



SONGS
of the
SAVIOR

LENT 2023



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The season of Lent, marking the 40 days and six Sundays before Easter Sunday, continues to be a beautiful and beneficial tool in the life of Christ's Church. In the ancient church, this period was used to guide new converts through several weeks of learning the fundamentals of the faith as well as to provide time for self-reflection focusing on identifying with Christ—specifically to deny oneself, take up one's cross, and follow him (Matthew 16:24).

Therefore, Lent is a season to reflect, to repent, and to rest as we seek to follow Jesus. We reflect upon our mortality and sin, remembering that dust we are, and to dust we shall return in death as the penalty of sin. We repent of our sin and brokenness as we sit, like our brothers and sisters from the Old Testament, in sackcloth and ashes. And we rest in our Savior, the one who bore our sin, who removes our ashes and who gives to us, as the Prophet Isaiah says, a beautiful headdress.

As we pursue reflection on who we are, repentance for sin, and resting in our beloved Savior during this season of Lent, we will walk (and sing!) together through the Psalms, the Songs of the Savior. Jesus regularly quoted the Psalms as he proclaimed the good news of the Kingdom, sang the Psalms with his disciples, and even said the whole psalter was about him! For this reason, Martin Luther said that the Psalms "may be fairly called a little Bible, in which everything that is in the whole Bible is contained in a beautiful and compendious manner."

From Psalm 1 to Psalm 150, the psalter tells the story of the humble king, who for us and for our salvation, stepped into the humiliation of humanity, bore our sin in his death, and was raised to new life to the praise and glory and honor of our great God. The psalter also tells the story of living life as a real human in a broken world, waiting for the redemption and renewal of all things. So in this devotional we will focus each day on a new Psalm, and we will walk through the psalter from beginning to end, highlighting the story of the King, Jesus, and how he shares in the story of humanity in joy, thanksgiving, lament, and praise. We also have created a Spotify playlist with songs that correspond to each day's Psalm so that we may sing through the story together. May this devotional guide and corresponding song list ignite in our hearts a deeper love for and sweeter communion with our Savior, Jesus!

FEBRUARY 22, 2023

ASH WEDNESDAY

READ: PSALM 90

Moses' prayer turns our attention to the main theme of Lent: As creatures, human existence is fundamentally limited. We had a beginning, and we will have an end; we will "return to dust" (hence Ash Wednesday). Lent reminds us that when God says "yes" to the lifespan he gives us, there is an implicit "no" to the time he has not given us.

The great contrast and tension in the psalm has to do with the "dwelling place" from which one views our limited lifespan. Sin skews our perspective, causing "our hearts to rest in this world" (Calvin). If our hope is limited to the here and now, to the "secular," we experience our creaturely limitations as God's wrath, as his resounding "no!" The best we can do is "rage, rage against the dying of the light" (Dylan Thomas). But most of us would rather forget about death altogether, occupying our minds with the paltry pursuits of suburban American life, thinly masking our mortality in the veneer of cosmetics and careers, or wasting precious moments in the mockery of real life, which is the virtual world viewed through our phones.

Moses calls God's people to remember that God is our dwelling place, that the transient lives of the covenant community across time are bound up with the One for Whom eternity is present all at once. Viewed through the lens of God's gracious covenant, Christians' limited lives are permeated with joy, significance, and permanence. God's "no" is revealed to be his "yes!"

Psalm 90 is traditionally read at the beginning of Advent. It reminds us that our dwelling place is in God because the "Word became flesh and dwelt among us." Jesus embraced the limitations of creaturely existence despite temptations to supernaturally reject those limitations (this is why Lent corresponds to the 40 days of Jesus' temptation). But because Jesus lived and died in humble dependence upon the Creator's grace, God now shares his life with us. Through union with Christ, our limited days are transformed by and into eternal life.



PRAY

So, teach us to number our days that we may get a heart of wisdom...
satisfy us in the morning with your steadfast love that we may rejoice
and be glad all our days. Amen.

LISTEN

From Everlasting (Psalm 90) — Sovereign Grace Music

Scott Leveille

TEACHER IN RESIDENCE

FEBRUARY 23, 2023

READ: PSALM 1

The psalter begins with a wisdom poem, painting a visual of God's people being rooted and grounded in the richness of his kingdom in contrast to those seeking their identity in the mirage offered by the world. This beautiful passage carries both invitation and warning presented by starkly dividing all of humankind into two groups: those who delight in the Lord and those who do not. The world rails against this reality, wishing instead for a more inclusive or tolerant option. But there is no middle path. As we see in Deuteronomy 30:19, the Gospel call is clear: choose life.

If I am honest, I often *feel* like a disappointment to my Father. My motives are muddy, my heart feels hard, and my behavior consistently falls short of my best intentions. Yet as I meditate on Psalm 1, I realize it's not about my efforts at all, but instead is about God's work on my behalf. Like the unnamed arborist of Psalm 1 who intentionally plants beside the stream, cultivating (and, at times, pruning) and caring for the tree such that it can produce in-season fruit, my compassionate Father has planted me and you in rich soil, inviting us to feed on his life-giving Word and rest in the work of Christ on our behalf.

Jeremiah 17 echoes Psalm 1:

Blessed is the man who trusts in YHWH,
whose trust is YHWH.
He is like a tree planted by water,
that sends out its roots by the stream,
and does not fear when heat comes,
for its leaves remain green,
and is not anxious in the year of drought,
for it does not cease to bear fruit.

Take a moment today to ask God to revive your heart with his Word, enabling you to live in the reality of the "already" of redemption, able to produce fruit even while you live in the "not yet" year of drought.



PRAY

Trustworthy Father, you are steadfast and kind. I confess I am prone to seek after the empty promises of the world which leave me parched and disappointed. Turn my heart anew to you, that I may find my delight in your Word. Thank you for planting me in a place where I can thrive even in the “year of drought” because you’ve rooted me deeply by a stream of Life. In Jesus’ name, Amen.

LISTEN

Psalm 1 — The Corner Room

Catherine Walton
COVENANT MEMBER SINCE 2021

FEBRUARY 24, 2023

READ: PSALM 2

Psalm 2 is a Royal Psalm, each poetic verse is wrapped in the theme of kingship like a rich royal robe. It's simple to see the kingship theme. And it's easy to understand the placement of this psalm here at the front of the psalter. In Psalm 1 we learned that there are two ways that one can choose—the way of the wicked or the way of the righteous. Here in Psalm 2 there is also a choice—the way of the kings of the earth or the way of the Anointed One, the king of heaven. The psalter asks THIS question of us: To whom are we going to give our allegiance?

Psalm 2 is also a Messianic Psalm. It's messianic in the sense that it anticipates the person and work of Jesus Christ. The psalm states clearly how YAHWEH is on the throne in heaven and how he established the reign of his Anointed (v 2), and that YAHWEH set his king on his holy hill (v 6), and how YAHWEH announced *"You are my Son; today I have begotten you,"* and how YAHWEH made *"the ends of the earth (the Son's) possession"* (v 8), and how all the kings of the earth should *"Kiss the Son, lest he be angry"* (v 12). It foreshadows the coming Messiah.

Putting the messianic and the kingship themes together, it is clear to us in this time of Lent how we answer the question of our allegiance. We do so by boldly professing our faith in the King of Kings, in the Messiah himself, the Lord Jesus Christ. I am reminded of a profound statement made by R.C. Sproul concerning this psalm. He says, "I remind you again of the terrifying words in the admonition of the psalmist in Psalm 2, *'Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and you perish in the way.'* Beloved, I don't want any of us to ever be in the way of the anger of Christ. And my plea is that we would all rejoice in his coming, willingly bow our knee before him, embrace him with affection, and give him not the kiss of Judas, but the kiss of love and affection in which he delights."

As we "kiss the Son" (by the power of the Spirit), we are encouraged with the blessing in the final line of the psalm, *"Blessed are all who take refuge in him."*



PRAY

Dear Heavenly Father, I hallow you as the One who is sovereign over all. Thank you for placing your Son, Jesus Christ, on the throne and making him King of Kings. Today, help me to make Jesus my King alone, the One to whom I give my allegiance. For it's in the name of King Jesus I pray, Amen.

LISTEN

Psalm 2 — Poor Bishop Hooper

Dan Edwards
ASSISTANT PASTOR

FEBRUARY 25, 2023

READ: PSALM 4

“Sticks and stones may break my bones but words can never hurt me.” That’s a bunch of baloney, and we all know it. We have all been hurt by words. Sometimes a careless or unintentional comment can open an old wound. Or worse, sometimes people outright attack us with insulting and abusive language meant to belittle and harm us. Words can hurt a lot! King David writes Psalm 4 in such a time of distress and offers us helpful guidance as we seek healing from many kinds of emotional harm, not just from slanderous words.

First, see that he turns to the Lord. God is his righteousness and the source of his relief. He pours his heart out in prayer to the God of all comfort who meets us in all our afflictions. When you have experienced emotional harm, your Father in Heaven hears you and is ready to meet you in your distress! Notice also in verse 4, he is honest about his anger. We are often uncomfortable with our anger, even righteous anger, or too quick to anger. But it is important to be honest about the harm that we have experienced. Those emotions that we deem negative must be dealt with in a healthy way, and that begins by naming them in the presence of God. Then, we might share with a safe person, and if possible and wise, share with the person who has hurt us. Be angry. Feel your feelings. But don’t sin in doing so. Don’t let your sin turn into resentment. Don’t let your anger turn into hatred or violence. Worship God and trust that he will settle all harms more justly than you are able. Getting even won’t do you any good, not really.

Lastly, see where David’s ultimate joy and peace come from—from the Lord himself. We have been harmed by others and that matters, but what matters more is God’s presence. The light of God’s face upon us is more to be desired than material plenty, more than good food and good drink, and more than the opinions of others. Only in the Lord do we dwell in true safety. Remember Jesus asleep in the storm? He knew where his peace and safety came from, and by faith we have access to the same gracious God!



PRAY

Dear Lord Jesus, may I find my greatest rest and safety in you! Amen.

LISTEN

Psalm 4 — The Corner Room

John Fountain
ASSISTANT PASTOR

FIRST SUNDAY IN LENT

CHILDREN'S DEVOTIONAL

Read

PSALM 8, MATTHEW 21:12-17

In these passages, babies and infants are praising the Lord. They recognize that he is the Lord—majestic and glorious—who put the moon and stars in their place, and he became low for us, to save us, to rescue us. Praise the Lord!

Wonder

In the Matthew passage, the pharisees were mad about the children's songs of praise. Why were they mad? Why did the songs make Jesus glad? What is your favorite song to sing to Jesus and why?

Pray

Dear God, you are glorious, majestic, awesome, and your name is great in all the earth! Please help me to be filled with awe and praise of you for you are worthy. Fill my heart and mouth with songs to you! In Jesus' name, Amen!

Rejoice

Christ is All in All — Keith and Kristyn Getty

FEBRUARY 26, 2023

READ: PSALM 8

Psalm 8 praises the Lord, *Our Lord*. The One who is Creator of all things entered into his creation to become *Our Lord*, to be with us, to save us unto himself, for he is so very mindful of us—his dear children.

Our Lord Jesus will arrive in Jerusalem on a colt surrounded by the praise of children. When he enters the temple in his last days giving sight to the blind and making the lame walk—*again* it will be the children's praise, "Hosanna to the Son of David" which will declare the truth of who he is: the Messiah, the King! Such praise infuriates the scribes and pharisees, for how could Jesus allow them to attribute such honor and praise to him? How sweet it must have been to Jesus' ears to hear these children cry out in need and to declare the truth of what he came to do...save them, save us! Jesus quotes this Psalm 8 to *still* his enemies in the temple, "Out of the mouth of infants and nursing babies you have prepared praise?" (Matthew 21:16)

Our Lord, who is majestic and glorious, the heavens are the works of his fingers, and the stars he put in their place. Our Lord, who was made low for us and yet is crowned with all glory and honor with all things under his feet. When we hear such words describing our Lord, how can we not be like the children? How can we not overflow with praise for what he has made and what he has done? Filling our church and homes with songs of praise, for we, like these little ones, are needy, longing for care, love, and nourishment—*all* of which are found in the saving grace of our Lord, our King, Jesus!



PRAY

Dear Lord, you are majestic and glorious. You set the moon and the stars in their place and yet your powerful hand holds me. May my mouth never tire of proclaiming the goodness and truth of who you are—King Jesus! In your precious name, Amen!

LISTEN

Psalm 8 — The Corner Room

Laura Tucker

DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN'S MINISTRIES

FEBRUARY 27, 2023

READ: PSALM 9

In Psalm 9, King David sings God's praises for giving him victory over his enemies. Perhaps David wrote this song after a winning a battle against the Philistines. Clearly, David is elated. In his joy, he gives glory to God for executing justice—"the Lord sits enthroned forever; he has established his throne for justice" (v 7). For us, it can seem jarring when David revels in the fact that God judges wicked people. Aren't we supposed to show mercy even to our enemies? Of course, the gospel teaches us to love our enemies and to work for their good. At the same time, it is right for us to long for justice. Isn't that what we want when we pray for those who are oppressed? Like David, we can be confident that God will ultimately give justice to all who are poor and oppressed. He is a refuge for those in need, and we can always come to him in prayer: "The Lord is a stronghold for the oppressed, a stronghold in times of trouble" (v 9).

