LORD, do not forsake me; be not far from me, my God. (v.21)

This entire psalm reminds me of the laments of Job, a book we are studying in our Bible Study group. The way the psalmist moans and groans, Job could have written this. And yet, he had faith that God was with him, even in the absence of an answer from the Lord, and in the presence of abuse from his friends. Sometimes, we, too, are between the rock of a seemingly absent God and the hard place of suffering unhelpful friends. Yet our Lord Jesus Christ promised to be with us “always, even to the end of time” (Matthew 28:20). He has not forsaken us and is not far from us. Thanks be to God!

Lamentations 2:8-15; 1 Corinthians 15:51-58; Matthew 12:1-14

Thursday, October 24

Birthdays:

Prayers for: Bob & Mary Capps; Tim Caudill, Keegan; Jorge & Elizabeth Cavazos, Arianna; Emile & Lynn Champion; Travis & Shelia Chandler

Ezra 1:1-11 “Any of his people among you may go up to Jerusalem in Judah and build the temple of the LORD, the God of Israel, the God who is in Jerusalem, and may their God be with them.” (v.3)

In this verse, I don’t quite understand why the prophet Ezra appears to localize God’s presence. Yes, He was (and is) the God of Israel, and the ancient Hebrews believed that He dwelt in the temple in Jerusalem. But God is everywhere, and in every place where true believers gather to worship and praise Him. He is in the grandest European cathedral, as well as the tiniest white-clapboard chapel in rural America. But most importantly, He dwells in the “tabernacle” of our hearts, now that Jesus—as the bridge to the Father—has made possible immediate communion with God. Those ancient Israelites were called to rebuild the Jerusalem temple. It’s our job to keep up the “temple” of our hearts, so God can “live” in a good house!

Psalm 37:1-18; 1 Corinthians 16:1-9; Matthew 12:15-21

Tuesday, October 8

Birthdays:

Prayers for: Dick & Jackie Savacool; Debbie Schaberg, Emma; Aaron & Mary Scherzer, Simon, Amelia, Eleanor; Charles & Jennifer Scherzer

2 Kings 22:1-13 He did what was right in the eyes of the LORD and followed completely the ways of his father David, not turning aside to the right or to the left. (v.2)

A friend of mine, researching her family heritage, was astonished to find that her distant relatives came to this country on the Mayflower. Another friend discovered he was related to John Quincy Adams. As Christians we have a spiritual heritage as well. We are connected to all those who have planted the seeds of faith in our lives. One of those connected to our spiritual heritage is King Josiah. This passage speaks about Josiah, who was the last godly king before the exile. From the day he heard what was written in the Book of the Law, his heart was convicted and he set out to turn the hearts of his people back to God. When I read this description of the spiritual character of Josiah, I wonder what people will say about me when I am gone from this earth. Would someone be able to put my name in front of the above passage? “Robin, she did what was right in the eyes of the Lord and followed completely the ways of [her heavenly Father], not turning aside to the right or to the left.” Could someone put your name in place of King Josiah’s?

Psalms 120, 121, 122, 123; 1 Corinthians 11:2, 17-22; Matthew 9:1-8

Wednesday, October 9

Birthdays:

Prayers for: Dennis & Rene Schiltz, Mckenna, Brennan, Maggie; Fr. Michael & Rachel Schwandt, Margaret; Scotty Scott & Beth Dickinson

Psalms 119:145-176 See how I love your precepts; preserve my life, LORD, in accordance with your love.” (v.159)

Preserving ourselves...we have made it a billion-dollar industry in our attempt to prevent the inevitable. Who likes change anyway? I, myself, stroll down the health and beauty aisle in the grocery store. It does become a little comical to me as those “energy words” jump out at me. You name it. Any given “age-buster” product claims to plump, shrink, fade, tighten, cover, shield, strengthen, and prevent. I once saw an Internet ad offering to preserve your body by Cryonic Suspension for \$60,000 or \$40 a month for life. More surprising is the number of people who have actually signed up for this deal! When you do not know the Savior, there is great fear of change—and greater fear of death. The truth is this: “Though outwardly we are wasting away, yet inwardly we are renewed day by day” (2 Corinthians 4:16). It is only through the word of God and His saving grace that we are being preserved and transformed into His likeness. God’s preservation is not for the moment but forever.

