

# *Psalms for Faith and Prayer*

The Keezletown United Methodist Church  
2023 Lenten Devotional

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### Abbreviations

KJV	The King James Version of the Holy Bible
NASB	New American Standard Bible
NIV	The New International Version of the Holy Bible
NKJV	The New King James Version of the Holy Bible
NLT	The New Living Translation of the Holy Bible
NRSV	The New Revised Standard Version of the Holy Bible
RSV	The Revised Standard Version of the Holy Bible
v.	verse
vv.	verses

## Table of Contents

Introduction	Rev. Joel Robinette	5
Psalm 1 "Praying the Psalms"	Rev. Joel Robinette	5
Psalm 13 "How Long?"	Jenny Dillard	6
Psalm 13:2 "Facing Fears and Giving them to God"	Diana Davis	8
Psalm 22 "My God, Why Have You Forsaken Me?"	Rev. Joel Robinette	9
Psalm 23 "Our Shepherd"	Becky Ryman	9
Psalm 23:5 "In the Presence of God"	Diana Davis	11
Psalm 23:5 "Filling Our Cup"	Diana Davis	11
Psalm 23 "The Caring Shepherd"	Dale Dodrill	12
Psalm 24 "Welcome to God's World"	Rev. Joel Robinette	13
Psalm 27 "Whom Shall I Fear?"	Rev. Joel Robinette	13
Psalm 31 "Into Your Hands I Commend My Spirit"	Rev. Joel Robinette	15
Psalm 32:7 "My Hiding Place"	Diana Davis	15

Psalm 32 "Father, Forgive Them"	Rev. Joel Robinette	16
Psalm 37:7 "I'd Rather"	Diana Davis	17
Psalm 40 "A New Song"	Rev. Joel Robinette	17
Psalm 42:11 "Hope in God"	Steve Suter	18
Psalm 46:10 "A Path to Stillness"	Rev. Joel Robinette	19
Psalm 51:1-17 "Anticipating God"	Karen Mooney	20
Psalm 51:2 "Crap Slide"	Diana Davis	21
Psalm 62:5 "A Psalm in My Heart"	Rev. Joel Robinette	22
Psalm 69:32-33 "The Door of Tomorrow"	Diana Davis	23
Psalm 69 "Thirsty"	Rev. Joel Robinette	24
Psalm 78 "High Places"	Scott Dillard	25
Psalm 86 "Why Not Me?"	Mary Jane Propst	26
Psalm 90 "Finding Home"	Rev. Joel Robinette	26
Psalm 91:11 "Guardian Angels"	Michele Dodrill	27

Psalm 95 "Open Ears and Hearts"	Rev. Joel Robinette	29
Psalm 98 "A Time to Sing"	Sharon Martin	29
Psalm 118:24 "Live and Enjoy Today: Praise the Lord's Blessing of Another Day"	Len Williams	30
Psalm 118 "The Gift of Today"	Ken Thomas	31
Psalm 119:105 "A Whole Lot of Praise"	Rev. Joel Robinette	32
Psalm 127 "Unless the Lord"	Rev. Joel Robinette	33
Psalm 133 "Unity"	Rev. Joel Robinette	33
Psalm 136 "God's Steadfast Love Endures Forever"	Rev. Joel Robinette	34
Psalm 137 "Bring Everything to God"	Rev. Joel Robinette	35
Psalm 139:1 "The Body"	Diana Davis	36
Psalm 139 "Fearfully and Wonderfully Made"	Kelli Sprague	36
Psalm 139:14 "FOURTEEN!"	Alissa Wanger	38
Psalm 147:8 "Rain Shower"	Diana Davis	Page
Psalm 150 "Doxology: Glory to God"	Rev. Joel Robinette	Page

## Introduction

Welcome to *Psalms for Faith and Prayer: The Keezletown United Methodist Church 2023 Lenten Devotional*. Lent is a Christian season of 40 days (not including Sundays) that precede Easter and are a time of preparation for the good news of the resurrection of Jesus Christ and salvation that God brings from sin and death. This year, Lent begins on February 22, 2023 (Ash Wednesday) and ends on April 8, 2023 (Holy Saturday). This devotional has been written by some wonderful folks at Keezletown UMC and I think you will be blessed to read about their stories and faith in Jesus. There is also an additional invitation within the devotional to pray through all the Psalms during these 40 days. I hope you will read the Psalm or Psalm passage for the day, and if you are so inclined, to add in praying through the Psalms this Lent. May God help to pray and sing the Psalms!

Peace be with you,  
Pastor Joel Robinette

### Day 1 “Praying the Psalms”

*Happy are those  
who do not follow the advice of the wicked,  
or take the path sinners tread,  
or sit in the seat of scoffers;  
but their delight is in the law of the LORD,  
and on his law they meditate day and night (Psalm 1:1-2 NRSV).*

Psalms is the hymnbook, songbook, prayer book of the Bible. Notice there are no chapters like in other books of the Bible. There is Psalm 1, Psalm 2, Psalm 3, through to Psalm 150; so that each psalm is a different prayer to pray and song to sing.

Psalm 1 begins with a reminder that we will find no happiness or future in wickedness or sin. Delight and life come in the meditating upon and living out the ways of God.

There are some Christians who take that “meditate day and night” on God’s words to heart and pray all 150 psalms every four weeks. That comes out to about five psalms a day. For Christians who follow that practice there is provided ample room to pray every day, pray God’s word, and join in the prayers that God’s people have been praying for millennia.

In this devotional there will be a whole psalm or part of a psalm to read or pray each day. This is one way to make room to delight in God’s word and pray a

psalm. There will also be other psalms listed each day so that, should you dare, you could pray through the entire Psalter in the 40 days of Lent. Whether you choose to pray from one psalm each day in this devotional or to try and pray all the psalms this Lent, may you know the blessing of God who will be watching over your way.

## Pray Psalm 1

Rev. Joel Robinette

## Through the Psalms: 2, 3, and 4

### Day 2 "How Long?"

*How long, O LORD? Will you forget me forever?  
How long will you hide your face from me?  
How long must I wrestle with my thoughts  
and every day have sorrow in my heart?  
How long will my enemy triumph over me?  
Look on me and answer, O LORD my God.  
Give light to my eyes, or I will sleep in death;  
my enemy will say, "I have overcome him,"  
and my foes will rejoice when I fall.  
But I trust in your unfailing love;  
my heart rejoices in your salvation.  
I will sing to the LORD,  
for he has been good to me (Psalm 13 NIV).*

I'm sure that each of us, at some point in our lives, have come to God with a "How long?" question of our own. A few that come to mind for me are:

How long until I find a new job?  
How long until I am reunited with my loved ones?  
How long will this pain in my heart last from losing someone I love?  
How long will we have to wait to have a child?  
How long will this adoption process take?  
How long will this medical condition last and how long will the treatment be?  
How long will Covid and all of its disruptions continue to affect our lives?  
How long will it take for our country to heal?

## How long, O Lord?

The writer of this psalm, David, has come to God in a time of despair and distress. He doesn't seem to think that God is acting quickly enough and his impatience has grown to the point of having to ask God four times, "How long?" in just the first two verses. I can certainly relate to those feelings of impatience when God's perfect timing and mine did not line up together. The feelings of uncertainty, fear, anxiousness, with maybe even just a little anger thrown in for good measure can reach a point where they feel completely overwhelming and unbearable.

So, what are we to do when we find ourselves in a season of "How long?"

We should do just what David did! We should take all those circumstances, feelings, and questions straight to God.