Midway through his victory song, David suddenly turns to God and asks for more help. It's a surprising turn in the psalm, but it teaches us something about our own life as Christians. Christ, God's chosen King to whom every nation will bow, has been raised from the dead for our justification. He triumphed over death and Satan. Like David, we rejoice in his victory each time we hear the gospel preached and each time we celebrate the Lord's Supper. But we also cry out for more help. We remain sinners, in need of God's sustaining grace every day. So we always celebrate the Lord's victory, and we always cry out, "Be gracious to me, O Lord!" He who lifted Jesus up from the gates of death will surely answer.



PRAY

Lord, we praise you for your justice—you give help to the oppressed and to the needy. Teach us also to love justice and to uphold the hope of the poor. Be gracious to us, O Lord. In Jesus' name, Amen.

LISTEN

The Hope of the Poor (Psalm 9) — Wendell Kimbrough

Stuart Clay
PASTORAL INTERN

FEBRUARY 28, 2023

READ: PSALM 12

You can hear the desperation in the psalmist's cry, "Save, O Lord..." The psalmist needs God's help! The predicament: Where are God's people? Where are the good, faithful, loving, humble, truthful people? They are nowhere to be found. Instead, the wicked run rampant. They are full of lies and deceit. They manipulate. They are prideful and arrogant. So where are God's people?

It could be that the people of God withdrew as they were overcome by the wicked. The loudest voices seem to win sometimes. It often is easier to resign ourselves to living in our little Christian subcultures where the world can't get to us. That certainly wasn't the way of Jesus. Or the people of God could have decided they were going to fight, fight, fight with all their might. To beat the enemy you have to be the enemy. Take up their tactics. Beat them at their own game. That certainly wasn't the way of Jesus either. Jesus did not run to either extreme. There was plenty of evil in the world that Jesus entered. But Jesus displayed a humble boldness that neither withdrew from the world nor adopted its tactics.

I heard a talk at a conference last year on being a steady, non-anxious presence in a world that is losing its mind. I'll be honest, that's hard! The easiest thing is to pick an extreme. But Christians are called to stay in the game and model our Savior. In America it seems that a fair critique of the church is that it sounds no different than the world. Where that is true, we need to own that. We need to repent. We cannot broker in lies and deceit. Our speech must reflect God's speech. Our character must reflect his character. Truth over lies. Humility over pride. Wisdom over foolishness. Compassion over hate. It is God's speech that lifts the psalmist's head. It wasn't a change of circumstance. It was a remembrance, a conviction, that God's speech was pure and true. It is God's word that refines and purifies the people of God.



PRAY

Father, forgive me when I have modeled the world more than I have modeled my Savior. Forgive me for my laziness when I run from one extreme to the next. By the Holy Spirit, would you give me strength, wisdom, and discernment to be a non-anxious presence in this world. In Jesus' name, Amen.

LISTEN

Psalm 12 — The Corner Room

David Driskill
ASSISTANT PASTOR

MARCH 1, 2023

READ: PSALM 13

How long, O Lord, how long? We hear it echo—in the space between sobs, in the minutes that turn to hours every restless night, in the waiting of each long and broken day. David's psalm of lament begs the question of not one moment but of a condition that plagues every believer while still on this side of heaven: We live in the gray in-between of the now and not yet. Through Christ we are redeemed and made new, and yet, our world remains drenched in sin. Our flesh fails. Our hearts break. Nothing is as it ought to be and we forget. We forget what is true, Who is True, in the midst of the suffering that does come and often stays for much, much longer than our hearts can stand. So what do we do? What do we do when all we feel is lonely, heartsick, despair, and abandon? David gives us a road map.

We start with the cry that is honest to our human hearts. *How long? Have you forgotten me? Where are you? Are you going to leave me here?* Though shortsighted, when we ask these questions we open ourselves up to move past them, to recognize them as feelings rather than truth, and to transition to our knees for pleas that align our hearts with God's. *Open our eyes to see you in this suffering, O God, for you are here.* We invite God into our waiting, and then we reach out for hope: We remember. The antidote to forgetting always is remembering. Remember his steadfast love. Remember the joy of our salvation. Remember and sing. Remember and proclaim: I am not forgotten. I am not alone. I am seen. I am known. I am loved. I am free. I am his.

Because of the grace we have in Jesus, we are free to travel this path from fleshly outcry to holy remembrance as many times as it takes. Salvation has come and is coming again to make all wrongs right. Until then, we wait and remember. It's only a matter of time.



PRAY

Abba Father, you are a God who is near, who is present, who is merciful in the listening. Grant us the grace to move from forgetful heart cries to worshipful remembrance in every situation, that we might wait in the hope we have in your son Jesus Christ. It's in his name we pray, Amen.

LISTEN

How Long, O Lord, How Long (Psalm 13) — Sovereign Grace Music

Maria Sivils

COVENANT MEMBER SINCE 2008

MARCH 2, 2023

READ: PSALM 16

There must have been a sinking feeling, a pit-in-the stomach sort of ache, in the heart of the Levites when they heard how the promised land would be divvied up. Yahweh had graciously brought his people to the land of promise—the place of God’s protection, provision, and presence—and as the lines are falling for each of the 12 tribes, the Levites hear that they have no land portion, no lot for their tribe. If this is the promise, are we not able to participate? How will we experience the fullness of joy, how will we dwell secure and know the gladness of heart of our extended family? What will my children and their children do if I have nothing to give them?

The words of David here in this psalm, particularly verses 5–6, are balm to a concerned soul. Psalm 16 is a psalm of *trust*, highlighting the believer’s core understanding of what is true about himself and about God. A major temptation for believers is to place our trust and confidence in the realization of the *promises* of God rather than in God himself. We often make our own security, our immense provision, or our name our chosen portion. And so we find it difficult for our hearts to be glad and for our whole being to rejoice when those things fail

But for those whose portion is Yahweh, who make the God of heaven and earth their cup of blessing, their true allotment is greater than can be imagined. Peter says that we have been born again, brought into the family of God, to an unperishable, undefiled, and unfading inheritance that is being kept for us. So even when sin and evil are swirling and even though we may lose all material provision, we take refuge in Yahweh and say, “I have no good apart from you.” If we have Yahweh, our Savior, redeemer, and friend, then indeed we have a beautiful inheritance.



PRAY

Gracious God, I bless you for giving me good counsel in your word—to trust you and place my whole being's confidence in you—and I ask that you will help me always set you before my face so that my heart will know gladness and my whole being may rejoice in the security of your presence. In Jesus' name I pray, Amen.

LISTEN

Psalm 16 — The Corner Room
Fullness of Joy (Psalm 16) — Caroline Cobb
Psalm 16 (My Inheritance) — Ashton Barber

Josh Johnson
ASSISTANT PASTOR

MARCH 3, 2023

READ: PSALM 23

How comforting—this picture our brother David paints showing us our Savior, Jesus, our Shepherd. Calm in the face of danger. Contentment in his presence. Feasting in the company of enemies. Peace in the storm.

How does this land with you though? Is it comforting? Or does it bring up feelings of bitterness, doubt, or defeat because your day-to-day experience with the Lord and in this life isn't one of peace and comfort?

Do you find you are wanting?

Does your address look more like drought country than green pastures?

Are you drowning in tumultuous waters filled with uncertainty and danger?

Does your soul feel more fragmented than restored?

Is your path fraught with sin, temptation, immorality, and impurity instead of righteousness?

Are you exhausted in your toil to maintain your name, reputation, and influence?

Is your heart filled with fear and anxiety?

Do you feel lonely and surrounded by those in opposition to the Lord?

Do you feel dry and barren?

Are you hopeless about the days to come?

If your soul resonated with any of the above, this psalm is for you! Don't you know David was a human whose life was far more often characterized by life-threatening, fear-inducing, soul-sabotaging sin, brokenness, and evil on all sides, than green pastures and calm waters. Don't you know this beloved psalm comes from a heart that had much practice singing itself forward in faith, hoping and trusting that the Good Shepherd would provide as he promised? And how fuller a picture we have now than David did! In the Scriptures we have seen the Shepherd make the ultimate sacrifice for his sheep. He has walked through the true Valley of the Shadow of Death.

My friend, what does it take to rest in your Good Shepherd, to live out of the bounty that is offered to you in him that David so beautifully describes for us?

“Turn your eyes upon Jesus.
Look full in his wonderful face.
And the things of this world will grow strangely dim,
In the light of his glory and grace.”



PRAY

Dear Jesus, my King and Shepherd, you have given me all of yourself, and in you I have eternal peace, hope, and joy. But I confess that often this is not the experience of my life. I want to rest in you! I want to be comforted by your presence! I want to be hopeful about the days to come, not because of my circumstances, 401k, resume, or zip code, but because I am yours and you are mine. Help my heart to meditate on your beauty, righteousness, justice, and mercy—that the things of this world might grow strangely dim. Thank you for your abundant, undeserved grace to me. I am yours. Amen.

LISTEN

The Lord is My Shepherd (Psalm 23) — Keith and Kristyn Getty

The Lord is My Shepherd — Psalter Project, Esther Ellis

Psalm 23 — The Corner Room

Psalm 23 — Melanie Penn

Caroline Royal

DIRECTOR OF YOUNG WOMEN'S DISCIPLESHIP

MARCH 4, 2023

READ: PSALM 27

When you quiet your mind to pray, are you typically asking God for “one thing”? In verse 4, David writes, “One thing have I asked of the Lord...” Keep reading Psalm 27 and David has not just one but several requests in this song of praise and lament for relief from his trouble. Scholars suggest “one thing” is not a singular thing but the most important thing. Psalm 27 encourages us to ask—is that our prayer? Among our prayers, is our highest priority to ask God for focus to seek him so that we can gaze upon his beauty?

David gives us words to help us see God’s beauty. *The Lord is my light and my salvation. The Lord is the stronghold of my life. David also helps us to trust in God’s faithfulness. He will hide me in his shelter in the day of trouble. He will conceal me under the cover of his tent. He will lift me high upon a rock. He has been my help. And what is David’s posture? I will be confident. I will not be afraid. I will sacrifice with shouts of joy. I will sing and make melody to the Lord. I will wait.* Psalm 27 challenges us to see God’s beauty, to hold fast our trust in his faithfulness and to worship despite our circumstances, even as we walk through difficult ones. *I believe that I shall look upon the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living.* (See Exodus 33:17-34:8 for more about the goodness of the Lord.)

Within Psalm 27, David is certainly asking God to hear and protect and to bring David near (“forsake me not”), but the most important petition is for the perseverance to seek the Lord. We should be reminded of the tabernacle, the place where God dwelled with his people, the ancient Israelites. The house of the Lord, the temple, is the place where we meet God and meditate (“inquire”) on his Word. It’s no longer a physical place, but as Paul writes in Ephesians 2:11-22: In and through Jesus, we are members of the household of God, growing into a holy temple in the Lord, into a dwelling place for God.

Lent is a season for us to reflect on our often misplaced focus and to be encouraged and challenged. May it be our most important thing to seek the Lord and to behold the face of God.



PRAY

Father, help us to slow down so that we might behold your beauty and hold fast to your promises. Jesus, thank you, that in you and through your sacrifice we are able to dwell with God today and forever. Holy Spirit, turn our hearts to worship as our most important thing and give us courage as we wait for the Lord. In Jesus' name, Amen.

LISTEN

The Lord is My Salvation — Keith and Kristyn Getty

Hollye Stigler

COVENANT MEMBER SINCE 2012

SECOND SUNDAY IN LENT

CHILDREN'S DEVOTIONAL

Read

PSALM 32, JOHN 1:29, 1 JOHN 1:9,
PSALM 103:11-13

Jesus came to take away our sins—what good news! Our sins are forgiven in Jesus because on the cross he took the punishment for our sins deserve and gave us his righteousness. Praise the Lord, he is the Lamb of God that has saved us from our sins!

Wonder

How do you feel when you've messed up, when you've sinned? Do you ever keep thinking about your sin? Read again 1 John 1:9 and Psalm 103:11-13. What is true about you and sin because of Jesus?

Pray

Dear God, you are perfect in all your ways, holy, just, faithful, and merciful. Thank you for forgiving me of my sin and cleansing me from all unrighteousness. Help me to turn from sin and turn toward you. In Jesus' name, Amen!

Rejoice

Nothing But the Blood — CityAlight

MARCH 5, 2023

READ: PSALM 32

“You are the man.” These were the cutting words David heard after he had committed adultery with Bathsheba and had her husband murdered. Along with Psalm 51, it is believed that David penned Psalm 32 after these events took place, and we see in it both the darkness created by sin and the healing properties of confession.