2 Kings 22:14—23:3; 1 Corinthians 11:23-34; Matthew 9:9-17

Thursday, October 10

Birthdays: Dorie Dawson

Prayers for: Ronnie Sefcik; Grant & Heather Seiver, Wade, Mackenzie, Savannah, Isaac, Abigail, Luke; Valerie Shepherd

Matthew 9:18-26 He said, “Go away. The girl is not dead but asleep.” But they laughed at him. (v.24)

Jesus does the impossible, bringing life out of death. Can you see the scene? Musicians and mourners were hired to play and lament in the mourning ceremony for this girl. Loads of money was spent. A lot of food was prepared. People traveled far to be there. A big crowd gathered. When Jesus proclaimed, “The girl is not dead but asleep,” there was only unbelief and mocking laughter. Our enemy is a smooth operator—especially in a crowd. Have you ever been in a crowd and felt the temptation to be lured away from God’s will? I have. Have you ever been tempted to believe that God does not work incredible works today? The Devil cheers when he can neutralize our bold witness in a crowd. He enjoys slowly unraveling our faith with seeds of unbelief. The crowd did laugh at Jesus. They did not know Jesus like we do. Even though our faith might waiver in a crowd Jesus, will not be swayed. No matter how the culture, our friends, or even the church may pressure us, we need to put our complete trust in Jesus and his ways. Lord Jesus, we give our loyalty to you. Keep us from falling into the unbelief of this world.

2 Kings 23:4-25; Psalms 131, 132, 133; 1 Corinthians 12:1-11

Friday, October 11

Birthdays: Jill Johnson

Prayers for: Warren & Donna Settles, Linden, Ethan, Deanna; David Sierra & Nina Torres, Alondra, Andrea; Brenda Spiess, Lauren

Matthew 9:27-34 Then he touched their eyes and said, “According to your faith let it be done to you.” (v.29a)

The two blind men in this passage could not see Jesus or see his miracles, but they had been listening to Jesus and they followed him down the road. Jesus restored their sight because of their faith in him. Years ago, I volunteered to be a part of a group that read to blind children. Because they could not see the pages of our book, we would enhance the stories using their other four senses. If we came to a part in the book that said, “Then Mrs. McGregor baked a delicious apple pie,” we would cut up apple slices and pass them around the room. The children sat amazingly still. Story hour was their favorite time of day. Sure, their eyes were off in different directions, but their other senses were attentive, and they hung on every word. I learned a great deal about listing and hearing during my time of volunteering. Paul wrote, “Faith comes by hearing” (Romans 10:17). The blind men’s faith came by listening and hanging on Jesus’ every word. If we want to have faith, we must find the time to listen to Jesus. May it be that we, too, find it important to hang on his every word.

2 Kings 23:36—24:17; Psalms 140, 142; 2 Corinthians 12:12-26

Saturday, October 12

Birthdays: Mike Daigle, Billie Johnson, Fr. Nazir Masih

Prayers for: Eric & Myschel Spiess, Kevin; Troy Spiess, Coltin, Gavin; Frank & Pat Stahl; Lee & Dianna Stein; Julie Stevenson; Anne Sundquist

Matthew 9:35—10:4 Then he said to his disciples, “The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field.” (v.37)

At times when I am at a football game or walking through a crowded place, I wonder what Jesus would think if he were there. Could he see into the hearts of people as he passed by? Sometimes my heart is heavy wondering how many souls around me could call Jesus their Savior. How many would know about Jesus or care? In this passage, I think Jesus’ heart was heavy. He makes an unusual plea to his disciples when he asks them to pray for workers. He asks for prayer because praying will open the way for God to plant, in the hearts of men and women, the desire to serve Him. In the past I thought this call for workers was only a call to overseas missions. But now I see this plea differently. It is a plea for all of us to get to work. I believe the work is to keep our eyes open, see the harvest, and to find ways to gather in the hearts of those around us. Crowds now are a reminder to me. I say an earnest, yet quick, prayer: “God send people to touch the lives of those in the crowds and to help me do my part in the harvest for souls. There is much work to be done.”

