



Providence Presbyterian Bustling's

March 29, 2020

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Welcome

Greetings! It has been foremost in our prayers this week that this edition would find everyone healthy and well. Everyone's experience is unique, but collectively it is satisfying to know we are all there for one another come what may. Blessing and well wishes to All!

SOME THOUGHTS FROM PASTOR HERMAN

Interestingly enough, the Lectionary Psalm for this week is Psalm 23! What a wonderful "coincidence" of God's grace to be reading and reflecting on that psalm each day. What especially drew in was when I read it in what's known as the Amplified Bible (on Biblegateway.com) as part of my devotional practice, on Sunday. Here it is (with a word of two of my own adding in red):

Psalm 23 (Amplified Bible) – The Lord, the Psalmist's Shepherd. A Psalm of David.

23 The Lord is my Shepherd [to feed, to guide and to shield me], I shall not want — **I will lack nothing.**

He lets me lie down in green pastures; He leads me beside the still and quiet waters.

He refreshes and restores my soul (life); He leads me in the paths of righteousness for His name's sake.

Even though I walk through the [sunless, deep and dark] ^[a] valley of the shadow of death, I fear no evil, for You are with me; Your rod [to protect] and Your staff [to guide], they comfort and console me.

You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies. You have anointed and refreshed my head with ^[b] oil; My cup overflows.

Surely goodness and mercy and unfailing love shall follow me all the days of my life, And I shall dwell forever [throughout all my days] in the house and in the presence of the Lord.

Footnotes:
 [a] Or valley of deep darkness.
 [b] In ancient times it was customary in hot climates for a host to provide his guest with olive oil to put on his head. The Lord blesses and anoints His believers with the Holy Spirit, whom oil symbolizes, to prepare them for His service.

Continuing with it as the "Psalm of the week", I read it again in a contemporary paraphrase called The Message, which added a whole different flavor. [My reflection notes in red ...]

Psalm 23 (The Message)

23 God, my shepherd! I don't need a thing. You have bedded me down in lush meadows, you find me quiet pools to drink from.

True to your word, you let me catch my breath and send me in the right direction.

It's not all just ease, refreshment—which are things you DO provide. May I keep my eyes open and be alert to those "quiet pools" to stop and drink from them.

Your "right direction" can also pass through dark places and dark times in the 'valley of the shadow.' We don't often admit or embrace the difficult path through the dark valley, but that can also be the right path or the "paths of righteousness" as some other translations render it. The Spirit drove You into the wilderness, Jesus (Mark 1:12). Why do we think that shouldn't happen to us, too? There are lessons we can and can only learn in the wilderness places and wilderness times. Is this such a time for us ... for me?

Even when the way goes through Death Valley, I'm not afraid when you walk at my side.

Your trusty shepherd's crook makes me feel secure.

Death Valley—a dry, barren, seemingly lifeless place ... and time there seems interminable. To be alone there is maddening! Yet, I am not and never alone. "You walk at my side ..." to encourage me, strengthen me, guide me, carry me if necessary. You are my faithful Shepherd.

You serve me a six-course dinner right in front of my enemies.

No need to run from the enemy or enemies. No need to be afraid. Right there, in the very presence of that which threatens me, you provide—and do so abundantly.

You revive my drooping head; my cup brims with blessing. Your beauty and love chase after me every day of my life.

Every day. Every day without exception. You pursue me, come hard after me in Your Beauty and Love. I can't outrun or stray too far from Your Love and Beauty that they/You won't chase me down. May I stop ... to be embraced and to embrace You ... in Your Love and Beauty.

I'm back home in the house of God for the rest of my life. ... forever!

Grace and Peace to all in the Grip of God's love.

Prayer Requests

- Darlene Brown — Prayers for Our Nation
- Carol Shore — Prayers for her sister, Karen Eckert in a Nursing Home
- Jen & Andrew Caron—A Blessing: Andy has a new job!
- Ginny Heal Prayers for her brother, Jerry
- Marge Hull — Continued prayers for her son, Lee
- Barbara York — Continued prayers for her Dad
- Julie Olsen — Continued prayers for her Mom

Traveling Mercies & prayers for Alice Garman as she leaves to spend time at her daughter's home in Maryland until the Crisis passes

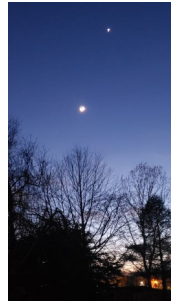
Your Thoughts

Our Session Moderator, Rev. Rebecca Gresham-Kresner (Becca) from Faith Presbyterian Church in Medford has kindly allowed us to link to her personal thoughts on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/writerevwrite/> Browse on by & her a ❤️

She is also leading a live stream service Sunday morning at 9:00 AM on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/FaithPresMedford/>

If you have any pictures or thoughts you'd like to share, please send them to RickCheslo@gmail.com They could make the next issue!

Moon & Venus over Burlington



Good To Know

- **Vintage Services can be viewed online at our Facebook Page at** <https://www.facebook.com/groups/ppchurch/> or at <https://provpresch.org/>

- **Offerings can be sent via US Mail to:**

Providence Presbyterian Church 2087 Old York Road Burlington, NJ 08016

- **Or on Sunday Morn, Jack will be present in the Church Parking Lot if you wish to drop your offerings off in a Drive-Thru fashion. Stop on by from 8:30 to 9:00 or from 11:00 to 11:30**

- **Fourteen Members came out last week to take advantage of our Drive-Thru & to say HI!**