He sees you, He knows you, He loves you and desires so much for you to come to Him in prayer and discuss all these things with Him. He longs to be in relationship with you and promises to make our burdens lighter when we give Him the time and opportunity to do so. He will often give us a new perspective on things and, as David did, we can trust in His unfailing love.

As I am able to look back now and see some of my "How long?" questions answered, I am able to see just how good He has been to me. It certainly makes the current ones that are unanswered as of yet, and those that will certainly come in the future, easier to bear and gives me confidence that His perfect timing will work all things to the good for me and for you! Our hearts can rejoice in the salvation that is coming with the cross!

## Prayer

Father God, as hard as we try to discern Your will for us, sometimes it can feel like we are just left waiting with no answers in sight. We often grow impatient and may seek to take matters into our own hands to bring about results and fit things into our timelines. Forgive us when we step out of Your will. Help us to always remember that You are walking with us in all of our "How long?" seasons of life and that Your perfect timing will bring good things that we could never have hoped for or imagined if we give You time to accomplish them. Amen.

Jenny Dillard

Through the Psalms: 5, 6, and 7



Day 3  
"Facing Fears and Giving them to God"

*How long shall I take counsel in my soul,  
Having sorrow in my heart daily? (Psalm 13:2 NKJV).*

Sitting in the hospital the first week of November, watching my husband grow weaker and weaker, and feeling so helpless, was heart-wrenching. Driving home by myself and sitting at home in the evenings was when the doubt wanted to creep in.

Are they going to help him?  
When?  
When?  
When?  
Will he ever get better?

God's timing is hard to wait on. I wanted improvement now. And when he came home on that Thursday, I was scared to death that I could not take care of him or that something would happen.

We have to face our fears,  
give them to God,  
and know,  
know in our heart and our soul,  
that He is in control,  
and that He will never leave us.

He was there, in the hospital, in my car, in our home, and He is here today...and we made it through by His grace.

Prayer

Father, thank You for being alive and well and in control of all things. Forgive our impatience. Amen.

Diana Davis

Through the Psalms: 8, 9, and 10

Day 4  
"My God, Why Have You Forsaken Me?"

Jesus had been on the cross about six hours when he cried out with a loud voice,

*"Eloi, Eloi, lema sabachthani?" which means, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" (Mark 15:34 NRSV).*

Those are the first words of Psalm 22. The psalms are songs. If I said, "Amazing grace, how sweet the sound," there are many people who would start filling in the next lines of the hymn, "that saved a wretch like me." People might not stop there but go right on with the rest of that hymn. Saying the first line brings the whole song to mind. So, when we recognize that Jesus prays, sings, or cries out the first words of Psalm 22, it is most appropriate to read all of Psalm 22 to give insight to what Jesus was saying, praying, or singing on the cross. Psalm 22 is quite striking for how images within it resemble the life and suffering of Jesus. Psalm 22 is also remarkable for the praise it contains and salvation it proclaims. Pray Psalm 22 while reflecting on Jesus praying this song from the cross.

Pray Psalm 22

Rev. Joel Robinette

Through the Psalms: 11, 12, and 14

Day 5  
"Our Shepherd"

*The LORD is my shepherd;  
I shall not want.  
He makes me to lie down in green pastures;  
He leads me beside the still waters.  
He restores my soul;  
He leads me in the paths of righteousness  
For His name's sake.  
Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death,  
I will fear no evil;  
For You are with me;  
Your rod and Your staff, they comfort me.  
You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies;*

*You anoint my head with oil;  
My cup runs over.  
Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me  
All the days of my life;  
And I will dwell in the house of the LORD  
Forever (Psalm 23 NKJV).*

This is such a well-known verse. But I grew up hearing it from the two people in my life that I knew loved me unconditionally. My grandpa Myrle Earman, Sr. and my grandma Gertrude. I was at their house by Layman's Trestle almost every weekend. I remember me and Gramma visiting Grampa when he was so sick with hardening of the arteries. I remember seeing him weak and sick and feeling so helpless. I had many of them feelings come back as I watched Wayne the last few years before his passing. So, I have kind of used this verse much like I did as a child when Grampa passed.

But the meaning of the verse is so profound. "I shall not want." Pretty simple: God provides what we need. Be it spiritual, financial, be it friendships, anything we need he will provide. May not be what we want but he knows when we don't. He leads us to our church family and faith community. And if we listen, he will restore us.

And when you go thru the pain that's when you're closest to God. When you lean on him. When Wayne was in the hospital with Covid I couldn't really pray. So, I cried and held my Gramma's Bible. And I felt him so strong and felt the peace when I couldn't even ask for it. I could feel the prayers from all over. I can't explain it, but I could feel it.

Our church family has had a tough few years. But with our Shepherd guiding us, we can do anything.

Pray Psalm 23

Becky Ryman

Through the Psalms: 15, 16, and 17

Day 6  
“In the Presence of God”

*He anointeth my head with oil* (Psalm 23:5 Diana Davis paraphrase).

Oh my, to be in the presence of the Father, to be sitting at His table, and to have Him take you in His arms, draw you close and pour the sweetest ever smelling oil on your head – feeling the oil slowly flow over your head and down your face – the tender touch of Him blessing you as His own – and you look at Him and He smiles, and says “You are Mine – no one can take you from me.” What a promise! What a blessing! May you feel His hand on you this Easter.

Prayer

Father, I await the day when I can be with You, but until then, I know You are with me. Thank You. Amen.

Diana Davis

Through the Psalms: 18, 19, 20, and 146

Day 7  
“Filling Our Cup”

*...my cup runneth over* (Psalm 23:5 KJV).

“I have a cup, and it’s half full.” That’s what I tell people when they ask how I’m doing. We are blessed, each of us, through our struggles, because He is with us, filling our cup with what we need when we need it. He never lets our cup run dry – we can – but He doesn’t. He never promised we wouldn’t struggle. He did promise He would be with us. I’m glad He’s the One that’s filling my cup.

Prayer

Father, I ask that any barriers that may come between You and me, that you help me destroy them, that I might continue to rejoice in the blessings you are giving me in filling my cup. Amen.

Diana Davis

Through the Psalms: 21, 25, and 26

Day 8  
"The Caring Shepherd"  
Read Psalm 23

On our small farm in West Virginia we had horses, cattle, chickens, hogs, and sheep. The ones that took the most daily care were the sheep. The part that I enjoyed most about them was watching the little lambs playing.

David was a shepherd prior to be chosen king. He knew from experience the care and protection that sheep required. Their lives were in his hands. If his flock were like the few we had, I can only imagine what his days were like.

Knowing David's experience with being a shepherd, I have chosen to focus on the 23<sup>rd</sup> Psalm. He could have started it by writing: "The Lord is a Great Shepherd" or "The Lord is a Shepherd," but neither one would have been personal. I believe the words, "My Shepherd," came from his heart.

David had come to realize that he was like the sheep in his group, weak and helpless. He was trusting in God's care and found it sufficient for every need. This Psalm provided rest, guidance, and protection to him. It continues to do the same for all of God's children today.

During the last few months that my mother lived in a nursing home, she depended on others 100% for her care. She was never ready for me to leave. One day, we quoted the 23<sup>rd</sup> Psalm. On my next visit, a nurse said, "Your mother seemed more peaceful after you left last time." From that day, until she passed, that is how we parted.

As the years pass, like David, I realize the importance of God as my Shepherd. For some time, I have said the 23<sup>rd</sup> Psalm at different times during the day. "My Shepherd!" During the last few months, I have been honored to speak at churches, a graduation, a wedding, and memorial services. These 53 words have been a true blessing as I prepare and speak. Yet, still nervous before each event, they have helped me to be more calm each time.

