

Lutheran Women's Missionary League

God CARES For You!

If the Lord had not been my help, my soul would soon have lived in the land of silence. When I thought, "My foot slips," your steadfast love, O Lord, held me up. When the cares of my heart are many, your consolations cheer my soul (Psalm 94:17-19).

Written by: past LCMS Rocky Mountain District President, Rev. Allen D. Anderson

C-A-R-E-S

C: Confession/Communication/Cleansing

A: Attention

R: Regard

E: Enigmatic

S: Salvation

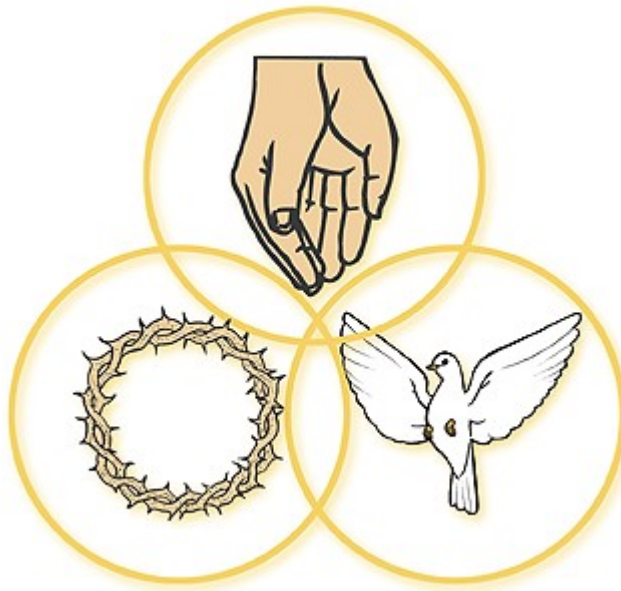


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St. John's Lutheran Church welcome you. We hope your time with us will be a blessing to you. We pray that you will receive encouragement and a strengthening of your spirit that you may bring strength and support to those around you.

My the Lord bless you and keep you...



Opening Hymn “Blessed Jesus, At Your Word” LSB 904

[1] Blessed Jesus, at Your Word
We have gathered all to hear You.
Let our hearts and souls be stirred
Now to seek and love and fear You,
By Your teachings, sweet and holy,
Drawn from earth to love You solely.

△ [4] Father, Son, and Spirit, Lord,
Praise to You and adoration!
Grant that we may trust Your Word,
of our salvation,
While we here below must wander,
Till we sing Your praises yonder.

Invocation

P Welcome! We gather together in His time, His place and His name. In the name of the Father and of the Son ✠ and of the Holy Spirit! Amen.

P Why are we here?

C **We gather together because Christ comes to us through His Word**

P Why do we worship?

C **We worship because we have a relationship with Jesus as He calls us to be His own. We acknowledge that we are a fallen people, sinful from our conception, ungrateful in our lives, hurtful toward others, and selfish for our wants.**

P What do we deserve?

C **We deserve no good thing, rather deserving death, punishment, and yes, damnation. What can we do but turn to you, Lord? We ask for Your mercy, pleading for Your grace because we deserve nothing!**

P What do we receive?

C **Through Your Word we know that You have saved us from a lost life, and have made us Your own. You did this by being fully human, to take our place, and being fully God, to pay the price, through Your bitter suffering and death on the cross. You claim the victory over Sin, Satan, and that final villain Death, by Your glorious resurrection.**

P Where do we find this?

C **Only in You do we have forgiveness, life, and salvation.**

The Result of Confession

P It is only by His mercy and grace that we are able to come to the Lord to ask for forgiveness and be forgiven. It is only in His Name that, as a called and ordained servant of Jesus, I announce to each of you His grace, and the certainty of His forgiveness for all your sins. Receive this in His name, the Father, the Son ✠, and the Holy Spirit. Amen.

God C-A-R-E-S

CARES

C = Confession – Why do we confess?

