

PRAYER: Holy God, thank you for spending time with me today. Thank you for reminding me that the chores and demands of daily living are never as important as my time with you. Keep me close always. Amen.

ACTION: God is always close. Talk to God as you go about your chores and responsibilities today, giving thanks for dirty dishes, floors to sweep, a car to drive and all the blessings of life.

Saturday, July 30, 2022 (by Lisa Trigg)
Ecclesiastes 1:1-11 <https://tinyurl.com/3sdj88fv>

PONDER: Ecclesiastes carries the theme of "vanity" or "meaninglessness" throughout its 12 chapters. This vanity conveys a sentiment of emptiness when we try to fill our cravings with the objects of our desires. We might feel only temporarily fulfilled when we have bought the latest gadget or a bigger house or the newest fashion. We soon get bored and want something else. Ecclesiastes is a book of self-reflection — of looking back on how we live and what joys or sorrows are found along the journey. It's okay to be honest with yourself about whether you have gratefully accepted the blessings you have received, or whether you have only wanted more. Being thoughtful and reflective can add purpose to our actions and help us give meaning to our lives and the lives of others.

PRAYER: Dear God, you give my life meaning. You mean for me to feel loved, and I thank you for your loving kindness. Help me share your love with those who might not know it today. Amen.

ACTION: Write a note or share spoken words with someone to let them know what they mean to you. Maybe the person is a nurse or a teacher or friend. "You mean so much to me because ..." is a great way to change vanity into meaning.



GOBIN CHURCH
A United Methodist Community for All

DAILY PRAYER MEDITATIONS **July 25-30, 2022**

Monday, July 25, 2022 (by Marilyn Culler)
Hosea 2:14-3:5 <https://tinyurl.com/yc95e4zf>

PONDER: The imagery in verse 2:18 reminds me of the Creation story and the 23rd Psalm. A covenant with animals, birds, creeping things and fertile ground suggests a return to a state of blessing. The bow, sword and war will be put aside so that the people can lie down in safety. In a time of spiritual decline, Israel was not without hope. This imagery of hope makes me think of our world today. Where do we find hope amidst everything that seems antithetical to peace and safety? A friend recently shared a quote with me: "Hope is the elixir of the Divine." God is present among us. When we hold steadfast to the promise of Divine Presence, we are empowered to work toward the peace and safety God desires for all God's people.

PRAYER: God, keep me safe as I seek to transform the world for you. Amen.

ACTION: Where is your place of safety? Go there and ask God what you should do today to make the world a better place.

Tuesday, July 26, 2022 (by Jamie Douglas)
Psalm 44 <https://tinyurl.com/zxst49hk>

PONDER: Have you ever felt that you were listening for God and living for Him, but He seems to have fallen silent? This psalmist recounts the oral history of the Israelites and recalls times where God seemed to favor them. God receives the glory for His grace and protection. Current times feel to this writer as a time where God has forgotten the Israelites, perhaps even punishing them. He declares that God has walked away from them and insists that they continue to

live under the law and sing praises to God, but to no avail. Where is God in the midst of their strife, struggle, and humiliation? Why are we “flat on our faces in the dirt, held down with a boot on our necks” (v25 MSG)? Will you come to our rescue?

PRAY: Lord of Love, help us to remember that you never sleep and never take your eyes from us. We succeed, we struggle. We have joy and victory; we have heartache and pain. Our timing is not your timing, and our understanding of you is myopic. Offer us a glimpse of your Glory. Let us thank you in times of joy and in times of sorrow. Amen

ACT: Take a telescope out into the country on a clear, bright night. Look up to the heavens without the telescope, then look through the lens. The same sky looks quite different with the telescope. Recognize that we cannot always see the big picture, the full picture of God at work in us, around us, throughout the world and in the grand universe.

Wednesday, July 27, 2022 (by Anita Edenfield)
Matthew 5:43-48 <https://tinyurl.com/2uj2h973>

PONDER: I seriously doubt any of us have gone this far in life without being told to be nice to someone (or several someone's) we definitely did not feel like being nice to! Jesus takes us farther by telling us to *love* our enemies. While it sounds like a much harder task, it is actually a small degree of difficulty with exponentially greater rewards. In calling us to love those who persecute us, God is leading us to imitate the one who gives us life and loves us just as unconditionally.

PRAYER: God of Love, teach me how to love as You love each of us. Show me the way to forgive and to spread unconditional love to everyone just as you love and forgive me time and time again throughout my life. I ask this in the name of Jesus, our Lord, Amen

ACTION: Ask God for guidance and then seek out someone with whom you realize you need to make peace. Offer them your sincere apology and ask for their forgiveness. Give thanks to God as you move forward together experiencing His love and forgiveness in both your lives.

Thursday, July 28, 2022 (by Lisa Trigg)
Psalm 107:1-7 <https://tinyurl.com/3uspkkmw>

PONDER: Reading this Scripture about redemption brought back a memory of my momma and the trading stamps we used to collect when I was a child. Whenever we collected enough stickers from our favorite store and filled some sticker booklets, momma would announce “Redemption Day!” and we’d head into town to redeem our stickers for something we needed. It might be a new can opener or a set of dishes. Redemption Day was fun because we could look at a variety of things together in the store window, where the store manager was thankful for our customer loyalty. Maybe God doesn’t give out loyalty stickers we can collect in a booklet, but God does share in our joy and happiness at our redemption through Jesus.

PRAYER: Dear God, thank you for your love and guidance that comes through Jesus and his example to us. May we share joy at being your beloved and redeemed children. Amen.

ACTION: Give out stickers that have a happy message.

Friday, July 29, 2022 (by Terry Noble)
Luke 10:38-42 <https://tinyurl.com/2vym9z72>

PONDER: In this story of Mary and Martha I’ve generally felt sorry for Martha. There she is preparing a meal and rushing about to make her guests comfortable - doing all the things society expects of a good woman and a gracious host. Yet, when Martha complains, Jesus tells her that Mary has made a better choice. What?! Can you imagine Martha’s surprise at his reply? Mary may have also been surprised, expecting Jesus to agree with Martha that she was not doing her part. What did others in the room think of this conversation? Perhaps they felt that Jesus was going too far by encouraging a woman to spend time listening - feeding her spirit on Jesus’ words - rather than performing the tasks expected of her. Jesus’ inclusion of Mary and encouragement of Martha clearly shows the value he placed on time taken to listen and contemplate and learn. It’s a lesson for us to put aside our business and recognize the importance of time spent with God.