Jeremiah 35:1-19; Psalms 137, 144; 1 Corinthians 12:27—13:3

Sunday, October 13

Birthdays: Fehintolu Babayemi, Chris Patton, Katherine Taylor

Prayers for: Fred & Charlotte Talley; Bill & Debbie Taylor, Katherine, Charlie, Bella; Linda Tervay; Greg & Terry Thomas; Lucky Tischler

Psalm 146 The LORD opens the eyes of the blind. The LORD lifts up those who are weighed down. (v.8 NLT)

In the great 1986 comedy movie Ferris Bueller’s Day Off, a high schooler skips school for a day. His reason: “Life moves pretty fast. If you don’t stop and look around once in a while, you could miss it.” Thirty plus years later, Ferris’ words ring truer than ever. Life does move fast—frighteningly so. If you don’t stop and look around, you miss so much of God’s creation. The writer of Psalm 146 asks the Lord to open blind eyes and lift burdens. In other words, help us not to speed through life blindly, but take time to enjoy the strange, beautiful, and sometimes wacky adventures the Lord sends our way. While Our Father isn’t advocating skipping school (at least not often), He does want us to occasionally open our blind eyes, breathe deeply, and take a “Day Off” to enjoy His wonderful world—and maybe to dance on a parade float singing “Danke Schoen.”

Jeremiah 36:1-10; Psalm 147; Acts 14:8-18; Luke 7:36-50

Monday, October 14

Birthdays: Kristina Dear, Ted Ritts, Jose Valencia

Prayers for: Stacey Tortorice; Jim & Elaine Tummy, Jack; Mary Lee Turk; Jose & Brenda Valencia; Dick & Marlene Van Horne; Pete Varney

Psalm 3 I cried out to the LORD, and he answered me from his holy mountain. (v.4)

This week I got into big trouble. With the best intentions (always a red flag), I created a mess entirely of my own making, which I was also entirely unable to fix. I won’t go into the embarrassing details but suffice to say I spent a lot of time crying out to the Lord for help. And He, through His unbelievable grace, rescued me. When David wrote the song we call Psalm 3, he was also running from a mess entirely of his own making. His son Absalom had usurped the throne in response to David’s terrible handling of a family crime (see 2 Samuel 13 for details). King David knew that his family, his people, and the Lord had every right to kick him to the curb. Yet he cried out to God for help, and God answered him by restoring David to the throne. Some people get angry when God doesn’t grant their requests, but I’m more astonished that He grants any of them. Neither David nor I deserved mercy, but Christ graciously extended it. Thank You, Lord!

Jeremiah 36:11-26; Psalms 1, 2; 1 Corinthians 13:1-13; Matthew 10:5-15

Tuesday, October 15

Birthdays:

Prayers for: George & Sandra Vick; Chris & Lisa Wanner, Matthew, Nicholas; Ray & Suzi Waters; Mike & Anna Weil; Kate Williams

Jeremiah 36:27—37:2 So Jeremiah took another scroll and dictated again to his secretary, Baruch. He wrote everything that had been on the scroll King Jehoiakim burned in the fire. Only this time he added much more! (v.32)

There is a wonderful website called the “Wayback Machine.” This site, in a nod to the excellent Mr. Peabody cartoons, has archived websites since 2001. It “crawls” the Internet, takes screenshots of websites, and saves them for posterity. That’s it. But that is enough. Recently a newscaster deleted a series of derogatory blogs, and thought they were gone forever. But the “Wayback Machine” had saved a copy of the pages and she had to admit the truth of what she’d written. God has his own version of the “Wayback Machine.” Despicable King Jeremiah thought he was scot-free when he burned Jeremiah’s prophecy, but God just re-dictated it and re-sent it to the king. He even added to it! If you believe the Lord has forgotten your past wounds, fear not. He has a “Wayback Machine” far more powerful than anything man-made. He remembers you, and He will enact justice. Count on it!

Psalm 5, 6; 1 Corinthians 14:1-12; Matthew 10:16-23

Wednesday, October 16

Birthdays: Lois Henderson, Shelly Huckaby

Prayers for: David & Helen Weigand, Alaina, Cassie, Nicole, Nathaniel, Charlie, Bailey; Kent & Tracey Weissling, Sean, Jeff; Addie Yeboah

Psalm 119:1-24 Even princes sit and speak against me, but I will meditate on your decrees. Your laws please me; they give me wise advice. (vv.23-24)

One thing the Healing Ministry taught me is the importance of “boundaries.” So many problems in our lives, souls, and spirits are caused by other people breaking through our proper and sacred boundaries. Psalm 119 shows an example of this. “Princes” are speaking against me. Maybe they are saying I should keep giving to others when my own tank is running low, or listen to a drama-queen friend who never listens to me, or put my own needs behind the needs of everyone else because “it’s the Christian thing to do.” These not only lead to burnout, they are unbiblical. God doesn’t want us to listen to these gadflies; He wants us to meditate on His laws and take their wise advice. The Lord’s word is full of ways to protect our God-given boundaries. Listen to His word, not to the discouraging “princes.”