Prayer

Lord, we thank you for all your blessings, your mercies, and unending love. Help us each day to know you better, and by the power of your Spirit use us to be a blessing to others. Keep us humble, so that we can follow You, Our Shepherd.  
Amen.

Dale Dodrill

Through the Psalms: 28, 29, and 30

Day 9  
“Welcome to God’s World”

*The earth is the LORD’s and all that is in it,  
The world, and those who live in it (Psalm 24:1 NRSV).*

Psalm 24 begins with a profound affirmation that the earth is God’s. The Bible begins with God creating the heavens and the earth and then moving right into creation to dwell with us on the seventh day. Throughout the scriptures God moves into the world with God’s people in the Tabernacle (mobile tent temple), the Temple at Jerusalem (destroyed and rebuilt several times), and the Church (a people temple). One of the greatest things Christians point to for how we know God comes right where we are in the earth is when God became flesh in Jesus Christ and came to tabernacle (dwell, tent, temple) with us (John 1:14). Pictures of what “the end” will be like in the Bible, such as how Isaiah and Revelation (to name a few) describe it, point to a new heaven and a new earth where they are brought together and God dwells with people.

Psalm 24 invites us to seek God’s presence and salvation that are right here and let God into every part of our world. We have nothing to fear about letting God into our lives, because it is God who has already brought us into God’s world – the earth.

Today, open the gates of your world and life and let God in as you pray Psalm 24. Take a few minutes today to go outside and look at creation and join the psalmist in affirming, “This is God’s world.”

Pray Psalm 24

Rev. Joel Robinette

Through the Psalms: 33, 34, and 35

Day 10  
“Whom Shall I Fear?”

*The LORD is my light and my salvation  
whom shall I fear?  
The LORD is the stronghold of my life;  
of whom shall I be afraid? (Psalm 27:1 NRSV).*

My sister Heather is five years older than I am and she has always been one of my heroes. When I went to kindergarten, I was not afraid, because I pedaled my

bicycle to school behind my big sister's bike. I am sure I was nervous but I wasn't afraid. One summer in college I went on a trip to Morocco which lasted a week or so and my sister Heather was leading a group of six of us and we road on trains, squeezed into grand taxis, visited different areas and met local people, ate local cuisine (absolutely delicious), and lodged in the kind of hotels where Moroccans stayed (we packed our own bedsheets and toilet paper, just in case!). Heather had been there many summers leading people on trips through the country, so though it was my first time in that beautiful land, I was not afraid. As my sister Heather was a comfort for me because she was older, ahead of me, had already walked where I was walking the first time, and she guided me, I have found that when I walk with God there is nothing to fear.

In Psalm 27 there are all sorts of things a person might be afraid of: evildoers, adversaries and foes (v. 2); an army against me, war against me (v. 3); enemies all around me (v. 6); adversaries and false witnesses (v. 12). The psalmist sees them all, but is not afraid because of the LORD who saves. Whenever you see the word "lord" in all capital letters in the Old Testament as "LORD" it is a signal that God's holy name is being called upon and, out of respect for that name, the person reading or copying the scriptures says or writes "LORD" instead of speaking or writing God's wondrous name. There is nothing to fear when God, who has the name that is above every name, is with us.

Paul reaffirms this freedom from fear we may have because of Jesus Christ:

*What then are we to say about these things? If God is for us, who is against us? He who did not withhold his own Son, but gave him up for all of us, will he not with him also give us everything else? Who will bring any charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies. Who is to condemn? It is Christ Jesus, who died, yes, who was raised, who is at the right hand of God, who indeed intercedes for us. Who will separate us from the love of Christ? Will hardship, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?...No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor 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 (Romans 8:31-35, 37-39 NRSV).*

Pray Psalm 27

Rev. Joel Robinette

Through the Psalms: 36, 38, and 39

Day 11  
"Into Your Hands I Commend My Spirit"

The last words of Jesus on the cross in Luke's Gospel were,

*"Father, into your hands I commend my spirit"* (Luke 23:46 NRSV).

Those words are very similar to David's words in Psalm 31,

*Into your hand I commit my spirit;  
you have redeemed me, O LORD, faithful God* (Psalm 31:5 NRSV).

This is likely another place where Jesus is praying or singing part of a psalm with the whole psalm in mind. So, Luke directs us to Psalm 31 where we may reflect on some of the last words of Jesus from the cross. As Jesus and David placed their lives in God's hands, let us place our lives in God's hands while we pray Psalm 31.

Pray Psalm 31

Rev. Joel Robinette

Through the Psalms: 43, 44, and 145

Day 12  
"My Hiding Place"

*You are my hiding place;  
You keep me from trouble;  
You surround me with songs of deliverance* (Psalm 32:7 NASB).

From the words of "You Are My Hiding Place" by Selah:

You are my hiding place,  
You always fill my heart  
With songs of deliverance;  
Whenever I am afraid,  
I will trust in You.  
Let the weak say I am strong  
In the strength of the Lord.  
I will trust in You.



We have a place so strong, so hidden from anyone, so secretive that we can go to when we are at our wit's end, and no one can hear us cry or shout or be angry – no one, but God. And in that place, He will take our burden and our anger and our depression and fill us with love. Go there; sit with Him; tell Him everything; and let Him take it all away.

### Prayer

Father, In the midst of our tears and our anger, You are there waiting for us to spill it all out so you can hold us and let us know, "I got this." Help us come to you, and let go, so we can love again. Amen.

Diana Davis

### Through the Psalms: 45, 47, and 48

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### Day 13

### "Father, Forgive Them"

At the time that Jesus was being crucified he prayed this prayer in the hearing of those who hung him there, divided his clothing, and scoffed,

*"Father, forgive them; for they do not know what they are doing"* (Luke 23:34 NRSV).

Christians are confident of God's forgiveness because it runs through the stories of the Bible including the life of the psalmist David in this Psalm 32, and in the actions of Jesus Christ as he came to seek, forgive, and save sinners. Confident of God's forgiveness and grace, we confess our sins to God and each other. Rather than wallowing and holding onto sin, we give it to Jesus that we may be free to joyfully walk with God.

It is not uncommon for me as a pastor to find people uncertain if God can forgive their sin. Like the psalmist the weight of sin and judgment can be heavy. This psalm helps us pray what may be hard to believe: the grace, love, and forgiveness of God is more powerful than our sin. As Jesus does forgive, we may be forgiven.

Pray Psalm 32 and in faith confess your sins to God and open your heart to the promise of God's forgiveness and joy. May God give us grace to walk in the faith of Psalm 32.

Pray Psalm 32

Rev. Joel Robinette

Through the Psalms: 49, 50, and 52

Day 14  
"I'd Rather"

*Be still before the LORD, and wait patiently for him (Psalm 37:7 RSV).*

I'd rather hear cows mooing than horns honking.  
I'd rather hear birds singing than sirens blaring.  
I'd rather see mountaintops than skyscrapers.  
I'd rather sit quietly alone than be in the midst of a crowd.  
I'd rather smell freshly spread manure than to smell exhaust fumes.  
I'd rather feel the touch of a soft breeze than the fan blowing.  
I'd rather hear rain on the roof than traffic moving by my window.  
Most of all, I'd rather sit on my front porch in the silence  
and listen to the quiet Voice of God.

Prayer

Father, forgive me when I want to hear You so badly that I won't quiet down enough to do it. Soothe my spirit and let me hear. Amen.