Notice how David describes one who is “blessed.” It’s not having fame, riches, or success. Instead, verses 1-2 show us that being blessed is having one’s sins forgiven, and verses 3-4 tell us why. When David concealed his sin, his inner self was wasting away. He experienced a heaviness and lack of strength. All of his fame, riches, and success wouldn’t be able to rescue him from the spiritual and physical effects of sin. When we are counted guilty and the merciful and mighty God forgives us, that’s a blessing of the highest degree.

Furthermore, when we conceal our sin, we’re choosing the wrong kind of hiding—hiding in ourselves. But verse 7 teaches us a better way to hide—in the shelter of God’s presence.

Throughout the psalms, God is described as a shelter, a shield, and even a bird with large wings. He invites us not to hide *from* him but *in* him. We can come under his care, be honest, and find healing both for ourselves and anyone we’ve hurt in the process. How wonderful that the God of the universe not only forgives our sin but invites us to himself for healing and reconciliation!

Have you felt this way with your own sin? Have you noticed how it can create a darkness deep in your soul? Have you said to yourself, “I am the man (or woman)?”

David experienced what the apostle John would later write about in his first epistle: “If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness” (1 John 1:8-9). This, brothers and sisters, is the greatest of all blessings.



PRAY

Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, please forgive us for being slow to repent and quick to hide within ourselves. Help us long for the blessing of confession and hiding in the shadow of your wings. In Jesus' name I pray, Amen.

LISTEN

Psalm 32 — The Corner Room
You Forgave Me (Psalm 32) — Randall Goodgame
Then at Last (Psalm 32) — Wendell Kimbrough

Rick Barnes
DIRECTOR OF MUSIC

MARCH 6, 2023

READ: PSALM 40

Psalms, along with Job, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and Song of Solomon, make up the part of the Bible called wisdom literature. What is the purpose of wisdom literature? To help us live wisely!

Waiting is a form of suffering, and it calls for wisdom. So often in life we face difficulties where we see no way out. Perhaps we have experienced the loss of our job, a fractured relationship, a hoped-for relationship, a longing unfulfilled, a debilitating illness, a wayward spouse or child, an addiction, or any number of other maladies of living in a fallen and sinful world. All of these things can be truly heart wrenching and cause us to feel our life is in a pit. We do not know how long the trial will last, we lose hope we will ever get out, and we don't know what to do.

Psalm 40 is a hope-filled psalm that helps us live wisely in such times. David is reflecting on a time when God delivered him. We see him go from waiting on God to having a new song in his heart. Notice the progression. David *waits patiently for the Lord*, then God *inclines to him and hears his cry*. God is a God who hears us. Next, God *lifts him out of the pit, out of the miry bog*, delivering him from the things that trapped him. After rescuing him from the pit, God *sets his feet in a firm place*, stabilizing his life and steps again. And finally, God *puts a new song in his mouth*. What started with distress ends with a renewed stability and with unexpected singing and rejoicing. What a picture of how God rescues us!

So what is the wisdom laid out for us in times of suffering and delay? That we *wait patiently for the Lord*. The posture of waiting is looking to the Lord for help, of fixing our mind and heart on him. *My eyes are ever on the Lord, for he only will release my feet from the snare* (Psalm 25:15). And we are to do this *patiently*, submitting ourselves to God's timing in our trials and afflictions. Years ago I heard a Bible teacher define waiting as "accepting a difficult situation from God without giving him a deadline to remove it." This is what faith is, seeing him who is unseen, believing in him, and submitting to his sovereignty.

David's waiting on the Lord can serve as a pattern for us. Are you waiting patiently for the Lord? Am I? Wait for the Lord, be strong, and let your heart take courage. Yes, wait for the Lord!



PRAY

God the Father, you who love us with an everlasting love; God the Son, Jesus, you have laid down your life to save us; and God the Holy Spirit, you who dwell in our hearts and assure us of our sonship, help us to patiently wait before you. In Jesus' name, Amen.

LISTEN

New Song (Psalm 40) — The Dodds

Henry Morris
ASSISTANT PASTOR

MARCH 7, 2023

READ: PSALM 42

Don't you just love going to worship on Sundays? I love worshiping together as we hear God's Word read aloud and taught. I love singing praises to the Lord together as we encourage each other of the truths of God's character. I love taking the Lord's Supper each week as we remind each other of Jesus' sacrifice on our behalf and the forgiveness of our sins because of his work on the cross. All of these things help me to go out into this broken world in which we live. I'm sure they help you too!

Remember how we felt when we couldn't meet and worship together because of COVID. Remember the sadness and the longing? I think that's how the psalmist was feeling when he wrote Psalm 42. He had been exiled from Jerusalem (where the temple was) and was in a foreign land unable to gather for corporate worship and prayer. He was desperate and thirsting to be with God in that special way as he had before. And to make matters worse, the unbelievers around him were mocking him saying, "Where is your God?" suggesting that his God must not be real or he wouldn't be in this situation.

The Christian life is full of highs and lows isn't it? None of us are immune to feeling desperation and longing, wondering where God is and why our lives look the way they do. What do you do in the longing? In the thirsting?

The psalmist cried out to the Lord and fought back by remembering God's character and speaking that truth to himself over and over. He says, "By day the Lord commands his steadfast love and at night his song is with me" and "Hope in God; for I shall again praise him, my salvation and my God."

The truths of God's Word that we are being fed on Sundays in worship and when we read his Word alone will help sustain us through the dark times. God writes these truths on our hearts, and his Spirit reminds us of them to encourage us. What a beautiful thing!

Thank you, Lord, for the blessing of corporate worship and for the ministry of your Word and your Spirit in our lives. Thank you that we have a Savior who knows the longing and the feeling of being forsaken by his Father. A Savior who has felt the pain of being mocked by people calling out to him, "Where is your God?" A Savior who hung on the cross to die for us and cried out "I thirst." A Savior who experienced real separation from you, without having his needs met, so that he could meet the needs of his people.



PRAY

Dear Lord, as a longing and parched people, thank you for your son Jesus, our Savior and the living water, who through your Word and by your Spirit strengthens, encourages, and sustains our hearts and souls. In your name we pray, Amen.

LISTEN

Psalm 42 (I Will Praise Him Again) — CityAlight

Lord from Sorrows Deep I Call (Psalm 42) — Matt Boswell, Matt Papa

Psalm 42 — The Corner Room

My Help, My God (Psalm 42) — Sandra McCracken

Hope in God (Psalm 42) — Advent Birmingham

Emily Getty

COVENANT MEMBER SINCE 2006

MARCH 8, 2023

READ: PSALM 46

Are you familiar with the term “earworm?” Earworm is the term for a song that gets stuck in your head and you just can’t stop singing it or hearing it go around and around in your brain. It could be anything—“The Itsy-Bitsy Spider,” or a jingle like “Break me off a piece of that Kit Kat bar,” or most any song like “Who Let the Dogs Out?”

Psalms are songs, but we don’t always think of them in that way. Psalm 46 has a superscript that denotes that it is “To the choirmaster, of the sons of Korah, according to Alamo (perhaps a musical or liturgical category), A Song.” an earworm, two particular parts of Psalm 46 to me are classics.

Psalm 46:1 “God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.” Can we ever overemphasize this? No! And when you slow it down, when it rolls around in your brain and heart a few times, it seems to expand. God is our refuge and strength. If God is our refuge and strength, what is *not* our refuge and strength? Ourselves, our abilities, our insights, our position, our relationships...our ANYTHING. We cannot look to ourselves for help in trouble or for help in anything that really matters because only God is our refuge and strength. That is, our help must come from outside of us.

Psalm 46:10a “Be still and know that I am God.” Will this ever not be applicable to our lives? No! Is there anything that sounds less 2023 than “Be still?” How many ways do we prevent the possibility of stillness? How many notifications, texts, emails, sharing suggestions, memories, show up on our phones every day? Every hour? How many spam calls? “Be still and know that I am God” invites us to quiet all of the distractions. As Robby says, “Turn stuff off!” This being still is not just clearing one’s mind. Much more, it is being still in God’s presence, recognizing how little we grasp of who God really is, and inviting him to transform and renew our minds so that we KNOW that he is God and we KNOW him.

Whatever part of God strikes you, sing it, put it to music, write it on a Post-It note, put a sticker on your phone, make it your home screen. Find ways to put it in front of you so that your eyes, your ears, and your heart are in constant contact with God's truth through God's word.



PRAY

Father, Son and Holy Spirit, thank you that you are my refuge and strength. Thank you that I can rely upon you always for everything. Forgive me for looking to myself to sort out my life. Allow me to know you in deeper ways day by day. Forgive my distracted heart. Thank you for your presence by your Holy Spirit. In Jesus' name, Amen.

LISTEN

A Mighty Fortress is Our God — Keith and Kristyn Getty

Marty Crawford
ASSISTANT PASTOR

MARCH 9, 2023

READ: PSALM 51

Have you ever gotten caught? Cheating on a test, stealing something, lying, or someone seeing what you are really like at home with your friends and family? I can feel the fear washing over me even as I think of those times when I know I have been found out. And yet I also can remember the relief I felt when that weight was removed.

Reading the narrative of David and Bathsheba (2 Samuel 11), you can feel the weight and gravity of David's sin. Not only was David with someone else's wife, potentially without her full consent as a female in this culture, David sent her husband to be killed in battle to make sure he did not get caught. This is the same man, described as a "man after God's own heart," anointed as God's chosen king, who, despite his size and stature, defeats a giant. This same man falls and falls hard.

This story makes us uncomfortable. It does not give good "people-chosen-by-the-Lord" vibes. Which, maybe, is the point. David's sin is crushing, and truth be told, it is not until a good friend calls him out that he even sees the weight of what he has done. It is in getting caught that brings him to his knees, but it does not stop there. He does not just feel the weight of his guilt, but in this psalm, we see him turn to the only One that can carry that weight, the only One that can provide the real relief of mercy because of what David knows to be true about him. He knows Yahweh, and he also knows that Yahweh alone can give steadfast love and abundant mercy. It is him alone that can restore David, not only to free him from his guilt but restore to him SALVATION.

The same is true for us, yet we must be willing to be caught. To ask the Lord to show us our sin daily and live in constant repentance, not so that we feel better about ourselves but because we know the One to whom we turn. That we may pray as David: "Let me hear joy and gladness, let the bones that YOU HAVE BROKEN rejoice."



PRAY

Thank you, Lord, that you are steadfast and merciful; that you bring us to our knees, not to shame us but to bring us nearer to you as the only one that can restore us to the way you made us. May I praise you when I am called out of darkness and hiding (no matter the consequences) and brought into the light of your salvation. In Jesus' merciful, saving, gracious name, Amen.

LISTEN

God Be Merciful (Psalm 51) — Indelible Grace Music
God Be Merciful to Me (Psalm 51) — Keith and Kristyn Getty

Sara Litten
DIRECTOR OF YOUTH MINISTRIES

MARCH 10, 2023

READ: PSALM 62

This psalm acknowledges that circumstances, oppression, and attacks are a reality in the life of a believer. Your job may be filled with stressful challenges that leave you exhausted and frustrated. Your family dynamics may include priorities, goals, and objectives that are in direct conflict with one another. Mental health issues, addiction, abuse or other challenges may be a part of your day-to-day relationships. These issues are real, and they are hard. They can be overwhelming and leave you discouraged and lonely.

Yet hear the word of the Lord in Psalm 62: He alone is my rock and my salvation, my fortress, I shall not be greatly shaken. My refuge is God. Power belongs to God, and to you, O Lord, belongs steadfast love. That is who God is! He is our salvation. He does not change, and he protects his people. He is trustworthy. He is a safe place for his people to find rest. His love is steadfast.

What does the Lord ask of us? That we would wait in silence. As the arrows of the enemy are set against us, we are called to wait in silence. How in the midst of hard things—deceit, death, the loss of a job, the decline of a parent, cancer, being hurt by a friend, financial hardship—are we supposed to wait in silence? What does that look like? What does that mean?

For me it looks like sitting in the presence of my heavenly Father, praising him for the things that I know are true! Praising him that he is my rock, my salvation, and my fortress. Praising him for his steadfast love, for his provision, and for his protection. Praising him for his unchanging character. Praising him for his word and that he is trustworthy. Adoring him.

For me it is confessing, repenting, turning away from my sin, and turning toward God.

For me it is giving thanks; not only for who God is but for all the ways that he blesses me with his presence and his goodness.

And then it is asking—not demanding, not telling, but asking—for his will to be done. Asking for him to conform me to the image of his Son. Asking for him to help my unbelief. Asking for him to show me his way and give me the wisdom and endurance to walk in it. Asking for him to fill me with the Holy Spirit. Asking not for my will but that his will would be done. And after I ask, that I would wait in silence.