Jeremiah 37:3-21; 1 Corinthians 14:13-25; Matthew 10:24-33

Thursday, October 17

Birthdays: Vicki Jones, Jennifer Scherzer

Prayers for: Matt Willoughby, Meghan, Clare; Danny & Debbie Winkler, Jennifer; John & Kathryn Zacharias; Norma Abrams; Ana Acosta

Matthew 10:34-42 “If you love your father or mother more than you love me, you are not worthy of being mine.” (v.37a)

One afternoon, a beautiful young woman walked into the Healing Ministry for prayer. She had recently graduated from college and told me that she’d finally admitted her love for Jesus to her family. I didn’t think this sounded like a problem until she tearfully told me her family was Muslim. When she confessed her newfound faith, they turned their backs on her. She no longer had a family. I was able to remind her that Jesus warned his disciples (and, through their writings, also warned us) that they might lose our earthly friends and family when they followed him. We prayed together that she would find a church home that would be her new family. It cheered her greatly. It costs us to take up the cross, and sometimes it costs us everything—including the affection of those we love. But it is a price well worth paying.

Jeremiah 38:1-13; Psalm 18:1-20; 1 Corinthians 14:26-33a, 37-40

Friday, October 18

Birthdays:

Prayers for: Pat Alvis; Ashley Anderson; Nicole Anderson; Suzanne Arnold; Gwen Arora; Clement Asuoha; Jackie Austin; Jon Austin

Psalm 17 By the power of your hand, O LORD, destroy those who look to this world for their reward. But satisfy the hunger of your treasured ones. May their children have plenty, leaving an inheritance for their descendants. (v.14)

In the 1920’s, a young animator created a popular cartoon character named “Oswald the Lucky Rabbit.” The young man thought this character would bring him fame and fortune—until a change at the studio left him without a job and without his famous character. He was robbed of his successful future by “those who look to this world for their reward.” On the long, sad train ride home, the discouraged young animator began to doodle around with another cartoon character—a little mouse with a big attitude. He didn’t give up hope. And that’s how Walt Disney’s greatest character, Mickey Mouse, was born. In Psalm 17, young David had also been robbed of his future—his anointed kingship—by Saul, but he looked to the Lord for support. He didn’t give up hope. And that’s how his dynasty was born.

Jeremiah 38:14-28; Psalm 16; 1 Corinthians 15:1-11; Matthew 11:1-6

Saturday, October 19

Birthdays:

Prayers for: Cody & Rachel Ault, Alex, Evelyn, Margaret, Charlotte; Lourdes Aviles, Lance; Wayne Ballentine; Maria Del Carmen Bastard

2 Kings 25:8-12, 22-26 On August 14 of that year, which was the nineteenth year of King Nebuchadnezzar’s reign, Nebuzaradan, the captain of the guard and an official of the Babylonian king, arrived in Jerusalem. He burned down the Temple of the Lord, the royal palace, and all the houses of Jerusalem. He destroyed all the important buildings in the city. (vv.8-9)

This passage tells of one of the most devastating events of the ancient world—the destruction of Jerusalem in 586 BC. Solomon’s magnificent temple, which had been a center of worship for over 400 years, was obliterated along with the rest of the city. Much of the population was dragged away to slavery in Babylon. This was destruction on a massive scale—think 9/11, except that it happened to every building in New York. Nothing was left of this glorious city. Yet even this was part of God’s plan for His people. During the Exile in Babylon, the history of the Jews was written down for the first time—words that can be read today in the Old Testament. Daniel surviving the lion’s den and his three friends being protected in the fiery furnace—these miracles happened during the Exile. What had begun in disaster eventually ended in freedom and a renewed sense of purpose for the Lord’s people. When you face tough times, remember that Christ hasn’t abandoned you. Facing hardships might just be the beginning of a tremendous future!

Psalms 20, 21; 1 Corinthians 15:12-29; Matthew 11:7-15