Diana Davis

Through the Psalms: 37, 53, 54, and 55

Day 15  
"A New Song"

*He put a new song in my mouth,  
a song of praise to our God.  
Many will see and fear,  
and put their trust in the LORD (Psalm 40:3 NRSV).*

Psalm 40 has two distinct sections. Section one celebrates God's salvation and it is not someone else's salvation or way back in the past, but the psalmist sings of the way God, "heard my cry...drew me out from the desolate pit...set my feet upon a rock" (v. 2). Those who have known God's saving help can sing this song and recall God in their own salvation story. The first section of vv. 1-10 is full of the good news of God's saving help. Sing and pray this section with thanksgiving.

The second section of vv. 11-17 notes a present need for God's mercy, help, and deliverance. The evils and problems around are, "without number" (v. 12) yet the psalmist continues to seek God. Section one begins, "I waited patiently for the LORD" (v. 1) and section two ends, "Do not delay, O my God" (v. 17). The psalm ends with waiting on God's help, not God's help realized for the current need. This second section of the psalm helps us pray, or even pray for us, when we don't know to pray when we are in trouble and "my heart fails me" (v. 12).

A gift of the Psalms is they can give words to our emotions and needs when we don't know what to say or pray. The Psalms can help us rejoice when our joy leaves us speechless. The Psalms can help us lament when troubles are overwhelming and we do not even know what to ask for. The Psalms may indeed be "new songs" to help us give voice to our deepest needs and highest praise. May God give us grace to pray the Psalms and join in the prayers of the people of God and give voice to all things we need to bring for God's mercy.

Pray Psalm 40

Rev. Joel Robinette

Through the Psalms: 56, 57, and 58

Day 16  
"Hope in God"

*Why are you cast down, O my soul?  
And why are you disquieted within me?  
Hope in God;  
For I shall yet praise Him,  
The help of my countenance and my God (Psalm 42:11 NKJV).*

Being down in the dumps. Having the blues. Feeling low. In a dark place. Depression. Even though some people may have more problems with depression than others, none of us is immune from it. When the son of Korah wrote the 42<sup>nd</sup> Psalm, he was dealing with depression himself, even getting to the point of asking,

*“Why have You (God) forgotten me?  
Why do I go mourning because of the oppression of the enemy?” (v. 9).*

And then this son of Korah made an amazing statement: Hope in God. But he did not hope in Him because he could see anything right at that moment to praise God for, no, but rather he hoped in God because he knew that the day would come that he would be able to praise Him. Why? Because God was his God, and he knew without a shadow of a doubt that in due time God would give him good reason to praise Him.

Whenever you find yourself dealing with depression, a time when your soul is cast down and not lifted up, hope in God! Why? Because He is the help of your countenance and your God, and you shall yet praise Him. Hold on to the fact that God will give you good reason to praise Him! And, unlike the son of Korah, we have the hope that is found only in Jesus. The son of Korah was looking forward to God giving him a reason to praise Him. We can look back to Calvary and have all the reason in the world to praise God.

#### Prayer

Dear God, thank You for being not only my God, but my Savior as well! And even though I am overwhelmed right now, and find it hard to praise You right at this moment, I know that You will yet give me good reason to praise You, and I thank You for that as well. Amen.

Steve Suter

Through the Psalms: 59, 60, and 61

#### Day 17 “A Path to Stillness”

The form below of praying Psalm 46:10 has been a gift to me and is familiar to many who pray. There are times when the busyness of life or the familiarity of the form of spiritual disciplines tempt me to speed through without much time for reflection. For example, I might pray The Lord’s Prayer, or do Bible reading, or recite a favorite memory verse but do those things automatically and thoughtlessly. Psalm 46:10 always helps me slow down and know more acutely the graces of God that are right around me. It is a prayer that can help me center my thoughts on the presence of God. This way of praying Psalm 46:10 repeats part of the verse while subtracting a word (or two) after each repetition and having a moment of silence. When all the words have been subtracted, the process reverses to add a word (or two) while

including a moment of stillness. As this prayer invites stillness, it may be beneficial to move to a quiet place where you could be uninterrupted for a few minutes while you pray.

Pray Psalm 46:10 as directed below:

<i>Be still and know that I am God</i>	[Observe three breaths of stillness]
<i>Be still and know that I am</i>	[Observe three breaths of stillness]
<i>Be still and know</i>	[Observe three breaths of stillness]
<i>Be still</i>	[Observe three breaths of stillness]
<i>Be</i>	[Add here a time of stillness, perhaps 5 minutes]
<i>Be still</i>	[Observe three breaths of stillness]
<i>Be still and know</i>	[Observe three breaths of stillness]
<i>Be still and know that I am</i>	[Observe three breaths of stillness]
<i>Be still and know that I am God.</i>	
<i>The LORD of hosts is with us;</i>	
<i>The God of Jacob is our refuge (Psalm 46:10-11 NRSV).</i>	

Rev. Joel Robinette

Through the Psalms: 46, 64, and 65

Day 18  
“Anticipating God”  
Read Psalm 51:1-17

I was fortunate and blessed to take the Emmaus Walk this past fall of 2022. I was so excited to make this retreat. I anticipated God to move, God to make new in me, God to forgive, God to heal, God!

The second day was life changing for me. We were all in the chapel and one of the pastors stood before us to give the message. She took the communion bread and broke it. “Jesus’ body was broken for us,” she said.

Although I had heard those words many times, it was this time that the words became personal for me. Broken for me! At that moment I knew that Jesus was there to heal my brokenness. All the pain, disappointment, sadness, the weight of it all was just too much for me to bear any longer. I had a Savior that had paid the price for my healing. I had a Savior that was waiting for me to give my burden to Him. The tears just started to come and I knew that this was my moment. My moment to give my brokenness to Jesus to heal. I walked to the altar and took a piece of the communion bread in my hands and prayed, “God, today I give you my

brokenness to you, for you to heal me and make me new, to renew the joy of my salvation.”

The pieces of the bread represented the broken pieces of my life and I laid them in the basket, giving them to Jesus. I stood and returned to my seat and continued to cry but I could feel, as it were, the weight of my sadness was lifted. It was so beautiful the way that each lady that was in the chapel that day were waiting, waiting on God to move and accomplish what He had come to do in our lives. God was personal to us that day. God was personal to my deep needs of healing. We were all in one accord allowing God to move among us. I know at that time that my Walk to Emmaus was in God’s timing.

I’m so thankful for all who put their love of God in action to make this life changing experience happen for me. I want to continue to work for the Lord, grow in my Christian life and share God’s love to all who God puts in my life’s path.

On my Emmaus Walk, God renewed me. God restored my joy of salvation and created in me a new heart for His glory.

May God bless you today to know how very much you are loved by Him and how very much He desires a close personal relationship with you.

#### Prayer

Keith Green has helped many to sing Psalm 51:10-12 which says:

*Create in me a clean heart, O God,  
And renew a right spirit within me.  
Cast me not away from your presence, O Lord,  
And take not thy Holy Spirit from me.  
Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation  
And renew a right spirit within me.*

Karen Mooney

Through the Psalms: 51, 66, and 67

#### Day 19 “Crap Slide”

*Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity,  
and cleanse me from my sin (Psalm 51:2 NIV).*

Sometimes in life, we forget that though we may have a good day, we have friends and loved ones that find themselves buried in a “crap slide.” Though you may not think your words will help, and maybe they won’t, we have to try. We have

to let those we love know that whatever is happening, we care; and if we need to get in the crap with them, and pull them out, and wash them off, that we will do, because we love them. Isn't it beautiful that God washes away the crap every day and gives us a fresh clean start every morning? The hymn "Whiter Than Snow," by James Nicholson, reminds us:

Whiter than snow, yes, whiter than snow;  
Now wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.