PRAY

Father, you alone are my rock and my salvation and my fortress. You alone are my refuge. Father, teach me how to wait in silence. In Jesus' name I pray, Amen.

LISTEN

My Soul Will Wait (Psalm 62) — Sovereign Grace Music
I'll Not Be Shaken (Psalm 62) — Wendell Kimbrough

Ingram Link

DIRECTOR OF WOMEN'S MINISTRIES

MARCH 11, 2023

READ: PSALM 63

Psalm 63 was written by David in the wilderness of Judah while he was fleeing from his son, Absalom.

We are all searching for a rich spiritual experience—it's how we were made. But because of sin, we are not searching for God. We search for things that bring us immediate pleasure. We even often chase after God because we want something in life, but when we actually *find* him, a profound change occurs. We can see this in our psalmist, David. David primarily writes about begging the Lord for things: to protect him from his enemies, to win certain battles, for protection from Saul, etc. But slowly God touches his heart, and David's prayers begin to change. David writes in Psalm 63:3, "Because your love is greater than life, my lips will glorify you." Wow! When we truly experience God, we *love him more than life*. Jonathan Edwards said, "The mark of authentic spiritual experience is that you become satisfied with God for *who he is*, and not just for the benefits that he gives you." How can we cultivate an authentic experience with God? How do we become satisfied with who God is and not just with what he gives us?

Friends, take a breath of relief, because we have a God who specializes in drawing near to us. There is a sweet line in one of the songs that we sing on Wednesday nights during KidConnection:

"Jesus said if I am lost, he will come to me
And he showed me on that cross, he will come to me."

He will come to us. David never wrote, "I sought you and you are my God..." he wrote, "You, God, are my God—earnestly I seek you." What wonderful news!



PRAY

Lord, thank you that you chase after us. Thank you that my spiritual experience and relationship is not dependent on me and my “work” but in you and what you have done for me on the cross. I pray that you would tune my heart to relish deeply in who you are: a loving Father who specializes in redeeming his children. In Jesus’ name, Amen.

LISTEN

Psalm 63 — The Corner Room

Abbie Lee Coon

MINISTRY ASSISTANT (CHILDREN)

THIRD SUNDAY IN LENT

CHILDREN'S DEVOTIONAL

Read

PSALM 67, LUKE 2:25-32, REVELATION 7:9-10

Jesus is the promised Savior that came to rescue all nations. Praise God for his faithfulness to keep his promise and bless all nations through Jesus. of Jesus praising him for his salvation!

Wonder

Can you imagine what it will look like for so many people, so many nations, to be praising Jesus together? What do you think it will sound like? Draw a picture of what you imagine. As a family write words praising Jesus on your drawing.

Pray

Dear God, thank you for keeping your promise to send Jesus to rescue us. Fill us with hope and joy in expectation of the day we will sing your praise before your throne with people from every nation. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Rejoice

Rejoice | Let the Nations Be Glad and May the Peoples Praise You — Keith and Kristyn Getty

MARCH 12, 2023

READ: PSALM 67

If you are a believer in Christ God's face is shining upon you! A shining face is the opposite of an angry or scowling face, and a face turned towards someone is the opposite of a face turned away in indifference or disgust (Boice). God's face shining upon us indicates God's favor toward us. It means that he delights in us. And since we recognize and know people by their faces, seeing God's face also implies personal knowledge of God—God showing us who he is, revealing to us his glory. What other blessing do we want in life? To know God and be favored by him is certainly the greatest blessing anyone can experience either in this life or afterward.

But notice the cry of a heart that has truly experienced God's shining face, "*Let the peoples praise you, O God, let all the peoples praise you! Let the nations be glad and sing for joy!*" This is the cry of a redeemed heart, a desire that God will be praised by *all* the peoples of the earth, that he will be exalted among *all* nations, that the glory and splendor of God the Father and of Jesus Christ and of the Holy Spirit will be praised by people from every tribe, tongue, and nation.

Not only is there a God-ward desire that God's name be praised throughout the earth (*hallowed be Thy name!*), but there is a man-ward desire, *Let the nations be glad and sing for joy!* We who have experienced the gladness and joy of God's shining face long for all the peoples of the earth to likewise experience the deep gladness and joy of knowing God and the Lord Jesus Christ. CS Lewis rightfully said joy is meant to be shared. So Psalm 67 is a missionary psalm. John Piper has a book on missions wonderfully titled *Let the Nations Be Glad*, based on this very verse.

Jesus Christ took on flesh so the world could experience God's shining face. It is in his face that we see the light of the knowledge of the glory of God. He is the giver of true joy and gladness. Joy to the world, the Lord is come.



PRAY

Heavenly Father, I thank you that, astoundingly, your face is shining upon me! Thank you that you have revealed your grace and goodness to me through Jesus Christ. I pray that your name be known throughout the earth and that the nations can be glad and sing for joy in King Jesus. Amen.

LISTEN

May the Peoples Praise You — Keith and Kristyn Getty
Psalm 67 — The Corner Room

Henry Morris
ASSISTANT PASTOR

MARCH 13, 2023

READ: PSALM 69

Psalm 69 is a lamenter's lament. Beginning with an invocation/strong plea for help, "Save me...", this individual lament was also shared with "the choirmaster" (note the title). The psalmist's experience (vv 1-4, 7-12, 19-21), was universal enough to help others sing along.

What's the main complaint? While the psalmist openly acknowledges his failures (vv 5-6), the singer suffers *unjustly*. A rebellious world doesn't like "zealots" (see vv 7-12). Ungodly persecutors have it out for him. See it: You can admit you are far from perfect, "O God, you know my folly; the wrongs I have done are not hidden from you..." and *still ask God to deal justly with godless enemies*. What a relief for the common experience of persecution.

But Psalm 69 anticipates a unique experience. Zeal for the Lord's House (69:9) led Jesus to cleanse the Temple (John 2:13-17). Sour wine mentioned in Psalm 69:21 finds a double echo in Mark 15:23 and 36, bracketing the Lord's death by crucifixion. So, Jesus can identify with us when we are persecuted for righteousness. But he was zealous, righteous, and horrendously persecuted even though he had no folly or guilt to confess. He died as a substitute *for the wicked!*

See, Paul can quote the end of Psalm 69:9—"the reproaches of those who reproach you have fallen on me" (Romans 15:3)—*in reference to Christ* who "did not please himself." That is, on the cross Jesus did not demand the justice he deserved. Rather, not pleasing himself, he accepted the justice we deserved. But our godless reproaches fell upon the Son of God. He honored the Father but died in the place of those who dishonor him.

The psalm ends in praise of the Lord who hears the needy (v 33). This is because God's salvation sits between the cry of the afflicted (v 29a) and the songs of those set on high by his saving grace (vv 29-36). Yes, seated with the risen Christ, we have a new angle on all things!



PRAY

O Lord, thank you for your invitation to call upon your name when I am attacked for righteousness. Moreover, in light of my unrighteousness, thank you for your salvation in Christ Jesus. Seated with him, help me learn to bless those who curse me. In Jesus' name, Amen.

LISTEN

Draw Near (Psalm 69) — Wendell Kimbrough, Sandra McCracken

Psalm 69 — Poor Bishop Hooper

Psalm 69 — Matt and Josie Minikus

Robby Holt
SENIOR PASTOR

MARCH 14, 2023

READ: PSALM 84

Charles Spurgeon called Psalm 84 “the Pearl of Psalms, the sweetest of the Psalms of Peace,” and yet it opens with a cry of desperation. The psalmist doesn’t mince words about the disconnect between his current circumstances and his thwarted desire to be in the temple with God’s people (v 2). His intense emotion reminds us that we are a pilgrim people with eternity set in our hearts, armed with his strength for a great adventure, and eyes focused on a fixed point.

There’s a clarity in childhood—our imaginations are captured by great adventure stories. I think it’s because we are created for a singular great adventure, to have a heart set on pilgrimage along God’s highway to Zion/heavenly Jerusalem (v 5), with all the twists and turns the journey entails. To have a heart walking the right direction on this heavenly highway means pointing the compass outside of ourselves. It means a disciplined rejection of “living your best life,” “choose happiness,” or “follow your heart,” but rather “follow God,” setting our hearts on the things of his kingdom rather than our own comfort or agendas.

The pilgrim is called blessed three different times in the psalm: “Blessed are those who dwell in your house, ever singing your praise” (v 4), “Blessed are those whose strength is in you, in whose heart are the highways to Zion” (v 5), “Blessed is the one who trusts in you” (v 12). Far from a “hashtag blessed” set of circumstances, this journey covers difficult terrain through the Valley of Baca—a place of weeping, tears, drought, and dryness (v 6). The psalmist is not where he wants to be, and yet along God’s highway he moves from strength to strength because he finds his strength and trust in God (v 7).

Throughout the psalm we are reminded of the incomparable loveliness of being in the presence of God (v 10); the pilgrim has eyes fixed on this true reality. The writer of the psalm refers to worship in a physical temple, but what he longed for was a precursor fulfilled in the living temple of Jesus Christ and his gathered church. It’s a call, practically, to check my priorities—are my heart and flesh crying

out for an encounter with the living God, or am I distracted by appearances, drifting thoughts, and to-do lists? Thanks be to God that we are equipped for this great adventure with every spiritual blessing in Christ (Ephesians 1:5) needed for the journey.



PRAY

Dear Father, I pray that our desire to be in your presence would grow and grow. Would you give us strength to guard our hearts and keep our gaze fixed on you as we pilgrimage?

LISTEN

If I Was a Bird — Mission House, Jess Ray, Taylor Leonhardt
Highways in Our Hearts — Psalter Project, Esther Ellis
No Place Better (Psalm 84) — Caroline Cobb

Kate Graham

COVENANT MEMBER SINCE 2012

MARCH 15, 2023

READ: PSALM 86

The relationship is clear and the situation dire. David is desperate. He is a hunted man. Psalm 86 is a plea from David to “his” God. David begins the psalm by describing his posture before the Lord. He is asking the God of the universe to listen to him as he is “poor and needy.” David knows his own heart. He recognizes that he is a mess. In addition, David recognizes that he is in a life-and-death situation. There are men seeking to kill him. He is fearing for his life. There is no amount of self-sufficiency that will save him. David knows God must intervene to save both his heart and his life.

And so, with this posture of extreme need, David turns to the only one that can fulfill his needs. To David, it is clear who is calling the shots. It is clear who has the next chess move. But with a closer look, it is encouraging that he does not describe God as a “chess player” but as “good and forgiving and abounding in steadfast love.” His plea for grace is not to “a” God but to “THE God.” David knows there is only one true God—one to whom nothing can be compared. David knows God and recognizes God is “great and does wondrous things.” He knows that his God has rescued him from Sheol spiritually and can rescue him from this manhunt physically.

David’s response and prayer is asking the Lord to align his heart with the heart of the Father. Instead of just asking for safety, his humble posture asks to be taught the Lord’s way. He is pleading for his next steps. He asks for unity of heart and mind in the Lord. O Lord, don’t we believers want that as well! David is begging the Lord to get his heart right. He says, “unite my heart to fear your name.” David wants to think clearly and have his motives, thoughts, and next steps come straight from the Father. He trusts his Father and knows his character. David describes Him as merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness.

May we, like David, run to the Father whose steadfast love is set on us. May we ask him to align our hearts and show us his way. May we have eyes to see he is merciful and gracious and worthy of our praise. May our posture before our Father be like David's—poor and needy, turning to our gracious Father that is abounding in steadfast love.



PRAY

Father, hear our prayers. Teach us your way so that we may walk in your truth. In Jesus' name, Amen.

LISTEN

Abounding in Love (Psalm 86) — Mike Janzen

Leslie Brooks

COVENANT MEMBER SINCE 1997

MARCH 16, 2023

READ: PSALM 88

Calvin called the Psalms “An Anatomy of all the Parts of the Soul,” and today we come to the psalm which expresses the “dark night of the soul of the believer.” Anguish, pain, troubles, wrath, horror, sorrow, helpless, death. These words fill this psalm, and the feeling of utter darkness (which is the final word of the psalm) permeates each line. In fact, this is the only psalm in the whole of the psalter that has no mention of hope, joy, or praise—it begins with anguish and ends covered in darkness.

But I, O Lord, cry to you... Why do you hide your face from me?

In some way, at some time in our lives, we all have cried this painful prayer. In some measure we have tasted the brokenness of this world, the depth of sin, the anguish of feeling as though God is absent. Yet, here is assurance for you (and me) who are weary and feeling the pain of humanity: Though you may experience some part of this psalm in your life, and though it is good and right to pray these words in our darkest moments, the fullness of this psalm is not your prayer but the prayer of your Savior.

