

Devotions – October 19-25, 2014
By Members of Faith Lutheran Church
Rock, Michigan

Sunday, October 19

By Priscilla Brunngraeber

Text: John 10:9-10

I am the gate; whoever enters through me will be saved. They will come in and go out, and find pasture. The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full.

And have it to the full. I recently saw the movie “The Giver,” a movie that I found both interesting but also troublesome. One basic premise of the movie was about a society that was no longer allowed to remember anything in the past. The rationalization was that remembering things like fighting, hatred, discrimination, etc. were too painful, but by not being allowed to remember those things one had to miss out on remembering things like beauty, love, joy, etc.

This makes me wonder about what life would be like without Jesus in my life. True, the painful things in life would be nice to avoid, but they aren’t. And the joy of life is amazing! Jesus walks with me into real life each day. He is with me through all of it; the bad and the good.

At the end of the movie, what had been shown in black and white and shades of gray turned into the beautiful colors of God’s world as “The Receiver” broke through the society’s barrier so that all could remember. The beautiful colors of this time of year remind me that Jesus broke through the barrier of death for us and for our sins. Thanks be to God!

Let us pray: O God, the Giver of all things, thank you for a world of splendid colors and amazing things. Help us to always remember you are with us during the darkest times but also that we need to thank you for being with us as we celebrate the many blessings you have given us. In your name we pray. Amen.



Monday, October 20

By Priscilla Brunngraeber

Text: Psalm 46:10

He says, “Be still, and know that I am God; I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth.”

Even though I’ve been retired for a number of years, most days seem too busy, too chaotic, too noisy. It’s hard to imagine how I worked full time and still got everything else done! I know many others who feel the same way. How do we get ourselves into such lifestyles?

Perhaps I should move the sign above my bedroom window a little closer to where I spend most of each day. The sign reads, “Take time for the quiet moments, as God whispers and the world is loud.” (unknown) Good advice; now just to remember to heed it.

Even in a busy life there are those quiet moments if we pay attention. We need to listen during those moments, listen to what God would have us do. I enjoy the quiet of going for a walk, and God always walks with me. He whispers to me in a gust of wind, a bird-song, the chatter of a chipmunk. Those sounds of nature around us are constant reminders of He who loves us.

Let us pray: Caring God, thank you for your constant presence in our lives. Remind us to listen for your whispers in those quiet moments. Help us to be still so that we may hear you, even in the noisiest of times. In your name we pray, Amen.



Tuesday, October 21

By Priscilla Brunngraeber

Text: Matthew 21:16

“Do you hear what these children are saying?” they asked him. “Yes,” replied Jesus, “have you never read, ‘From the lips of children and infants you, Lord, have called forth your praise’?”

Each Sunday is “Supper and Sauna” night at our house. Our son, daughter-in-law and their three kids come over for dinner and then it’s bath time. It has become a custom that whoever first remembers that we need to pray before we begin to eat gets to choose who will say grace.

Our 2 ½ year old grandson has decided that he likes to be the one to lead us in prayer, so he usually gets chosen, no matter who remembered first. He folds his little hands and begins: “Dear God, thank you for...” then looks around the table, naming things as he notices them. He continues thanking God for forks, milk, ketchup, napkins, etc. and then names each of us, sometimes twice! He ends his prayer with a hearty “Amen” and a huge smile.

What a joy to be a part of what comes from the lips of this little boy! May we all remember to be grateful for everything that God provides.

Let us pray: Generous God, we thank you for all that you give to us. Help us to appreciate every day and everything in every day. In your name we pray, Amen.



Wednesday, October 22

By Priscilla Brunngraeber

Text: Psalm 96: 1-2

“Sing to the Lord a new song; sing to the Lord, all the earth. Sing to the Lord, praise his name; proclaim his salvation day after day.”

About twelve years ago I finally decided that I would like to start a cantata choir. I had heard an ecumenical choir perform an Easter cantata and was very moved by it. Why not try? I don't claim to have a lot of expertise in directing, but the Holy Spirit was giving me a nudge.

In a week we begin rehearsals for this year's Christmas cantata. I'm expecting about 30 singers from 4-5 different churches in the Rock, Perkins, Rapid River and Trenary area. We'll rehearse until December 21st, then perform the cantata at least two times, along with hopefully visiting a nursing home or two to share our music with the people there.

What a wonderful time we have! We laugh at ourselves, mess up, and work hard. We enjoy each other and enjoy getting ready for sharing the joy of the Christmas story with others. But *we* also are moved by the beautiful message that comes from what we are singing.

We pray: God of our joy, thank you for voice and song, friendship and community. Thank you for giving us opportunities to spend time with our brothers and sisters in Christ. Send your Holy Spirit to live in our hearts so that we might be moved to do more to share your word with others. In your name we pray. Amen.



Thursday, October 23

By Jane Kaukola

Text: I Thessalonians 5:16-18a

Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances...

When I read these Bible verses, I think of Paul in prison as he wrote: "rejoice, pray, and give thanks." Paul knew pure joy. God is with us. God has something in mind for you and for me. "We do not know what the future holds but we know who holds the future." (Bade)

Let us pray: Dear Lord, help us to trust in you and the plan that you have for our future. Amen



Friday, October 24

By Jane Kaukola

Text: James 1:17a

Every generous act of giving, with every perfect gift, is from above.

God loves us so much that He gave us the ultimate gift of His Son Jesus--in His life, death, and resurrection. We show our love for God by helping others. Small acts of kindness usually have a profound effect on other people. We never know how we "touch" others' lives by our kindness. These acts are "reflections" of God's greatest gift of all--Jesus.

Let us pray: Dear Lord, help us to be grateful for what we have received and generous with others. Amen



Saturday, October 25

By Jane Kaukola

Text: Psalm 43:5b

Hope in God; for I shall again praise Him, my help and my God.

Hope is the result of our faith. Hope is realistic about the trouble and despair that we face. In the cross, God comes in the midst of our fears. God, through Jesus Christ, proclaims life in the midst of death, hope in the midst of despair, and faith in the midst of doubt. Our real hope is in God. B.D. (Christianson)

Let us pray: Dear God, give us the strength to face our fears and sense your gracious presence. Amen