### Prayer

Thank you, Father, for a fresh, new, clean start every morning. Amen.

Diana Davis

### Through the Psalms: 68, 70, and 71

"Whiter Than Snow" Words by James Nicholson. Music by William G. Fischer. Public domain.

### Day 20 "A Psalm in My Heart"

*For God alone my soul waits in silence,  
for my hope is from him (Psalm 62:5 NRSV).*

Early during the Covid pandemic of 2020 I was reading Psalm 62 as part of a Bible reading plan for the year. Psalm 62:5 stopped me in my tracks. During those days I was waiting on many things such as (1) some return to normalcy or (2) figuring out how to navigate the latest restrictions or policies related to the pandemic. Psalm 62:5 challenged and reoriented my waiting and hope. I knew immediately this was a psalm God had as a gift for me and one I needed in my life.

I began praying Psalm 62:5 every day. I broke down the verse in different ways to help me wait on God in silence. I would sometimes pray the first half of the verse while I breathed in, "For God alone my waits in silence," and as I breathed out I would pray the second half, "for my hope is from him." I would pray the verse while subtracting a few words at a time and then adding them back in. As I played and prayed with Psalm 62:5 it got to be where I did not need to open my Bible to find it or dig up where I had written down those words. Those words were written on my heart and memory. For about 18 months I prayed Psalm 62:5 as a prayer every day and it reminded me again about the source of my hope and how to wait. I don't pray 62:5 daily anymore but it is still there deep inside my heart and memory

now. There are plenty of days when I am waiting or looking for hope that I am thankful that Psalm 62:5 is still there in my heart to pray and anchor me again to God.

One of my prayers for everyone using this devotional is that by the end of it you would have at least one Psalm that is written on your heart. A Psalm that you would pray so much that you would have it memorized from and able to carry through anything and everything for prayer and calling on God. If you haven't found that Psalm yet, I would encourage you to read through the Psalms until you find one, whole or a few words from, that you could receive as a gift from God for your life and pray it frequently so that it can be a Psalm you always carry with you.

Do you already have a Psalm in your heart? What is it?

If you don't have a Psalm in your heart yet, pray for God to share one Psalm that is for you and watch for it as you read the Psalms.

For those who would like to learn a classic Psalm and begin reading and praying it so you know it through and through, I would recommend praying and memorizing Psalm 23. Psalm 23 is a favorite one of mine and many Christians and I seem to need that one every day.

Pray Psalm 62

Rev. Joel Robinette

Through the Psalms: 73, 74, and 147

Day 21

"The Door of Tomorrow"

*Let the oppressed see it and be glad;  
you who seek God, let your hearts revive.  
For the LORD hears the needy (Psalm 69:32-33 RSV).*

We face the uncertainty of tomorrow, with its challenges, its hurts, its joy, its comforts. We do not know what lies ahead, but we know we want to go there. We turn to look back at yesterday, and it has vanished from sight. Like the dog sensing his master's presence on the other side of the door, we stand before the door of tomorrow knowing that God our Father is there waiting for us. When you open tomorrow's door, may you feel the loving presence of God, and may it warm your heart and make you smile.



## Prayer

Father, You were with us yesterday, You are with us today, and You are waiting for us in tomorrow. What a promise. My heart rejoices. Thank You. Amen.

Diana Davis

Through the Psalms: 75, 76, and 77

### Day 22 "Thirsty"

Jesus was thirsty while on the cross as John and the other Gospel writers relate,

*After this, when Jesus knew that all was now finished, he said (in order to fulfill scripture), "I am thirsty." A jar full of sour wine was standing there. So they put a sponge full of the wine on a branch of hyssop and held it to his mouth" (John 19:28-29 NRSV).*

Jesus was not given anything very good to drink by those who crucified him, just like David noted his enemies gave him vinegar for his thirst (Psalm 69:21). David did not hope that enemies would give him something good, but turned his hope, praise, and song to God noting: "O LORD, for your steadfast love is good" (v. 16); "the LORD hears" (v. 33); and "God will save" (v. 35).

Many preachers and Bible scholars have suggested that Jesus was not only thirsting for something to drink, but was thirsting to fulfill God's salvation. In the Garden of Gethsemane, Jesus prayed about a cup,

*"Abba, Father, for you all things are possible; remove this cup from me; yet, not what I want, but what you want" (Mark 14:36 NRSV).*

Here on the cross, Jesus thirsts for the cup the Father has for him that will bring salvation to sinners and hope for those enduring evil. Jesus our Savior received the vinegar while thirsting for God's salvation. Jesus knows what is like when we are thirsty for God's salvation but only trouble seems to be around. Jesus gave his life that we may receive the grace of God. Jesus offers us,

*"living water...those who drink of the water that I will give them will never be thirsty. The water that I will give will become in them a spring of water gushing up to eternal life" (John 4:10, 13-14 NRSV).*

How are you thirsting for God's grace today? Pray Psalm 69 while bringing your thirst to God and wait on Jesus who would give us "living water."

Pray Psalm 69

Rev. Joel Robinette

Through the Psalms: 63, 107, and 143

Day 23  
"High Places"

*But the high places were not removed. Nevertheless Asa's heart was loyal to the LORD all his days (1 Kings 15:14 NKJV).*

In the Bible study I am in we have been studying the History of Israel/Judah and all of their kings. It is plain to see how badly most of these men missed the mark of what the nation truly needed its leader to be. Some of these men were so evil I was surprised that God was so patient with them and gave them multiple chances to turn to Him. Yet He kept on reaching out to them speaking through the prophets and giving them corrections as a father would give his own children. When we got to Asa and I read the verse above I got to thinking about how he was a good leader and did some great things and yet there was still the footnote that he failed to remove the high places where people would worship false gods. Asa seemed like he was 99.99% committed to the Lord but he just couldn't bring himself to go all the way and remove those high places. It made me think about what the Bible would say about my life. I hope there are some good things that would be mentioned, that I was committed to the Lord, but deep in my heart I know that I have reserved some "high places" that I still haven't fully surrendered to Him. How about you? During Lent I hope we all can search out the corners of our hearts and recognize the "high places" we have not turned over to God yet. Then I pray that God gives us the power to start tearing them down!

Pray Psalm 78

Scott Dillard

Through the Psalms: 79, 80, and 81

Day 24  
"Why Not Me?"  
Read Psalm 86

Years ago when my husband Toby had a stroke and was in the hospital in Winchester, I prayed that God would send a pastor to pray for Toby. While I was there praying and waiting, a voice came to my head saying, "Why not me?" I moved over to sit on Toby's bed and placed my hands on him and started praying.

Later during that hospital stay I was on the elevator and was greeted by a pastor. As we talked the pastor agreed to visit Toby and pray for him. The pastor's spouse also came by and took me to the store so I could get some clothes and things while I was staying at the hospital and away from home. God heard my prayer and answered my request to send a pastor. God also helped me know that all of us, not only pastors, can pray for others and God hears our prayers.

Prayer

O God who hears and is faithful to save, give me faith to boldly pray for the needs of others and myself. Hear the prayers of all who call on you and trust in your grace.

Mary Jane Propst

Through the Psalms: 82, 83, and 84

Day 25  
"Finding Home"

*Lord, you have been our dwelling place  
in all generations (Psalm 90:1 NRSV).*

Psalm 90 is described as a prayer of Moses. I think it is an amazing recognition and affirmation of faith to name God as "our dwelling place" or "home." It shifts how we might think of where we will dwell from a location to a relationship with God. Moses makes God the focus of what we call home and indeed that God is "our" dwelling place in "all generations," so that wherever we are, we may find our true place in God.