I admit that I am rebellious. My sin is always in front of me. I have sinned against you, especially you. I have done what you consider evil. So you hand down justice when you speak, and you are blameless when you judge. Indeed, I was born guilty. I was a sinner when my mother conceived me.(Psalm 51:3-5).

C = Communication – What makes our communication with God possible?

Loudly, I cry to the Lord. Loudly, I plead with the Lord for mercy. I pour out my complaints in his presence and tell him my troubles. When I begin to lose hope, you already know what I am experiencing. My enemies have hidden a trap for me on the path where I walk. Look to my right and see that no one notices me. Escape is impossible for me. No one cares about me.

C = Companionship – What is our relationship with the Lord?

I call out to you, O Lord. I say, “You are my refuge, my own inheritance in this world of the living.” Hear my cry for help because I am very weak. Rescue me from those who pursue me because they are too strong for me.(Psalm 142:1-6)

C = Companionship (*Continued*)

Turn your burdens over to the Lord, and he will take care of you. He will never let the righteous person stumble. (Psalm 55:22).

C = Cleansing – How does this relationship with Him cleanse us?

As high as the heavens are above the earth, that is how vast his mercy is toward those who fear him. As far as the east is from the west that is how far he has removed our rebellious acts from himself. (Psalm 103:11-12).

Introit *(Psalm 46:1-11)*

God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in times of trouble.

That is why we are not afraid even when the earth quakes or the mountains topple into the depths of the sea.

Water roars and foams, and mountains shake at the surging waves.

There is a river whose streams bring joy to the city of God, the holy place where the Most High lives.

God is in that city. It cannot fall. God will help it at the break of dawn.

Nations are in turmoil, and kingdoms topple. The earth melts at the sound of God's voice.

The LORD of Armies is with us. The God of Jacob is our stronghold.

Come, see the works of the LORD, the devastation he has brought to the earth.

He puts an end to wars all over the earth. He breaks an archer's bow. He cuts spears in two. He burns chariots.

Let go of your concerns! Then you will know that I am God. I rule the nations. I rule the earth.

The LORD of Armies is with us. The God of Jacob is our stronghold.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit. As it was in the beginning is now and will be forever. Amen.

God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in times of trouble.

That is why we are not afraid even when the earth quakes or the mountains topple into the depths of the sea.

Reading from the Old Testament: 2 Chronicles 7:11-22

Solomon finished the Lord's Temple and the royal palace. He completed everything he had in mind for the Lord's Temple and his own palace. Then the Lord appeared to him at night. He said to Solomon, "I have heard your prayer and have chosen this place for myself as a Temple for sacrifices. When I shut the sky so that there is no rain, or command grasshoppers to devour the countryside, or send an epidemic among my people, if my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves, pray, seek my face, and turn from their evil ways, then I will hear their prayer from heaven, forgive their sins, and heal their country.

My eyes will be open, and my ears will pay attention to those prayers at this place. I have chosen and declared this Temple to be holy so that my name may be placed there forever. My eyes and my heart will always be there.

If you will be faithful to me as your father David was, do everything I command, and obey my laws and rules, then I will establish your royal dynasty as I said in a promise to your father David, ‘You will never fail to have an heir ruling Israel.’

If, however, you and your descendants turn away from me and abandon my commands and laws that I gave you, and follow and serve other gods and worship them, then I will uproot Israel from the land I gave them. I will reject this Temple that I declared holy for my name. I will make it an example and an object of ridicule for all the people of the world. Everyone passing by this impressive Temple will be appalled. They will ask, ‘Why did the Lord do these things to this land and this Temple?’ They will answer themselves, ‘They abandoned the Lord God of their ancestors, who brought them out of Egypt. They adopted other gods, worshiped, and served them. That is why he brought this disaster on them.’”

Discussion

CARES

A = Attention – Notice how God pays attention!

Notice that we have God’s attention. He is not distant and unengaged. He is here, with us right now, just as He was then. God does hear our prayers, and God does answer them. Isaiah wrote “My thoughts are not your thoughts, and my ways are not your ways,¹” declares the Lord.