I want you to picture Jesus praying in the Garden of Gethsemane. He is offering up prayers and supplications, with loud cries and tears, to him who was able to save him from death (Hebrews 5:7), praying “Father, if you are willing, remove this cup from me” (Luke 22:42). His life was drawing near to death, he was a man who had no strength, one whose companions had shunned him, whose eye grew dim through sorrow, and who, upon the cross, drank the cup of God’s wrath which fell heavy upon him. He was abandoned by his beloved friends and forsaken by his Father *for us*. He truly tasted utter darkness. But unlike this psalm, darkness could not and will not have the last word over him or any who belong to him! He was raised to new life, the light of the world piercing the darkness. He experienced the *darkest* night of the soul for us, so that when we experience our own dark nights, he is not unable to sympathize with our weaknesses but draws us near to his throne of grace and mercy.



PRAY

O Lord, God of my salvation, let my cries and prayers come before you, and incline your ear to my cry! Lord Jesus, you experienced the fullness of darkness and wrath, so that even when I taste the pain and suffering of this world, you uphold me and sustain me. Help me to remember: In the most painful parts of my story, you are faithful, even here. In Jesus' name, Amen.

LISTEN

Psalm 88:1–7 — The Corner Room

Psalm 88:8–18 — The Corner Room

Josh Johnson
ASSISTANT PASTOR

MARCH 17, 2023

READ: PSALM 89

“But God” usually are comforting words in Scripture. “But God...” meant it for good; is my strength; is merciful and gracious; shows his love; being rich in mercy. Psalm 89, written when Israel was in Babylonian captivity, has a starkly different “but God.” In Psalm 89:38 the psalmist laments: “But now [God] you have cast off and rejected; you are full of wrath against your anointed.” Eugene Peterson paraphrases that verse as “But God, you did walk off and leave us, you lost your temper with the one you anointed.” For 14 agonizing verses, the psalmist cries out “But God” has renounced his covenant with his servant; abandoned his “steadfast love” of his people; and turned from his “faithfulness [he] swore to David.”

With the heartfelt disappointments in those 14 verses, the psalmist does not sugarcoat what he perceives as the Lord’s rejection of his people. The candor of this psalm, contained within the Bible God sovereignly authored, reminds us that we can be forthright with God about our own pain and suffering. This psalm shows us that the Lord wants us to come to him when we are brokenhearted, call to him when we are in crisis, and pray to him when we are in pain.

Psalm 89 also confirms that even in the presence of pain, his promise prevails. In the first 37 verses of Psalm 89, the psalmist battles Israel’s pain with the Lord’s promise—the promise of someone who will be enthroned forever, whom the Lord has anointed, whose name will be exalted. Unlike the psalmist, we have the benefit of knowing that promise was fulfilled in Jesus. We also know that at the Cross, Jesus bore the ultimate wrath, abandonment, and rejection that we deserved.

Reading Psalm 89 in light of Jesus gives us the perspective that Sam had in *The Lord of the Rings* as he and Frodo suffered in Mordor. “For like a shaft, clear and cold, the thought pierced him that in the end, the Shadow was only a small and passing thing: there was light and high beauty forever beyond its reach.”



PRAY

Father, thank you that you call us to bring the darkness of our pain and suffering to you. And thank you that in Jesus, through what he accomplished at the Cross and through the empty tomb, there is light and high beauty forever beyond the darkness' reach. In Jesus' name, Amen.

LISTEN

Forever — Psalter Project, Esther Ellis

Mark Hogewood

COVENANT MEMBER SINCE 1995

MARCH 18, 2023

READ: PSALM 91

Psalm 91 may be classified as a song of confidence. Psalms/songs of confidence can be distinguished by an “unwavering confidence or trust in God’s ability and willingness to deliver from adverse circumstances...rooted in the character of God...expressed in confident faith” (Mark Futato, *Interpreting the Psalms: An Exegetical Handbook*).

Let’s focus in on Psalm 91:11-12, which we find cited in Matthew 4:5-6 from the lips of the devil. From the pinnacle of the temple Satan challenges Jesus, “if you are the Son of God, throw yourself down, for it is written, ‘He will command his angels concerning you,’ and ‘On their hands they will bear you up lest you strike your foot against a stone.’” Jesus rebukes the devil by quoting Deuteronomy 6:16: “You shall not put the Lord your God to the test.” Jesus is in the wilderness for the express purpose of being tempted. He is reliving Israel’s history and reversing their failures. This temptation refers back to Exodus 17:2-7 and is a temptation of the Son’s obedient sonship to test God instead of humbly obeying him.

Peter Leithart comments about this series of temptations, “Jesus is our champion, defeating Satan without our help...Jesus, the Son of God, becomes flesh, and enters the wilderness of this world, the wilderness that Israel has become. He assumes all human frailties and undergoes all the tests that Israel and all humanity have endured” (*The Gospel of Matthew: Jesus as Israel*). When this series of temptations is over, the devil leaves him and angels minister to him (Matthew 4:9). There is protection in the Son’s shadow. We may confidently sing Psalm 91 because of his faithful endurance. He will soon crush Satan under your feet (Psalm 91:13; Romans 16:20).



PRAY

Lord, you are my refuge and fortress, my God, in whom I trust. I believe you are who this psalm declares you to be and in your Son's faithful obedience, but I find it difficult to live in this sort of confidence. Help me. In Jesus' name, Amen.

LISTEN

My Dwelling Place (Psalm 91) — Keith and Kristyn Getty

Justin Richardson

ASSISTANT TO THE CHURCH ADMINISTRATOR

FOURTH SUNDAY IN LENT

CHILDREN'S DEVOTIONAL

Read

PSALM 92, COLOSSIANS 2:6-7, GALATIANS 5:22-24

The Lord is steadfast, his works are great, he is faithful in all his words. Jesus lived, loved, and served perfectly—righteous in all his ways. He is a firm foundation! He is growing us, building us up, establishing us to walk in his ways.

Wonder

Think back to when you were younger. What are some skills that you have improved? Now, think a little harder. The Holy Spirit is at work in your heart, growing you to be more like Jesus. Can you think of ways you are growing in his ways? Can you think of ways you want to grow?

Pray

Dear God, you are righteous, perfect, faithful, and steadfast. Help me to walk in your ways. Thank you for giving me faith in you and growing me to be more like you, Jesus! In Jesus' name, Amen.

Rejoice

He Will Hold Me Fast — Keith and Kristyn Getty

MARCH 19, 2023

READ: PSALM 92

How often do we fight against the very things that are meant for our good? I think back to my childhood and how insistent I was that I knew what was best for me. When leaving the house on a cool day my father would always remind me to bring a jacket. Like clockwork, I would always lean on my own wisdom, stubbornly resist his help, and head out short-sleeved. To no one's surprise, I'd spend the rest of the day miserably shivering on account of my pride. Children are prone to resist advice from grown-ups, just because it came from a grown-up.

Truth is, grown-ups can be just as stubborn. In Psalm 92—titled “A Song for the Sabbath”—the author reorients us towards what is good and what is worthy of our attention. This hymn of thanks and praise to God provides a template for how we should go before our most high king in prayer. We are reminded that his works are great (v 5), he pursues justice (vv 9 and 11), he is our strength (v 10), and he is the exclusive source of nourishment and flourishing (vv 12-15). In short: Only he is worthy of our awe! In him we find Sabbath rest from our earthly pursuits.

Even better news is that Sabbath rest is not limited to the here and now! While claiming victory over the Lord's enemies, the psalmist praises God for exalting his horn (v 10). His language is later echoed by Zechariah in Luke 1:68-69 as a celebration of the birth of John and the coming of Jesus. Victory indeed!

Psalm 92 serves as a reminder of the benefit we miss when our stubbornness wins the day. As the opening line attests, “It is good to give thanks to the Lord.” May we all give him the glory due his name—and enjoy manifold blessings along the way!



PRAY

O merciful king, we come before you praising your name. Help us to overcome our unbelief and draw nearer to the fount of living water. In Jesus' name I pray, Amen.

LISTEN

You Have Made Me Glad — Charity Gayle

Richard Cox

COVENANT MEMBER SINCE 2015

MARCH 20, 2023

READ: PSALM 98

Psalm 98 is a call to praise the Lord who was and is and is to come. The Lord has victoriously won salvation for his people; he reigns, here and now, as our King in the present; and he will come again to judge the world and make all things new.

The first stanza praises the Lord for securing military victory for the Israelites over their enemies. The call to sing a “new song” is typically associated with warfare, and you can see the reference to God’s mighty hand. Building off this victory, the psalm then calls for all the inhabitants of the earth to make a joyful noise to the Lord, the King. Lastly, the crescendo calls on all of creation to rise and praise the Lord. Why? The Lord will come to judge the earth with righteousness and equity.

You may recognize Psalm 98 as the basis for Isaac Watts’ 1719 Christmas favorite, *Joy to the World*. Far removed from the context of a military victory for Israel, Watts recognized—along with some help from Mary (Luke 1:51) and Simeon (Luke 2:31)—that the true victory over God’s enemies was secured by his own son, Jesus, humbling himself and living the perfect life to secure the ultimate victory of our salvation. “Joy to the world, the Lord is come!” Jesus now sits at the right hand of God the Father, ruling and reigning. There can be no better reason to make a joyful noise at present. “Joy to the earth, the Savior reigns!”

But things are not as they are meant to be. Sin and sorrow still infest the world. But praise be to God, there will come a day soon when the Lord will come again. It will be a day of judgment, but the Judge is righteous and equitable. On that day, even the seas, rivers, and hills will join the chorus in praising the Lord who will make all things new and remove the curse from his creation once and for all. “He comes to make his blessings flow far as the curse is found!”



PRAY

God, we praise you for your steadfast love and faithfulness to your people. You are our King, and we praise you for your promise to make all things new. Come quickly, Lord Jesus. In Jesus' name, Amen.

LISTEN

Psalm 98 (O Sing a New Song to the Lord) — Brian Sauve

John Harrelson

COVENANT MEMBER SINCE 2013

MARCH 21, 2023

READ: PSALM 100

At the Sunday morning service, my family tries not to sit in the same spot each week. You see, we do not want to disrupt the *same people* and their worship. New pew mates seem more gracious to our chaotic little noisemakers.

Psalm 100 gives thanks and reminds us to worship through praise. God gives us these directions to praise him: Make a joyful noise. Serve with gladness. Come with singing. Know that he is God. Enter with thanksgiving. Give thanks to him. Bless his Name. These verses also hold God's promises: We are his. God is good. His steadfast love endures forever. God is faithful to all generations.

If we focus on God's promises, the praises easily flow. We are his, let us make a joyful noise. God is good, and knowing that he is God, let us serve him with gladness. His steadfast love endures forever, let us draw near with thanksgiving and give thanks to God. God is faithful to all generations, let us bless his name.

God invites us to draw near and welcomes us close over and over in Psalm 100. God made us. God made us for himself. God made us for himself and claimed us as his own. Romans 5:10 reads, "For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, now that we are reconciled, shall we be saved by his life." God claiming us as his own shows us that we are redeemed by the finished work on the cross.

When we happen upon your pew, we will likely be late, covered in donut crumbs, and then spill something. As we disrupt your worship that week, we can both rest knowing who made us and that we are his. Together we will worship with joyful noises and sing to our God worthy of praise.



PRAY

Dear Jesus, thank you for claiming us as yours, that you are good, and that your love endures forever. As we praise and worship you, draw us closer to you. Amen!

LISTEN

All People That on Earth Do Dwell — The Trails Church
Psalm 100 — The Corner Room
You Are Good — Israel & New Breed

Rosemary Alexander

COVENANT MEMBER SINCE 2011

MARCH 22, 2023

READ: PSALM 107

*Oh give thanks to the Lord, for he is good,
For his steadfast love endures forever!*

These opening two lines of Psalms 107 set the stage for this powerful song of thanksgiving and praise. The folly of mankind, separated from God through sinfulness and rebellion, is revealed in the powerful words of this passage. We are shown as wandering, lost, beset by sinful darkness, and tossed by the waves in the storms of life. What is our response to these troubles? In a key stanza to Psalms 107, repeated four times, is the following:

*Then they cried to the LORD in their trouble,
And he delivered them from their distress.*

The Lord's loving response in each of these situations is profound, marked by his goodness and faithfulness, and showing steadfast love that endures forever. The Lord leads those who are lost to a straight way and a safe city to dwell in. He brings them out of darkness and death and frees them from bondage. He heals them with his holy word and delivers them from destruction. Finally, he stills the raging storm and raises up the needy out of affliction.

Without the presence of God in Christ, the concept of a love that truly endures forever would be unimaginable for a number of those among us. While many of us have been blessed with loving parents, families, friends, and spouses, there are also those who have struggled with dysfunctional family relationships, lost friendship, and betrayal. The words of Psalm 107 breathe the care, compassion, and concern of our loving Lord and Savior. When we cry to the Lord for help, he responds. His presence surrounds us, envelops us, comforts us, guides us, and fills our hearts with praise and thanksgiving. His response as we lean into his love, as we look into his face, and as we open our hearts to him is to love each of us forever. How perfectly wonderful to reflect on this as we approach the celebration of Easter.