I can understand why Moses found a home in God from a few details from his life. Moses was born in a Hebrew slave family in Egypt where he had to be hidden for a few months until he could not be hidden any longer. Moses was taken in by Pharaoh's daughter and was still brought to his own mother to be nursed, so

Moses moved between very different worlds of the masters of Egypt and the Hebrew slaves. When Moses was 40 years old he fled into the wilderness after killing an Egyptian who was abusing a Hebrew slave and Moses lived in tents as a shepherd. At 80 years old Moses was called by God to return to Egypt and call for slaves being released to be God's people, so Moses lived among the slaves in Egypt for a brief time. After God delivered the Hebrews from slavery, Moses was in the wilderness with the Hebrews and God until he died at 120 years old. Moses didn't have a permanent mailing address but God was with him through his whole life. I don't know if you have lived in the same location your whole life, never had a permanent address, or are somewhere in between. I do know that because of the grace of God who chooses to come and dwell with us, that we may always find a home, work, resting place, and gladness in God. Where are you living today? Wherever it is, right there, right here, you may live in God.

Pray Psalm 90

Rev. Joel Robinette

Through the Psalms: 85, 87, and 88

Day 26  
"Guardian Angels"

*For he will order his angels  
to protect you wherever you go (Psalm 91:11 NLT).*

My mom and dad used to paint ceramics together. I have several things that they painted, and it brings back happy memories when I look at them. I ran into one of my elementary school teachers a few years back, and she told me she still had the Easter ceramics my parents painted and put them out every year (and I was in elementary school a long time ago).

My mom had painted a set of angels that sat in my Grandma Brooks' kitchen. When my grandparents passed away, Mom brought the angels home and sat them in her own kitchen. She named them "Mom" and "Pop" in their memory and said they were watching over her. Fast forward to 2020 when Mom moved to Wellness House at Bridgewater Home. Those angels moved with her to continue watching over her. In the summer of 2021, after a two-week hospital stay, Mom returned to Bridgewater Home under hospice care. She again moved to a different room, and those angels travelled again. They sat on top of the wardrobe across from her bed. Chrisley and I tried to spend as much time as we could with Mom when she came back to Bridgewater, and we would take turns, giving each of us private time with

her but at the same time allowing us to be with other members of our family. One evening, as I relieved Chrisley so he could head home, we cried a few tears because it was getting harder to leave her. We said our usual words of “Be careful going home,” and “We’ll touch base the next day,” and out the door he went. Mom and I were sitting in the dark room with only the TV on when she asked me this question, “Do you see those angels up there?”

I told her, “Yes,” thinking that she was referring to the angels on top of the wardrobe. Then her next statement caught me off guard.

“They’re going to come and take me home. Maybe you better call Chrisley to come back. And maybe you should call Scott to come.”

Boom – not exactly what I was expecting her to say. After making a few phone calls, crying lots of tears, and waiting for people to arrive in Mom’s room per her request, I tried to figure out what all this meant. Mom had a really rough night, and we had a room full of people with Chrisley and myself: Scott and the girls, Teresa and her son, Mom’s brothers and their significant others, and then the nurse or aide that would come in when Mom needed something. For the next few days, we didn’t leave Mom alone. Someone stayed with her at all times. We did this for three days until she went home with those angels that were waiting for her.

Could we see angels in her room? No, of course not. During the two months that Mom was under hospice care, there were several times that she would see or have dreams about family members that had already passed away. Did it bother me? Yes, it did, and I would get tears in my eyes as I’d try to understand what she was seeing or explain that things were going to be okay. As we read in Psalm 91:11, God will send his angels to protect you where you go and in whatever situation you are in. He is watching over you. If you have faith and trust in God, He (and His angels) will be watching over you. I believe in angels even if I don’t fully understand. Do you?

### Prayer

Father God, thank You for angels. Thank You for words of encouragement that You will send those angels to guard and protect us in whatever we may be going through. Help us to remember to always trust in You. Amen.

Michele Dodrill

Through the Psalms: 91, 92, 93, and 148

Day 27  
"Open Ears and Hearts"

*O come, let us worship and bow down,  
let us kneel before the LORD, our Maker!...  
O that today you would listen to his voice!  
Do not harden your hearts... (Psalm 95:6-8 NRSV).*

If you have gotten this far into the Lent devotional let me share a warning about religious practices, disciplines, and duties that arises from Psalm 95. There are times we may do spiritual disciplines out of commitment or just to get along but neglect to open our ears and hearts to God. We may settle for fulfilling the form (worship and pray) but close our hearts to hearing and obeying God. Psalm 95 is a big invitation filled with spiritual practices like joyful-noisy-praiseworthy-singing, coming into God's presence corporately, kneeling, and bowing. This psalm reminds us there were some Hebrews who followed God out of slavery and participated in worship in the wilderness but did not listen to God and let their hearts become hard, so they did not obey God. We do spiritual practices so we may know God together, hear God's voice, and live in God's grace. Let us not settle for just getting something done and over with like weekly worship or daily prayers, but allow those times to intentionally open our ears and hearts to God. Let us not allow the routine (familiarity and even boredom) of spiritual disciplines harden our hearts to God.

Pray Psalm 95

Rev. Joel Robinette

Through the Psalms: 94, 96, and 97

Day 28  
"A Time to Sing"  
Read Psalm 98

Have you ever felt like you were in exile:  
separated from family,  
separated from love,  
separated from God?

When the Jewish people returned from exile, imagine how they felt. Finally, after all those years they had:  
a reason to sing,  
a reason to praise God,

a reason to rejoice.  
If you feel exiled or separated from God, pray  
he is listening,  
he cares about you,  
he is waiting.  
One day in the midst of our  
sorrow,  
despair,  
or loneliness  
there will come  
a time for singing,  
a time for joy.  
And all the earth will be awakened with the realization that God is a loving  
God.

### Prayer

Dear Father, in heaven and everywhere,  
calm our fears,  
quench our loneliness,  
revive our faith,  
and comfort our sorrows  
for you are a righteous God and capable of marvelous things. Amen.

Sharon Martin

Through the Psalms: 99, 100, and 101

### Day 29

“Live and Enjoy Today: Praise the Lord’s Blessing of Another Day”

*This is the day that the LORD has made;  
Let us rejoice and be glad in it (Psalm 118:24 NRSV).*

Each morning in my daily prayers, I praise the Lord for another day of life and to be able to live by myself without any serious medical problems. Everywhere I go, I see the beauty and wonder of the Lord’s creations. After being retired, I am able to notice and appreciate our Shenandoah Valley’s microflora and microfauna. I have a bird feeder in the cherry tree in my front yard. All kinds of birds (Goldfinches, Blue Jays, Cardinals, Doves) use the feeder. After they feed on the seed and eject the bran of the seed, squirrels and rabbits eat the bran on the ground. What

a blessing to be able to live another day and enjoy the Lord's creations. The beauty of the mountains with the Fall colored leaves and deer is breathtaking.

### Prayer

Heavenly Father, we praise you for another day of life and to be able to enjoy your creations. Thank you for reminding us that this is the day that you have made. Help us to rejoice and be glad in it! Amen.

Len Williams

Through the Psalms: 102, 103, and 104

### Day 30 "The Gift of Today" Read Psalm 118

We all know the 24th verse as we say it as a greeting sometimes,

*This is the day the LORD has made.  
We will rejoice and be glad in it (NKJV).*

To me that means that each and every day is a precious gift from God with new opportunities, and I will each morning give a prayer of thanks and try to be a better person and use his gift wisely.