His answer to us may often not be the answer we want, but God’s plan is always the one He follows. He knows His purpose and His desire. It is for this reason Jesus taught us to pray, “Thy will be done.” Though we ask for anything and everything we trust God to provide only that which will strengthen our faith and further the work of His kingdom.

May God, in all things teach us to pray as He wills, so that we and our nation may follow Him wherever He leads.

1 Isaiah 55:8

Prayer

- P** Dear Lord, as we gather together in worship and in prayer, we do so with humble hearts and minds.
- C** **Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable to You. Open my heart to Your love, and my mind to Your mercy, for You alone are the way, the truth, and the life. Thank You for this time and place as we worship and pray in Your name. Amen.**

Hymn Response “Come, My Soul, with Every Care” LSB 779 (v.1,5)

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| [1] Come, my soul, with ev'ry care,
Jesus loves to answer prayer,
He Himself has bid thee pray,
Therefore will not turn away. | [5] While I am a pilgrim here,
Let Thy love my spirit cheer;
As my guide, my guard, my friend,
Lead me to my journey's end. |
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Epistle Lesson: Philippians 4:4-7

Always be joyful in the Lord! I'll say it again: Be joyful! Let everyone know how considerate you are. The Lord is near. Never worry about anything, but in every situation let God know what you need in prayers and requests while giving thanks. Then God's peace, which goes beyond anything we can imagine, will guard your thoughts and emotions through Christ Jesus.

Discussion

CARES

R = Regard – How does the Lord regard us?

As Saint Paul writes to the Philippians he lets us know the regard and concern the Lord has for us. To 'regard' is to "look after." This is what God does for us. He looks after us like a loving father looks after his children. God provides for our needs as He knows is best.

Though, sadly, much of our nation has walked away from God we remain faithful, thrusting in His Divine Providence, knowing that regardless of what the world may through at us God will never cease to have regard for us His faithful Children.

It is for this very reason that we do not need to worry, and although life's stresses may trouble our hearts and minds for a time we can rest in the assurance that God never forgets us. Nothing can take us from His hand.

Prayer

- P** Dear Lord, You know my heart and mind. You know my challenges and my failures. You know my joys and happiness.
- C** **You understand my fears and troubles for they seem at times to take me over. I call upon You, asking that in all things I rejoice, knowing that Your grace is sufficient. You are with me and never will forsake me. I call on You with my heart exposed asking for strength, comfort, peace, and healing. For You alone know all my cares and woes so I place them upon You asking Your will be done. Amen.**

Hymn Response “What a Friend We Have in Jesus” *LSB 770*

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|--|--|
| [1] What a friend we have in Jesus,
All our sins and griefs to bear!
What a privilege to carry
Ev'rything to God in prayer!
Oh, what peace we often forfeit;
Oh, what needless pain we bear--
All because we do not carry
Ev'rything to God in prayer! | [2] Have we trials and temptations?
Is there trouble anywhere?
We should never be discouraged--
Take it to the Lord in prayer.
Can we find a friend so faithful
Who will all our sorrows share?
Jesus knows our ev'ry weakness--
Take it to the Lord in prayer. |
| [3] Are we weak and heavy laden,
Cumbered with a load of care?
Precious Savior, still our refuge--
Take it to the Lord in prayer.
Do your friends despise, forsake thee?
Take it to the Lord in prayer.
In His arms he'll take and shield thee;
You will find a solace there. | |

Gospel Lesson: John 17:1-26

Jesus looked up to heaven and said, “Father, the time is here. Give your Son glory so that your Son can give you glory. You have given him authority over all humanity so that he can give eternal life to all those you gave to him. This is eternal life: to know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you sent. On earth I have given you glory by finishing the work you gave me to do. Now, Father, give me glory in your presence with the glory I had with you before the world existed.

I made your name known to the people you gave me. They are from this world. They belonged to you, and you gave them to me. They did what you told them. Now they know that everything you gave me comes from you, because I gave them the message that you gave me. They have accepted this message, and they know for sure that I came from you. They have believed that you sent me.