PRAY

Father, we humbly pray that you will surround us with your holy presence today and every day as we look to you for guidance and deliverance. Whether in happy times or facing the storms of life, we praise you for your goodness and enduring love for us. We pray this to you in Jesus' precious name, Amen.

LISTEN

Oh Give Thanks (Psalm 107) — Wendell Kimbrough

Joe Strickland

COVENANT MEMBER 2013

MARCH 23, 2023

READ: PSALM 121

The 15 Psalms from 120 to 134 form a distinct unit within the psalter. They are known as the Psalms of Ascent and were sung by Old Testament saints as they traveled up to Jerusalem. As you may recall from our study of Leviticus, the people of God were commanded to travel to Jerusalem for Passover, the Feast of Weeks (Pentecost), and the Feast of Booths (Tabernacles). These feasts reminded the people what God had done for them in the past, and the continued remembrance and celebration of God's actions marked and formed God's people into a worshipping community in the present. These psalms were not sung as individuals or with families but on the road with other pilgrims while headed to a common destination.

The psalmist begins by lifting his eyes to the hills and drawing a contrast, and we would be forgiven if we are somewhat confused by it. For us, the image of hills juxtaposed against the horizon is a pleasant, even glorious image. In the Ancient Near East, however, the high places were where the worship of the pagan gods occurred (sadly this fact was missed by the company that put Ezekiel 20:29 on a t-shirt for Alabama football). In looking to the hills, the psalmist would possibly see shrines to the various deities. This begs the question: "When life is hard and the journey seems long, to where do I look for help?" The answer arrives quickly "my help is in YHWH, who made heaven and earth." The psalmist (and we) worship the one true God, the Creator, rather than the what has been created.

As we read this psalm, two main ideas about YHWH are brought to the forefront: He will not sleep or slumber, and he will guard/keep his people. The pagan deities often became distracted or fell asleep, and it was the job of the priests to rouse them from their slumber to pay attention to the people (see Elijah's taunts in 1 Kings 18). In contrast YHWH unfailingly watches over his people.

Six times in this psalm, YHWH is described as keeping or guarding his people, even in the most mundane things like our "going out and coming in." As Eugene Peterson notes, the real story of our Christian lives is the God who "preserves, accompanies, and rules us." If this was all the assurance we had, it would be

good news, but we know what the psalmist didn't: In the fullness of time, God sent his Son. He has entered into to our brokenness, and by his life, death, and resurrection has brought us into his kingdom. Samuel Francis says it better that I ever could:

*O the deep, deep love of Jesus, spread his praise from shore to shore!
How he loveth, ever loveth, changeth never, nevermore!
How he watches o'er his loved ones, died to call them all his own;
How for them he intercedeth, watcheth o'er them from the throne!*



PRAY

Almighty and everlasting Father, you have brought us in safety to this new day. Preserve us with your mighty power, that we may not fall into sin, nor be overcome by adversity, and in all we do, direct us to the fulfilling of your purpose; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

LISTEN

He Will Keep You (Psalm 121) — Sovereign Grace Music
Psalm 121 (I Lift My Eyes) — Keith and Kristyn Getty
Psalm 121 — The Corner Room

David O'Dell

COVENANT MEMBER SINCE 2011

MARCH 24, 2023

READ: PSALM 127

"If you don't work for it, someone else will." Western culture is bombarded with these messages daily, whether in the workforce, at school, in sports, or in our spiritual life. The Bible, however, gives us a very counter-cultural response. This psalm pierces through the heart of our overworking, overproducing, overly anxious culture and probably needs a warning label: "This psalm might crush everything that you thought life was supposed to be about." You have been warned.

At first glance Solomon seems to be describing a "Jesus take the wheel" mentality. If God is the one who builds, the one who watches over us, and it's all in vain for me to get up every day, maybe I just need to take a good long nap? But this is not what the psalmist says because this is not what the Bible says about the God who created us. Solomon is redirecting our hearts away from the work he describes as "anxious toil" to the way we were made to work. It is anxious work that is vain because this work is one in which we forget that it is God who works in and through us, and we, like Adam and Eve, begin to work as if we are gods. Solomon calls us back to the goodness of creation. That out of the seventh day, after God rested, Adam and Eve began work. It is after the fall that work became anxious because sin corrupted the goodness of the work that God created.

Solomon ends this psalm with an illustration about children. This illustration helps to point us to the miraculous reality of the way in which children are formed. Although human involvement is necessary, it is truly minimal in the way in which the Lord made children to grow and form in the womb. In comparison, our work becomes that which is fruitful and multiplying only when we are trusting in the One that supplies all our needs. This means we can rest, even when that might mean sacrificing the promotion, the raise, the lifestyle, because we know that it is work provided by the one who also gives his beloved rest.



PRAY

Lord, may I be reminded that I am not you. That only you can be everywhere at once, can do all things simultaneously, and that you give us rest in your finished work on our behalf. Help us as we do those things that you have called us to do because you are the God who gives us, his loved ones, rest. In Jesus' name, Amen.

LISTEN

Psalm 127 — The Corner Room

Psalm 127 (The Lord Will Fight for Us) — Advent Birmingham

Sara Litten

DIRECTOR OF YOUTH MINISTRIES

MARCH 25, 2023

READ: PSALM 130

Psalms 120-134 are called Songs of Ascent or Pilgrim Songs because they were sung by devoted Jews as they walked uphill to the city of Jerusalem to attend festivals. Three times per year pilgrims gathered to recognize and celebrate God's provision for them. Each was to "bring a gift in proportion to the way the LORD your God has blessed you" (Deuteronomy 16:16).

As you read Psalm 130, can you see the dusty pilgrim throng, drawing closer to the holy city? Closer and closer to the house of the LORD? As they anticipate entering the Temple, coming nearer the holiness of YHWH, they lament, "Let your ears be attentive to my cry for mercy. If you, LORD, kept a record of sins, LORD, who could stand?" (vv 2-3).

One of these yearly pilgrim journeys was made to remember the Passover, when God rescued his people by his mercy and the blood of a lamb. Easter, too, commemorates how God rescued us, his people, by his mercy and the blood of a lamb—Jesus.

Today, we are the dusty pilgrims, journeying through this season of Lent. We, too, celebrate God's provision for us, but our story begins at the end of this Psalm. In Psalm 130, Israel is waiting and waiting, putting hope in God's word—knowing he is a covenant keeper—but they have not seen redemption. As the author of Hebrews says, "All these people were still living by faith when they died. They did not receive the things promised..." (Hebrews 11:13). We see their faith, as they declare, "He himself will redeem Israel from all their sins" (v 8).

Fast forward, and here we are. Our reality is what they were hoping for: "We put our hope in the LORD, for with the LORD is unfailing love and with him is full redemption" (v 7). The life, death, and resurrection of Jesus brings us mercy and full redemption. What kind of response can we have to this? As St. Augustine said, "We are an Easter people, and alleluia is our song."



PRAY

Father, thank you for your unfailing love, for your covenant-keeping heart. Thank you, Jesus, for redeeming us from sin and rescuing us from ourselves. Spirit, thank you for putting a song in our hearts. Alleluia and, in Jesus' name, Amen.

LISTEN

I Will Wait for You (Psalm 130) — Keith and Kristyn Getty

Britta LaFont

COVENANT MEMBER SINCE 2021

FIFTH SUNDAY IN LENT

CHILDREN'S DEVOTIONAL

Read

PSALM 139:1-6; JOHN 10:14-18, 27-28

God knows us, he made us, and he is always with us. In fact, these verses talk about his hands holding and guiding us. He is so very near to us. Jesus came to lay down his life for us, so that we could know and enjoy God in his presence forever...nothing will separate us from God, nothing!

Wonder

God knows you and loves you so much that he sent Jesus to lay down his life for you. He is our good shepherd that knows us, and we can know him. How do we get to know Jesus? Share something you know to be true about Jesus.

Pray

Dear God, I praise you because I am wonderfully made, I am known by you, and you are always with me. Help me to know you and follow you for you are trustworthy. In Jesus' name, Amen!

Rejoice

Jesus, Strong and Kind — CityAlight
Wide, High, Long, Deep — Ellie Holcomb

MARCH 26, 2023

READ: PSALM 139

This song of praise in Psalm 139 makes me think of Jonah. Jonah ran away from what God wanted him to do. I can relate. When there is something I do not want to do, I escape. I run. I find another thing to focus on. I distract myself. However, it's impossible to run from God. When Jonah tried to run, God knew right where he was. In his mercy, God allowed a big fish to swallow Jonah.

Verse five tells us that God surrounds us. There is no where we can go for escape. This should be a comforting thought as we think about how much the Lord cares for us and seeks the good of his children. We cannot turn around or run ahead of him as he is both behind and before us. Wherever we go, his hand will lead us and hold us (v 10). It's amazing that even when we are running away from God, he is there to hold us and keep us!

If God knows all things and is in all places, why do I question him? God saw me before I even existed. He knows everything about me—my sins, my struggles, the things I do not like about myself. It is not my job to hide these things from him so that he remains happy with me. God is happy with me...as I am. We can all invite God to search our hearts, which he already knows. We do not need to escape. As God shows us the things in our heart that are not of him, we can repent and surrender our lives to him.



PRAY

Lord, please do search us and know us. Forgive us for the times we try to escape what you've called us to do. Thank you for knowing where we are always. Shine your light on the dark places in our lives. Thank you that "no height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord." In Jesus' name, Amen.

LISTEN

Psalm 139:1–6 — The Corner Room

Psalm 139:7–16 — The Corner Room

Psalm 139:17–24 — The Corner Room

Katie Flores

COVENANT MEMBER SINCE 2001

MARCH 27, 2023

READ: PSALM 146

We all will put our trust somewhere. But where is best? In princes and presidents? In partners? In parents? Where will our needy souls find lasting help and a place to rest our trust? Psalm 146 tells us that those whose help is in the Lord will be blessed. It is in him where our trust can rest.

This psalm begins a series of five final songs known as the Hallelujah Psalms. *Hallelujah* means "Praise God." So why are we to praise God, according to this psalm? Because he, unlike powerful people, has perfect power, and he uses that power to help the needy. We are to praise God because he is the One we can turn to in our need and trust to help us.

As St. Augustine wrote, our hearts are restless looking for a place we can find security and rest. In Psalm 146, we are reminded of where our trust can rest securely: in God who has perfect power and perfect compassion on those who need his help. He does not leave the powerless helpless. His mighty power that was used to make all the earth is used for the benefit of the needy. We can acknowledge our need and ask for help from the Lord because we can trust in his perfectly compassionate power.

Our biggest need is our need to be cleansed from our sin; who can we trust to deal with our brokenness? We can trust Jesus. God has the power and compassion to deal with our sin through Jesus. Placing our trust in Jesus is where our souls can find rest for our biggest need.

Praise is a right response to perfectly compassionate power. The psalmist here is filled with praise for all of his days because he has found the place of perfect help. And so too should our days be filled with praise to the Lord for being the One we can trust to help us.



PRAY

Lord, I praise you for Jesus who met my biggest need in atoning for my sin. I acknowledge my continued neediness and come to you in restful trust to be my help. Help me to continually put my trust only in you and respond to your work in praise. In Jesus' name, Amen.

LISTEN

Psalm 146 — The Corner Room

Meredith Hall

COVENANT MEMBER SINCE 2021

MARCH 28, 2023

READ: PSALM 150

Can't you just imagine the psalmist writing this hymn of Praise to our God? His joy is infectious! What he has tasted and seen of the Lord produces overflowing praise that erupts into music, dancing, calling others to join in, and ultimately a call to all of creation to, with its every breath, praise the Lord. But why? How? What is it about the Lord that produces this praise response? His glorious salvation through Jesus. His promised Kingdom, coming. His magnificent creation—both intricate and vast beyond measure or our understanding. His holiness. His justice. His righteousness. All of this and infinitely more is the impetus for this praise. He is worthy of all glory and worship and praise!

But what is the posture of your heart? For mine, most often, there is more lethargy and “meh” than praise and joy. This calls to mind a quote from a precious saint who's gone before us to glory, Elisabeth Elliot. She once said, “A clam glorifies God better than we do, because the clam is being everything it was created to be, whereas we are not.” My understanding of the sentiment behind Elisabeth's statement convicts me because it reminds me of all the many ways I get in the way of seeing Jesus clearly, and thus, how deeply I fall short of praising him as I ought. My unfulfilled desires. My felt need for comfort, acceptance, and control. These idols are too often the focus of my heart and mind and reveal a worship disorder in my own heart.

Oh wait, you too? Dare I believe that I am not alone? It probably looks different for you, but these broken hearts of ours find it far easier to praise, worship, and meditate on far lesser loves than the ultimate Love we were created for.

Oh that our hearts would learn from the psalmist and the clams!