I also find comfort in the first and last verses of Psalms 118 both verse 1 and 29 are the same.

*Oh, give thanks unto the LORD, for He is good!  
For His mercy endures forever.*

Forever is a pretty long time and I find comfort that God is going to have mercy on me.

Another verse that means a lot is 22,

*The stone which the builders rejected  
Has become the chief cornerstone.*

We all have value and, if we allow it, God will use us and we will become a cornerstone that others may build upon. As we stand on the shoulders of our forefathers the next generation needs us to be a foundation to which they can stand.



## Prayer

Heavenly Father, thank you for the gift of today. May I use it for the betterment of myself and others. Amen.

Ken Thomas

Through the Psalms: 105, 108, and 149

### Day 31

#### “A Whole Lot of Praise”

*Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path (Psalm 119:105 KJV).*

Psalm 119 is the longest song in the Bible with 176 verses. This song finds many ways to give praise, thanks, and affirmation of God’s words, promises, law, statutes, and a whole lot more synonyms for what God says and how God leads. The poetic form is easily missed in English versions, but Psalm 119 is an acrostic where the first letter of each line goes through the alphabet. Psalm 119 is exceptional in that there are eight lines for each letter. It is not enough to praise God’s words and ways with going through the alphabet once. Each letter has eight ways to start celebrating God’s decrees and before you say a line that starts with “Beth” (the Hebrew “B”) there will be eight lines that start with “Aleph” (the Hebrew “A”). Some English translations like the King James Version list the letter of the Hebrew alphabet at the beginning of each eight-verse stanza.

I am thankful that God gives me enough light in the Bible, the life and teachings of Jesus Christ, the faithful living of people, and the direction of the Holy Spirit, so that I may know some way to love God and love my neighbor as I love myself. What is something about God’s words that you are grateful for? Lift up your praise to God and join in a whole lot of praise for God’s words by praying Psalm 119.

Pray Psalm 119

Rev. Joel Robinette

Through the Psalms: 117 and 134

Day 32  
“Unless the Lord”

*Unless the LORD builds the house,  
those who build it labor in vain* (Psalm 127:1 NRSV).

What are you building or working on in your life? Solomon is credited with writing Psalm 127 and he knew something about building and working on stuff as the first Temple in Jerusalem for the LORD was constructed and dedicated during Solomon’s reign. Solomon sings that it is a waste of time to work on something if God is not part of it. He also notes it is error to work without rest as if everything depended upon you. The kind of building and work in view in this psalm is broad as the second half of it makes plain that even the building of families is in sight.

While considering all the sorts of work we do and allowing God to direct it and be a part of it, I also invite us to remember the invitation Jesus gives to be yoked with him:

*“Come to me, all you that are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me; for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light”*  
(Matthew 11:28-30 NRSV).

Consider the labor you are involved with and if God is in it. Consider the building you are doing, especially considering your family relationships, and how you may be yoked to Jesus moving forward in ways Jesus builds, works, guards, and rests.

Pray Psalm 127

Rev. Joel Robinette

Through the Psalms: 109, 110, and 111

Day 33  
“Unity”

Psalm 133 is one of the songs of ascents which were sung when people went up to the temple to worship God. For some, the trip to the temple in Jerusalem could take several days, so this could be (1) a travel tune and (2) getting ready to worship music. It is probably a song Jesus sang when he went to Jerusalem as a boy with his family and later when he went to the temple with the disciples. Psalm 133 gives

thanksgiving for when family and kin live in unity. That unity is described as abundant and joyful like the anointing of Aaron for the priesthood or morning dew.

This Psalm reminds me that on my way to worship God for a Sunday service or daily prayer, that a blessing from God is unity in family, in the church, and in the community. When I go to worship God, it is not just so I can be united with God, but so that I may be truly united with kin and neighbors in the grace of God. It reminds me not to celebrate war or divisions in family, church, or with neighbors but to pray and work for unity for all those who are kin through the grace of Jesus Christ. Psalm 133 may be best prayed with kin together or kin in mind.

### Pray Psalm 133

Rev. Joel Robinette

Through the Psalms: 112, 113, and 114

Day 34

“God’s Steadfast Love Endures Forever”

*O give thanks to the LORD, for he is good,  
for his steadfast love endures forever (Psalm 136:1 NRSV).*

Psalm 136 invites us to look back at what God has already done so that we may remember the goodness of God and how God saves. That looking back can give us confidence for the present and future. God’s love is not done working. God has saved and God will save. God’s faithfulness will continue to endure.

This psalm especially recalls God’s deliverance of the Hebrews from slavery in Egypt and how God guarded them while the Hebrews were refugees from kings who would have preyed upon them. The first half of each verse may have been sung or called out by a leader, while the second half of each verse, “for his steadfast love endures forever,” may have been called out by the congregation. When the Hebrews were most vulnerable as slaves and refugees, God saved and was faithful to guide them, so we can give praise that God is faithful to all of God’s promises to be with us.

The phrase “steadfast love” comes from a Hebrew word that mean’s “covenant faithfulness” indicating God will keep God’s promises. Take a few moments to remember (1) how God has saved in the past, including through Jesus Christ, and (2) a promise of God you are counting on. With those two things in mind pray all of Psalm 136.

## Pray Psalm 136

Rev. Joel Robinette

Through the Psalms: 115, 116, and 120

Day 35

“Bring Everything to God”

Psalms are the prayers and songs of God’s people. Psalm 137:9 can be a surprise with what people of faith pray about:

*Happy shall they be who take your little ones  
and dash them against the rock! (NRSV).*

In this psalm, the people of Judah recently suffered their children and families being killed, the temple in Jerusalem destroyed and the city walls ruined, and been carried off to a foreign land where they were asked to sing happy songs. They bring their lament and desire for revenge to God in prayer. During the singer’s anguish, God is still remembered and called upon. We may wonder how a person of faith could ask for violence against Babylon’s children, but perhaps we have not suffered the violence the first singers of Psalm 137 did. This psalm reminds me that we can bring every need, want, desire, hope, emotion – everything – to God. God has big shoulders. God’s shoulders are big enough to take it when we complain and rail against God, as plenty of the psalms do. God’s shoulders are also big enough to take the hatred and violence that we would pour out on others and instead bring all of that rage and pour it out to God. When we pray together songs like Psalm 137 we even share our brokenness and desires for revenge with each other, voicing them, and offering them together to God who can take it on those shoulders that even could take the cross, the sin of the world, the violence and hatred against him. The psalm does not end with peace, joy, or a turning away from violence. It may be that this is the first prayer or song we can sing to only begin to deal with the hurt and grief that has been done to us. It may be a tremendous act of faith to bring such raw pain and emotion before God. Psalm 137 is one of those that reminds me we can truly bring everything to God and then in faith allow God to direct what comes next. Is there any emotion, desire, or hurt that you have felt you could not bring to God? Psalm 137 is a reminder we can bring them all. Psalm 137 is also not the last psalm of the Psalter, not the last song sung in the Bible’s hymnal, not the last prayer of an exiled people, but it can be a faithful place to begin while in the midst of suffering. Pray Psalm 137 and either (1) bring one sorrow or wound that is still raw for the grace of God or (2) pray with those in mind who suffer violence and in faith bring

everything to God. Is there anything you have been carrying on your own and not given to God? Psalm 137 is an affirmation that God can take it.