I pray for them. I am not praying for the world but for those you gave me, because they are yours. Everything I have is yours, and everything you have is mine. I have been given glory by the people you have given me. I will not be in the world much longer, but they are in the world, and I am coming back to you. Holy Father, keep them safe by the power of your name, the name that you gave me, so that their unity may be like ours. While I was with them, I kept them safe by the power of your name, the name that you gave me. I watched over them, and none of them, except the son of destruction, that the Scripture might be fulfilled.

Now, Father, I am coming back to you. I say these things while I am still in the world so that they will have the same joy that I have. I have given them your message, but the world has hated them because they don't belong to the world any more than I belong to the world. I am not asking you to take them out of the world but to protect them from the evil one. They don't belong to the world any more than I belong to the world.

Use the truth to make them holy. Your words are truth. I have sent them into the world the same way you sent me into the world. I'm setting myself apart for this holy work so that they too will be made holy in truth.

I am not praying only for them. I am also praying for those who will believe in me through their message. I pray that all of these people continue to have unity in the way that you Father are in me and I am in you. I pray that they may be united with us so that the world will believe that you have sent me. I have given them the glory that you gave me. I did this so that they are united in the same way we are. I am in them, and you are in me. So they are completely united. In this way the world knows that you have sent me, and that you have loved them in the same way you have loved me.

Father, I want those you have given to me to be with me, to be where I am. I want them to see my glory, which you gave me because you loved me before the world was made. Father, you have done what is right and the world didn't know you. Yet, I know you, and these disciples have known that you sent me. I have made your name known to them, and I will make it known so that the love you have for me will be in them and I will be in them.

Discussion

CAREs

E = Enigmatic – How incomprehensible are the works of our Lord.

Some of the definitions for this word include; mysterious, puzzling, baffling, perplexing, unfathomable. Chapter 17 of John’s Gospel is Jesus’ High Priestly prayer, in which he prayed to His Father for us just hours before going to the cross to die for us. The definition of enigmatic can now take a new meaning for us.

For us. All that Jesus did was for us. Even here in this prayer He is praying for us. He is going toward the most horrible and torturous death creation has, or ever will, know and yet His concern is only for us.

How unfathomable are the wonders of our God. What an awesome and wonderful message we have to tell the world. What greater prayer can we pray than to go before the throne of God and pray for others: our neighbors, friends and our nation. Seeking their good will and benefit for God’s good purpose.

Prayer

- P** Dear Jesus, in the mystery of Your cross I come to You. You died, You rose from the grave, and You prayed for me. The world seems in chaos, yet You are in control. My life has its challenges, yet You give me strength.
- C** **I question so many things, yet You know the answer to them all. You take care of me even when I fail to see. Lord, I ask for strength to endure, peace to maintain balance, and comfort to offer others, as You have given to me. Thank You, Lord for loving me so much to die for me. Suffering the pains of death so that by You alone we have life, life now and eternally. Let my heart be open to pray for others as You have prayed for me. Amen.**

Hymn Response “Rise, My Soul, to Watch and Pray” *LSB 663 (v.1,5)*

[1] Rise, my soul, to watch and pray;
From your sleep awaken!
Be not by the evil day
Unawares o’ertaken;
For the foe, Well we know,
Is a harvest reaping
While the saints are sleeping.

[5] But while watching, also pray
To the Lord unceasing.
God protects you day by day,
Strength and faith increasing,
So that still Mind and will
Shall unite to serve Him
And forever love Him.

Thanksgiving — Way of Salvation

The prophet Isaiah wrote in his book, “A voice cries out in the desert: ‘Prepare the way for the Lord! Make his paths straight! Every valley will be filled. Every mountain and hill will be leveled. The crooked ways will be made straight. The rough roads will be made smooth. All people will see the salvation that God gives.’” (Luke 3:4-6).