PRAY

Jesus, make me like the clams who do precisely what they were made to do, and thus, bring glory and praise to you, their Creator and King. You alone are worthy of the song of my heart. Retrain and retune my heart to sing your praise as I notice spring flowers budding up out of the ground or as I watch the sun setting in the cotton candy colors you select. As I edit spreadsheets, onboard new clients, change diapers, or teach middle-schoolers algebra. Teach me to praise you as I discipline my children, bring order to the chaos of a messy kitchen, or commute home during rush hour on 280. You are worthy of my whole heart, my full praise, and my life. In humility and gratitude, I praise you for giving me your life at such a great cost! In your name I pray, Amen.

LISTEN

Praise the Lord (Psalm 150) — The Trails Church

Psalm 150 — The Corner Room

Psalm 150 (Instrumental) / Total Praise - Medley — Keith and Kristyn Getty

Caroline Royal

DIRECTOR OF YOUNG WOMEN'S DISCIPLESHIP

MARCH 29, 2023

READ: PSALM 113

In this psalm we see a glimpse of Yahweh's infinite greatness and his tender care. Psalm 113 is bookended with the phrase "Praise the LORD!" A life lived unto Yahweh rightfully begins and ends with praise, both in spite of and because of life's circumstances.

In verses 1-3 we see that Yahweh deserves all the praise of all people throughout all time. He is to be praised regardless of our feelings or circumstances. Why? Because of who he is, his character. Each of the introductory verses tells us to praise and bless the *name* of Yahweh. His covenanted love and faithfulness to us does not waver when our affections do. How often do we give God the leftovers of our time, attention, and praise?

Verses 4-5 draw our imaginations to God's glory and magnitude. The eyes of our hearts are lifted up to Yahweh who is high above the nations and whose glory is greater than the heavens. He is incomparably greater than all this world has to offer. Do you believe it? What seeks to steal your praise that is rightfully due to God? How do those things compare to the God who is seated on high?

Verses 6-9 remind us that God is both transcendentally glorious and imminently involved. He raises up the poor and lifts up the needy. He gives the barren woman a home. Infertility and miscarriage can be the most isolating, spirit-breaking seasons in one's life. Even there, in isolation, desperation, and hopelessness, God is present. He is close to the broken-hearted and comforts those who mourn. Where in your life do you feel desperate, needy, barren? Do you believe that this Almighty God is tenderly present with you?

Yahweh reverses the hopeless condition of sinners and sufferers by becoming a sufferer himself. The same God who is seated on high became poor and needy. Christ endured not just the worst that the world can offer but also the full wrath of his Father toward sin, so that we might live for him now and with him for eternity. Praise Yahweh!



PRAY

O God, I praise and bless your name. You are almighty and reveal yourself to me with tender care. There is no one like you. Thank you Jesus for coming to take on my sin and suffering so that I might be saved and have hope. I praise you for your faithfulness and love to me that never changes. In Jesus' name I pray, Amen.

LISTEN

Who is Like the Lord (Psalm 113) — Sovereign Grace Music

Daniel Sluis

DIRECTOR OF GUYS' YOUTH MINISTRIES

MARCH 30, 2023

READ: PSALM 114

Creation trembles in the presence of the Lord. The sea flees and turns back at the voice of the most high God. The mountains skip like rams and the hills skip like lambs. All of creation obeys the word of the God of Jacob. The Lord brings forth water from the rock. This song of praise celebrates the power and majesty of the Creator!

The Israelites experienced the goodness and kindness of the Lord as He brought them out of Egypt. He delivered them from slavery and demonstrated his faithfulness to his people. As his children we experience his faithfulness, his presence, and his goodness. He has brought us out of slavery. We are no longer slaves to sin because Christ took on the wrath of God for our sin. He paid the price on the cross, and we are covered in his righteousness. We are free in Christ! The hand of the Lord who created all things is on us. We are his children.

Our Father has provided a rescue for us that is eternal. His promises are sure, and as followers of Christ, we have the promise of eternal salvation in the new heavens and the new earth. In Revelation 21 we read the words: "Behold, the dwelling place of God is with man. He will dwell with them and they will be his people, and God himself will be with them as their God."



PRAY

God, you are faithful to your promise. Thank you for your goodness, kindness, grace, and mercy. Thank you that you are with me and that you are faithful. In Christ's name I pray, Amen.

LISTEN

God is Faithful (Psalm 114) — Sovereign Grace Music

Ingram Link

DIRECTOR OF WOMEN'S MINISTRIES

MARCH 31, 2023

READ: PSALM 115

It is difficult for me to get too far into Psalm 115 without giggling a bit. The text quickly goes to descriptions of the two competing deities experienced in our world. The first one, found in verse 3, is descriptive of the covenant God we serve: *"Our God is in the heavens, he does all that he pleases."* Total sovereignty, alive and full of power; I don't giggle about that but what follows makes me smile. The psalmist then gives us a list (vv 4-7) of characteristics of the deities that the world worships. Completely opposite of the God of the Bible, these gods are made by human hands. The author rightly calls them idols. They are lifeless and powerless. And I chuckle as the author piles up absurdity after absurdity in his description:

*"They have mouths, but do not speak; eyes but do not see.
They have ears, but do not hear; noses, but do not smell.
They have hands, but do not feel; feet, but do not walk;
and they do not make a sound in the throat."*

They do what we expect, they do nothing! So sad. How could someone worship something made by human hands? And it's even worse as the psalm lays out the natural consequence of trusting in something other than God, the Creator: *"Those who make them become like them; so do all who trust in them."* How could someone trust in such absurdity?

The chief lesson of this psalm in this season of Lent comes in the three verses that follow (vv 9-11): *"O Israel, trust in the LORD! He is their help and their shield. O house of Aaron, trust in the LORD! He is their help and their shield. You who fear the LORD, trust in the LORD! He is their help and their shield."*

Sadly, all people (even you and me) are given to placing their trust in idols. Famously, John Calvin called all people “idol factories.” That’s who we are outside of the grace of God in Jesus Christ. By the work of the Spirit, we do not place our trust in false gods who cannot act in our world; they are lifeless and impotent. We trust in YAHWEH—the One who is alive, and the One who is our help and our shield.



P R A Y

Dear Heavenly Father, I admit that I am an idol factory. Forgive me, and help me. Help me to trust in you alone. May I be outspoken as I claim you, O God, as my help and my shield. For I make this prayer in the name of Jesus, Amen.

L I S T E N

Not Unto Us Glory; Glory Lord Who Is the Lord — Israel & New Breed
Not Unto Us — Joyful Noise

Dan Edwards
ASSISTANT PASTOR

APRIL 1, 2023

READ: PSALM 116

How would you describe your love for God right now? Are you rejoicing in him? Thankful for his mercies? Feeling affection for him in your heart? This psalm teaches us that our love for God deepens as we meditate on his great rescue of us.

The psalmist declares, *I love the Lord, because he has heard my voice and my pleas for mercy.* The psalmist cried out to God in some affliction and God came to his rescue. He found God to be gracious and merciful, one who preserves the simple. He had been brought low, yet God saved him. He tells his own soul to rest in God, who has dealt bountifully with him. Notice his meditations: *For you have delivered my soul from death, my eyes from tears, my feet from stumbling. I will walk before the Lord in the land of the living.* As he contemplates God's rescue of him, his affections for God deepen.

Physical deliverances in the Old Testament foreshadow and point to the greater spiritual deliverance that comes to us in Jesus Christ in the New Testament. So, this psalm points to the greater saving work of Jesus for you and for me.

Read this psalm in light of your spiritual salvation in Christ and personalize it as you read. "I love you Jesus, for you heard my cry as I called out to you for forgiveness of my sins, for pardon and mercy. I was dead in my trespasses and sins, but you have made me alive. In you my soul has truly been rescued from a great and terrible death. Jesus, you are the one who dries all my tears, if not in this life, then certainly in heaven where you will wipe away every tear from the eyes of all your people and there will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain. Lord Jesus, you keep my feet from stumbling; you rescue me from paths of sin and destruction. In you I walk in the land of the living. The psalmist was referring to continued physical existence, but you give me new life in my soul even now as I walk on this earth."

The Old Testament saints had reason to rejoice and love God. We far more because we live on this side of the cross! Jesus is the one who delivers us from all our soul affliction. Are you singing I love you Lord today? We should for we have every reason.



PRAY

Heavenly Father, thank you for sending Jesus Christ to earth to deliver my soul from death and give me new life. Deepen my love for you as I contemplate this mystery, and help me to walk in newness of life this day! Amen.

LISTEN

Psalm 116 (I Love You, Lord) — Mission House, Jess Ray, Taylor
Leonhardt, Andrew Peterson, Skye Peterson

Henry Morris
ASSISTANT PASTOR

PALM SUNDAY

CHILDREN'S DEVOTIONAL

Read

PSALM 117, MARK 11:1-11

Today is Palm Sunday, and we remember Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem. As he rode in on a colt surrounded by the praise of people, he set his face toward the cross and his victory for us over sin and death. The long-awaited Savior, Messiah, our King came to save his people in a very unexpected way.

Wonder

Imagine the crowds of people surrounding Jesus, waving branches, shouting praises. As you think about this scene, what do you think you would have been doing? Some people expected a different king, why is Jesus the best King, the King of Kings?

Pray

Dear Jesus, You are the King of Kings and Lord of Lords and your kingdom is an everlasting kingdom. Thank you for rescuing me from sin, so that I can worship and serve in your kingdom forever! In Jesus' name, Amen!

Rejoice

Hail to the Lord's Anointed — Indelible Grace Music and Sandra McCracken

APRIL 2, 2023

READ: PSALM 117

The shortest psalm full of praise reminds us of the Lord's plan to rescue the nations—to rescue us! All nations, all peoples will praise his name. For did he not fulfill his promise to Abraham that all nations would be blessed through him—through his offspring—through Jesus? And are we not the great beneficiaries, the heirs of a glorious inheritance through the Lord's fulfillment of his promise? For through Jesus we are redeemed, we are a holy nation, a chosen people!

We praise the Lord, our God, who lavished his great steadfast love on us, so great in fact that while we were still sinners he sent Jesus to die for us. What greater love is there than this? A love so great, so steadfast that only a God like ours, whose faithfulness endures forever, would pour out the life of his only son to save faithless people unto himself.

Let us praise the Lord together, let us remember and rest in the truth and goodness of his mercy and grace poured over us. For he is faithful, he is steadfast, he is Lord of all and King of kings. And he call us his own, we are his people—praise the Lord!



PRAY

Dear Faithful Lord, your love is great, your ways are perfect, your plans never fail. You are worthy of all my praise and all honor for you have redeemed and rescued me! Forgive me for the ways my lack of faith leads me to sin. Thank you for faithfully holding me and guiding and forgiving me when I lack faith to walk in obedience. In Jesus' name, Amen!

LISTEN

Praise the Lord (Psalm 117) — Cardiphonia Music, Jered McKenna

Laura Tucker

DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN'S MINISTRIES

APRIL 3, 2023

READ: MARK 12:1-12 AND PSALM 118

Mark 12:1-12 records Jesus' parable of the vineyard (sometimes called the parable of the wicked tenants). The parable is told in the context of challenges directed to Jesus' authority. The parable contains clear echoes of the imagery of the vineyard in Isaiah 5:1-7, which could be said to be a microcosm of the story of Israel. What is different about Jesus' telling of the parable is that the vineyard isn't destroyed as in Isaiah, rather it is the tenants who are destroyed, and the vineyard is given to others (Mark 12:9).

Another added element is Jesus' citation of Psalm 118:22-23. This is not the first time we've heard echoes of Psalm 118 in Mark's gospel. During the triumphal entry, just a few days earlier according to Mark's chronological sequence, the palm branch-carrying crowd cries, "Hosanna! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord! Blessed is the coming kingdom of our Father David! Hosanna in the highest!" (Mark 11:9-10). The crowd's song associates Psalm 118 with Davidic rule.

What we have with Jesus' citation of Psalm 118:22-23 is a change of ownership—the vineyard is under new management. The once rejected son David is associated with the now rejected Son Jesus. Jesus, the rejected stone/son, has become the chief cornerstone. Those who claimed authority in Israel rejected the authority of the Son. They stumbled over the stumbling stone (Romans 9:32-33). The Church is built on this one foundation, Christ the cornerstone. He holds the whole structure together, and rooted in him, the whole grows into a holy temple in the Lord and a dwelling place for God by the Spirit (Ephesians 2:20-21). Thus, Christians sing Psalm 118 as a hymn of thanksgiving to God for his salvation in Christ the "living stone rejected by men but in the sight of God chosen and precious" (1 Peter 2:4).



PRAY

Father, you are good. We give you thanks for your enduring steadfast love. Thank you for Jesus the chief cornerstone in whom we are growing and being built up as a dwelling place for God by the Spirit. In Jesus' name, Amen.