Pray Psalm 137

Rev. Joel Robinette

Through the Psalms: 121, 122, and 123

Day 36  
"The Body"

*You have searched me, LORD,  
and you know me (Psalm 139:1 NIV).*

Every fiber of my being was created by You, O Lord. When I cry out in pain, you also feel the pain. When I abuse my body, you bring healing. Why is it so hard for me to take care of this temple that you want to live in? We can't concentrate on just making our hearts right with you, we have to take care of ourselves mentally, physically, and emotionally, so that we can show the world why you chose to live within us. Help me to be patient with my body as I grow older, and to know that you will only ask me to do what you will help me to do to glorify you.

Prayer

Father, help my body, my mind, and my spirit to glorify You this day. Amen.

Diana Davis

Through the Psalms: 124, 125, 126, and 128

Day 37  
"Fearfully and Wonderfully Made"  
Read Psalm 139

One of the unique experiences of working at Overlook was hosting a few international counselors each summer. These young adults would come from all over the world to share their faith and would bring a new and exciting element to that year's camp family. One particular Australian counselor left a lasting mark on

camp in 2009. He was a talented musician and brought along a very simple yet totally awesome song based on the scripture of Psalm 139:14. In fact, the words were literally just that scripture, repeated several times:

*I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made.  
Your works are wonderful,  
I know that full well (NIV).*

Add in some clapping, shouting, jumping, and really cool guitar chords and we had a hit camp song on our hands!

The kids begged to sing this song – sometimes the counselors begged! Almost every session of mealtime singing ended with Psalm 139:14. Campers chanted to sing it as the last song at closing. And, this didn't end when our Australian counselor went home. This was the most popular song at Overlook when I left in 2019 – 10 years later!

Over the years, I saw Psalm 139:14 do some pretty cool things. Middle school boys (who were “too cool” to sing anything else) sang this song. Children who did not own a Bible could quote this newly memorized scripture. Campers with low self-esteem, who compared themselves to others and feared they were not good enough, shouted the truth of their creation at the top of their lungs. Kids would go back to their church and share this Psalm with their congregations. My own children had this scripture written on their hearts from the time they could sing along. To this day, former staff send me a message when they hear this scripture in church or at a Bible study. Whenever I personally hear this psalm, a smile comes to my face and the melody plays in my mind. I see a dining room full of children and youth joyfully quoting scripture and I wonder how many could still sing this song today. I suspect the number is significant!

I hope you are comforted and encouraged today by the understanding that each one of us is “fearfully and wonderfully made” and I pray that you would know this to be a wonderful thing! I also encourage you to read the entire chapter of Psalm 139 and spend time reflecting on each verse.

Pray Psalm 139

Kelli Sprague

Through the Psalms: 129, 130, and 131

Day 38  
"FOURTEEN!"

*I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made;  
your works are wonderful, I know that full well (Psalm 139:14 NIV).*

Early one morning, when I was about 15-16 years old, I went to an Early Morning Prayer group at church with my dad and my Papaw. Typically, people would take turns praying about their joys and concerns for the upcoming week, but this specific morning, we read aloud a prayer that Pastor Joel had handed out. This prayer repeatedly praised God for how great He is and told God how much we love Him. I asked my dad on the way back home why we had prayed all of those things when God already knows how great He is. It seemed pointless to me, and I was upset that I had gotten up early to just tell God something that I knew He was already aware of. (If you know me, you know I am not an early riser... I did not make it to very many Early Morning Prayer groups before or even after this specific morning...)

My dad spent some time thinking of the best answer to my question, and eventually asked me, "Do you know that I am your dad and that I love you very much?"

I responded, "Yes, of course."

My dad then said, "But don't you still like for me to tell you that I love you? In the same way, God likes when we reaffirm to Him things that He already knows."

I like when people compliment me. I like when people notice the things I do and comment on them in nice ways. I like when people remind me that I am doing a good job, even when I already knew that I was. I imagine that God feels the same way. God knows that He is perfect and that He created us to be perfect in his image. But I can imagine that it makes God happy to know that we acknowledge how amazing His work is.

Anyone who has spent a week at Camp Overlook, or who has a child that has spent a week at Camp Overlook, may have sung the above Bible verse rather than reading it. At summer camp, everyone would sing the verse, the book, and the chapter, and then everyone would shout, "FOURTEEN!" over and over again. As a child, this Bible verse was always an energy booster because the song was so much fun to sing. As an adult, I still get excited anytime I hear this Bible verse because of the song, but I notice and appreciate the words more now. When I read, pray, (and usually sing) this Bible verse, I am telling God that I know I am awesome just because I know that God made me and I know that everything God does is awesome.

God made us, and God loves us. I imagine that it must be music to God's ears to hear us read, pray, and even sing the words to Psalm 139:14. God knows that we

are awesome. God knows that He did an awesome job creating us. But, I bet He still likes it when we remind him.

The Early Morning Prayer conversation with my dad happened 7-8 years ago, but I remember it often. Now, every time I pray, I find myself telling God about the wonderful things He has done in my life and how much I love Him.

### Prayer

Dear God, I know that I am awesome because You are awesome and You created me in Your image. I love You and I thank You for all that You have done in my life. I ask that You please be with those who have trouble accepting that they were fearfully and wonderfully made. Please be with me throughout all of my days. Amen.

Alissa Wanger

Through the Psalms: 132, 135, 138, and 140

### Day 39 "Rain Shower"

*He covers the heavens with clouds,  
he prepares rain for the earth,  
he makes grass grow upon the hills (Psalm 147:8 RSV).*

The rain came down today, soft and gentle, landing on all who went out. God comes to us in the same way, softly and gently, never forcing Himself on us. This world needs a shower – a good big one that will wash away the immorality, the hatred, the filth that the underworld raises up each day. Sometimes when it's raining, I think about my friend who loved to go out with her daughter in the rain, and run around laughing, and looking up smiling, with the rain washing their faces. Dear Lord, if only we could all be washed clean and rejoice in that shower.

### Prayer

Father, we all need a shower now and then, physically, but more so spiritually. Rain on us today, dear Lord, and cleanse our hearts. Amen.

Diana Davis

Through the Psalms: 147, 141, 142, and 144



Day 40  
"Doxology: Glory to God"

Psalms is made up of five different books and they all end the same way.

Open your Bible to Psalm 1 and see before it begins there is a superscription that says "Book I." You will find corresponding book numbers at the beginning of the other books within the Psalms. Take a look at the beginning Psalm of each book and look for the superscription:

Psalm 1	Book I	Psalms 1 - 41
Psalm 42	Book II	Psalms 42 - 72
Psalm 73	Book III	Psalms 73 - 89
Psalm 90	Book IV	Psalms 90 - 106
Psalm 107	Book V	Psalms 107 - 150

I point this Bible study fact out to also note how each of the five books of Psalms end. They all end with a doxology which are words that give glory to God. The first four books of the Psalms end with a verse or two for their doxologies, but Book V, the last of the five and end of all five, ends with the entire Psalm being a doxology calling "everything that breathes" to praise God. When you need to praise God, these doxologies are a great place to turn and join the prayers and singing of people of faith who raise their praise to God.

When Christians consider the love and salvation of Jesus Christ in the passion of the cross, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection to new life, and the defeat of sin of death there is much to give glory to God for indeed. Throughout the Psalms there is much to praise God for: the wonders of creation; God's faithfulness and promises; God's mercy and restoration; God's presence and direction; and the people of God to sing and pray the Psalms with. What is one reason you can think of to give glory to God today? Pray the doxologies that close each book of the Psalms after you have chosen something for which to praise God.

Pray the Psalms doxologies and give glory to God

Psalm 41:13  
Psalm 72:18-19  
Psalm 89:52  
Psalm 106:48  
Psalm 150

Rev. Joel Robinette

Through the Psalms: 41, 72, 89, and 106