“Now, Lord, you are allowing your servant to leave in peace as you promised. My eyes have seen your salvation, which you have prepared for all people to see. He is a light that will reveal salvation to the nations and bring glory to your people Israel.” (Luke 2:29-32).

I love you, O Lord, my strength. The Lord is my rock and my fortress and my Savior, my God, my rock in whom I take refuge, my shield, and the strength of my salvation, my stronghold. The Lord lives! Thanks be to my rock! May God my Savior be honored. (Psalm 18:1-2, 46).

You heard and believed the message of truth, the Good News that he has saved you. In him you were sealed with the Holy Spirit whom he promised. This Holy Spirit is the guarantee that we will receive our inheritance. We have this guarantee until we are set free to belong to him. God receives praise and glory for this. (Ephesians 1:13-14).

As for you, continue in what you have learned and have firmly believed, knowing from whom you learned it and how from childhood you have been acquainted with the sacred writings, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus.

(2 Timothy 3:14-15)

After this I looked, and behold, a great multitude that no one could number, from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed in white robes, with palm branches in their hands, and crying out with a loud voice, "Salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb" (Revelation 7:9-10)!

Discussion

CARES

S = Salvation

How is salvation obtained? Should that not be the first question on our minds and lips? The answer is so simple any child can learn it. Jesus is the First and the Last, the One who was, who is, and who is to come. He is our Rock and our Fortress, an ever present help in time of need. It is there we should take comfort and have our peace. May this truth pour over our nation that it may prosper under God's protection and providence.

Prayer

Almighty, everlasting God, Your Son has assured forgiveness of sins and deliverance from eternal death. Strengthen us by Your Holy Spirit that our faith in Christ may increase daily and that we may hold fast to the hope that on the Last Day we shall be raised in glory to eternal life, through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

Hymn Response "Lord, Take My Hand and Lead Me" LSB 722

[1]	[2]
Lord take my hand and lead me upon life's way	Lord when the tempest rages, I need not fear
Direct, protect, and feed me from day to day	For You, the Rock of ages, are always near
Without your grace and favor I go astray	Close by your side abiding, I fear no foe
So take my hand O Savior, and lead the way	For when Your hand is guiding, In peace I go
[3]	
Lord when the shadows lengthen and night has come	
I know that You will strengthen my steps toward home	
then nothing can impede me, O blessed Friend	
So take my hand and lead me unto the end	

Final Discussion

Is prayer important? Yes! Always! How are we to pray? From your heart. God is not impressed with great poetry and prose. "A submissive spirit O God, you do not despise." God seeks our love, not a show for others to see. Jesus said, "your Father who is with you sees what you do in private. He will reward you." So what are we to do on our journey home? Pray! Pray often. Pray always. Speak to God and wait on him.

Closing (C-A-R-E-S)

If the Lord had not been my help, my soul would soon have lived in the land of silence. When I thought, "My foot slips," your steadfast love, O Lord, held me up. **When the cares of my heart are many, your consolations cheer my soul** (Psalm 94:17-19).

Casting all your anxieties on him, because **he cares for you** (1 Peter 5:7).

Prayer

Almighty God, You have promised to hear the prayers of those who ask in Your Son's name. Mercifully incline Your ears to us who have now made prayers and supplications to You, and grant that those things that we have faithfully asked according to Your will, we may receive or meet our needs and bring glory to You; through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

Benediction

P: The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ ✠ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

R: Amen.

Sending Hymn "Go, My Children, with My Blessing" LSB 922 (v.1,4)

[1] Go, My children, with My blessing,
Never alone.
Waking, sleeping, I am with you;
You are My own.
In My love's baptismal river
I have made you Mine forever.
Go, My children, with My blessing—
You are My own.

[4] I the Lord will bless and keep you
And give you peace;
I the Lord will smile upon you
And give you peace:
I the Lord will be your Father,
Savior, Comforter, and Brother.
Go, My children; I will keep you
And give you peace.

**Let my prayer rise before You as incense,
and the lifting up of my hands as the evening sacrifice!**
(Psalm 141:2)