LISTEN

The Lord Our God is Good — Paul Zach, Wendell Kimbrough
All Hail the Power of Jesus' Name — Keith and Kristyn Getty

Justin Richardson

ASSISTANT TO THE CHURCH ADMINISTRATOR

APRIL 4, 2023

READ: MARK 12:18–27 AND PSALM 69

Psalm 69 begins with a desperate cry: “Save me, O God! For the waters have come up to my neck.” It ends with confident praise: “Let heaven and earth praise him... For God will save Zion.”

Many psalms have messianic elements, and often we find allusions, references, and hints of what is to come in the life of Jesus. Psalm 69 is clearly messianic; that is, it teaches us directly about our Messiah, Jesus.

Some gospel quotes coming from Psalm 69 include:

69:9 – “zeal for your house has consumed me” (compare John 2:13-17).

69:21 – “for my thirst they gave me sour wine to drink” (compare Matthew 27:33-34).

Throughout the psalm its writer, David, continues to cry out to God for deliverance, mercy, pity, salvation. This prayer-song takes us into David’s internal thoughts and sufferings and of the one who sits on David’s throne forever, Jesus.

Listen to the anguish:

“I am weary with my crying out; my throat is parched.”

“My eyes grow dim with waiting for my God.”

“What I did not steal must I now restore?”

“I have become a stranger to my brothers, an alien to my mother’s sons.”

“...the drunkards make songs about me”

“Reproaches have broken my heart”

“I looked for pity, but there was none, and for comforters, but I found none.”

The Psalmist calls on God to judge the wrongdoers:

“Pour out your indignation upon them.”

“Add to them punishment upon punishment.”

“Let them be blotted out of the book of the living.”

This servant is at the point of despair, yet with contrition seeks God’s provision and God’s honor:

“Let not those who hope in you be put to shame through me, O Lord GOD of hosts.”

“...answer me in your saving faithfulness.”

"Answer me, O LORD, for your steadfast love is good."

"Hide not your face from your servant."

"Draw near to my soul, redeem me."

Ultimately the anguished seeking leads to praise:

"I will praise the name of God with a song; I will magnify him with thanksgiving."

"Let heaven and earth praise him, the seas and everything that moves in them."

"God will save Zion."

The selection from Mark 12 highlights how Jesus was questioned again and again, yet he responded with truth and patience. The Sadducees could not (or would not) conceive of the promised resurrection into God's eternal kingdom. Eventually the Jewish leaders would move from curiosity to suspicion to hate and murder. While we would never compare our pain and suffering to those of Jesus, we all regularly feel the effects of our own brokenness and the brokenness of those around us. We have a Savior who is able to sympathize with our weaknesses. He is acquainted with grief; he knows our sorrows.



PRAY

Father, I am a sinner and I need you. Help me to see my life today in the light of your gospel, in the light of your suffering, and ultimately in the light of your coming kingdom. Thank you for suffering for me; thank you for bearing my reproach. Allow me to know you in a deeper and more complete way, and give me strength to serve and obey you. In Jesus' name, Amen.

LISTEN

Psalm 69 — Poor Bishop Hooper
Draw Near (Psalm 69) — Wendell Kimbrough

Marty Crawford
ASSISTANT PASTOR

APRIL 5, 2023

READ: MARK 12:35–37 AND PSALM 110

The world is a mess. Just look at the news...I know you don't want to, but if you did you'd see all kinds of injustice, oppression, greed, dishonesty, and general foolishness. It's so discouraging, especially if you have been on the receiving end of any of the above. Let us cry out with the psalmist, "God, where are you? Why don't you do something?"

But the wicked aren't worried about God. In verses 4 and 11, we see their posture. Either there is no God, he doesn't care, or won't act to avenge injustice. But the psalmist knows better, and so he cries out for justice: "God, defend the defenseless and bring justice to the wicked!" This is exactly how we should pray, particularly if we are the victim of oppression. God hears you and will be your helper. You can entrust yourself to his righteousness. And, if we find ourselves more aligned with the wicked than the righteous then we ought to repent. For truly the LORD is a great king, one who hears the desire of the afflicted and will do justice to those who do wickedness—to individuals and even nations. He will make all wrongs right.

In Mark 12:35-37, Jesus identifies himself as the same Great King—the one who will crush the enemies of God under his feet. He will call all humanity to account for their sin. This actually is bad news for all of us, for each of us has at times lived as if there were no God, as if God does not see, and as if God would never call us to account. But there is also Good News, for at the Cross of Christ the great king has already atoned for the sins of his people. And one day, when he returns, the earth will be free from the wicked and their terror. Come Lord Jesus!



PRAY

Almighty God, would you judge the wicked and deliver the oppressed!
Cause me to walk in your righteous way as I wait for your return. In Jesus' name, Amen.

LISTEN

Hail to the Lord's Anointed — Indelible Grace Music, Sandra McCracken

John Fountain
ASSISTANT PASTOR

APRIL 6, 2023

READ: MARK 13:3–37 AND PSALM 119:145–152

*What I say to you I say to all: **Stay awake.***

My wife has told me I have an incredible, very sought-after gift—the gift of sleep. I can sleep just about on command, anywhere, and under most circumstances. We joke that once my head hits the pillow, she has 10-15 seconds to tell me what she is thinking before I literally am snoring.

But this word from Jesus in the context is more than just “don’t sleep.” It is a call to pursue the throne of grace with diligence and desire. Jesus in Mark 13 is with his disciples teaching them about the time after his death and resurrection as he seeks to instill in them a bravery and courage in the face of unadulterated persecution. There will be wars and rumors of wars, his people will be delivered before the leaders of the day to give an account of who they are and what they believe, and his people will be *hated by all for Jesus’ sake*.

Much of the language in Mark 13 is similar to what John sees in Revelation, highlighting that Jesus is painting a somewhat abstract picture of the kingdom age. Toward the end he calls on his disciples to *be on guard (and) keep awake* (Mark 13:33). Interestingly, this passage has a corresponding element in the psalter—in Psalm 119:148 the psalmist declares *my eyes are awake before the watches of the night, that I may meditate on your promise*. What Jesus calls his disciples to in Mark 13 is what the psalmist experiences in Psalm 119—to live your life *in and from* God’s word, keeping your whole self in step with his promises.

It is a great temptation for believers to be overwhelmed with all that is not right in the world today—broken relationships with family, unprovoked wars and aggression, senseless violence and murders—and Jesus invites us to draw near to him instead. *I rise before dawn and cry for help; I hope in your words*. When the darkness overwhelms, and your heart grows faint within, know that the Lord is near and his word is true.



PRAY

Merciful Father, by your Spirit help me to run to you—when I am overwhelmed, when the darkness and unexplained hardships of this present age are too much for me, when I am helpless and afraid—and strengthen me to meditate on your promise and to hope in your words, for Jesus' sake, Amen.

LISTEN

Lead Me (Psalm 119:145–152) — McKinney Dawson

Josh Johnson
ASSISTANT PASTOR

APRIL 7, 2023

READ: PSALM 22:1–21

Where is God in suffering and death? I hear this question, or some variation of it, quite often. Sometimes it is when someone has lost a loved one. Sometimes it is in the wake of receiving a terminal diagnosis. Sometimes it is in response to mistreatment and abuse. Or, sometimes it is when we are overwhelmed by an awareness of the magnitude and futility of poverty, war, natural disasters, etc. throughout the world. I myself have wrestled with this question more often than I would have liked over the last few years. While we may attempt to inoculate ourselves from pain and loss, inevitably we will experience it. And when we do, if we are honest, we will wonder where God is in the midst of it.

In Psalm 22, David feels abandoned by God. We do not know for sure the particular circumstances, but whatever the case, it seems that God is far off. And while David expresses trust in God's deliverance, the description of God's holiness, "enthroned on the praises of Israel," seems to describe a God who is indeed distant and immune from David's anguish.

Jesus takes the words of Psalm 22 onto his lips amidst the supreme experience of God-forsakenness, of taking into himself all the separation from God which sin effects: "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" Yet by asking the question, he answers it. For it is none other than God himself who hangs on the cross. Where is God in suffering and death? He is here in the midst of it. And in the God-forsakenness of the cross, Jesus redefines who God is. Jürgen Moltmann explains God's self-revelation on the cross: "This is God, and God is like this. God is not greater than he is in this humiliation. God is not more glorious than he is in this self-surrender. God is not more powerful than he is in this helplessness. God is not more divine than he is in this humanity."

God is never closer than he is in our suffering and death. He would not allow us to suffer alone but has fully entered into our God-forsakenness to suffer with us and for us.



PRAY

Father, You have not despised my affliction nor hidden your face from me because Jesus Christ has suffered with me and for me. Be near to me in my suffering, drawing near through your Holy Spirit. Amen.

LISTEN

Psalm 22 — Fernando Ortega

Stricken, Smitten and Afflicted — Fernando Ortega

Scott Leveille

TEACHER IN RESIDENCE

APRIL 8, 2023

READ: PSALM 16

None of us need to be reminded that we live in a broken and fallen world. From wars to cancer diagnoses to strained relationships with our children to our own sinful thoughts, words, and actions, there are crises everywhere. We are all in need of deliverance. Ultimately we are in need of deliverance from the bondage of sin and death. But we all find ourselves in very hard places in life, and we need deliverance from those circumstances. Deliverance doesn't always mean a betterment of our circumstances, but it does always mean that God will take hold of us and see us through, even as we seek to take hold of God.

Psalm 16 helps guide us to our confidence in the midst of crisis, which is based first upon the fact the Lord is in front of us (v 8a). We always have God's protective presence with us. Second, our confidence comes from the fact that the Lord is our "right hand" (v 8b). God is holding us firmly through all circumstances and all afflictions. It is God's abiding presence and God's sustaining grace that even enables us to rejoice and be glad when life is hard. The psalmist then reminds us of our ultimate confidence, that God "will not abandon my soul to Sheol" (v 10a). Jesus fully defeated death so that death no longer has a hold on those who believe in Jesus. The worst-case scenario for the Christian is resurrection and everlasting life.

My default, and I am sure it is true of some of you, is to rely on myself and my own strength, gifts, and resources in the midst of crisis. May the Lord enable us to die to our self-reliance and self-sufficiency and trust more deeply in him.



PRAY

Lord God, forgive me when I let my circumstances dictate my faith. Help me to die to myself and trust more and more in you. In Jesus' name, Amen.

LISTEN

Psalm 16 — Poor Bishop Hooper

Psalm 16 — The Corner Room

David Driskill
ASSISTANT PASTOR

RESURRECTION SUNDAY

CHILDREN'S DEVOTIONAL

Read

PSALM 22:22-31; JOHN 20:1-18, 30-31;
1 PETER 1:3-4

He is alive! We celebrate that our King, our Savior, Jesus is alive! Today and every day we rejoice for King Jesus has triumphed over the grave crushing sin and death. So, we are filled with great hope, joy, and peace for we have been guaranteed a glorious, eternal, abundant life with him!

Wonder

King Jesus is alive! Think about John 20: Peter and John ran to the tomb to find it empty, and Mary went from “weeping” to running to tell the disciples, “I have seen the Lord.” Write or draw what makes today such a happy, joyful day for you—then share it!

Pray

Dear God, praise, praise, praise the Lord for he is alive! Praise the Lord that he is ruling and reigning and has prepared a place for me to live, worship, enjoy, and love him forever! King Jesus, thank you for conquering the grave, sin, and death. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Rejoice

Christ Our Hope in Life and Death — Keith and Kristyn Getty
Jesus is Alive — Rain for Roots

APRIL 9, 2023
RESURRECTION SUNDAY

READ: PSALM 22:22-31

His victory over sin, death, and evil will matter when we Gather, will ensure our true Growth, and will sustain us as we Go with him into all things.

When we Gather, we gather before the Throne of Grace in him:
Since he ascended into heaven—where true worshipers ascend—he leads us in worship and remains The Preacher behind his weak lil’ instruments. See Psalm 22:22 and Hebrews 2:10-12.

Growth?!?! The Christian life feels like an endless uphill battle!
Well, the cross looked like the most hopeless hill of all! But our God “has not hidden his face from him, but he has heard, when he cried to him” (22:24). Hebrews 5:7 says this makes Jesus the very priest we need! We, the needy, have the Savior we need! Also see Psalm 22:26.

Shall we who yet struggle, really GO in his name?
Yes, for the ends of the earth shall hear all about God’s victory and the nations, even Kings, the wealthy, and the poor will turn to the LORD! See Psalm 22:27-29.

Tired of this old tune? Sorry (not sorry)! The news is too good and this is the beginning of the way all things will be. The Risen King is set to inherit all things! So, we’re going to tell the next generation...even those yet to be born! See Psalm 22:30-31.

Hallelu-Yah! Christ is Risen!



PRAY

Risen Lord Jesus, help us celebrate your Vindication and your Victory in our gatherings before you, in the growth you give, and in our going in your name until you come again in glory! Amen.

LISTEN

Psalm 22 — Fernando Ortega

Psalm 150 (Instrumental) / Total Praise - Medley — Keith and Kristyn Getty

Robby Holt
SENIOR PASTOR

